

PERCEPTION OF MAJOR STAKEHOLDERS OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS ON LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION

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Abstract

The present study titled, "Perception of Major Stakeholders of secondary schools on Life Skills Education" was conducted to: (i) ascertain the perception of major stakeholders of secondary schools education such as- headmasters, teachers, students and parents with reference to the dimensions of life skills education such as- psychological abilities; interpersonal skills that help people take decisions, solve problems, think critically, communicate effectively, build healthy relationship, empathize with others, and cope with the stress and strain ultimate aim of the study was, however, to explore the perception of stakeholders for improvement LSE among the students. Four different tools and techniques were used for data collection such as-questionnaire, interview schedule, focus group discussion. The data were analysed qualitatively as well as quantitatively technique like-percentage analysis was done and thick description under qualitative technique. The study examined that lack government support and ineffective teaching learning materials. Challenges faced by headmasters of each school such as, lack of funds, negative peer pressure, lack of interest among student, lack of time, lack of teaching staffs. Majority of teachers reported that LSE lessons were not taught at all in their school. Some teachers responded that the lesson of life skills education was scheduled only once in a week, might be due to adequate time and material in the schools. While only 9 (22.5%) indicated that they were taught twice in a week. Majority of parents (76%) were said that life skills education is essential to make the child feel self-reliant in his work and duties and 17(68%) were responded that life skills education was all about to make an individual to deal effectively with confronting day to day situations. Majority of students expressed that they were not aware of about the concept life skills and importance of LSE this might be possible due to the fact that most of the teachers and headmasters of schools were not concerned about the importance of LSE.

Keywords: Life skill education (LSE), Perception, Secondary school



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Introduction

Life skill education develops psycho social competence which helps an individual to develop his/her positive behaviour, to deal with the challenges and demand of everyday life. It deals with mental functions such as awareness, attitude, leadership, creativity, appreciation and interaction with self, others and environment. It is a study of abilities, coping with peer pressure, emotion conflict and stress. UNICEF (2009) has recommended life skills based education should be given with the regular education. It has insisted LSBE should be contributed to a self-inclusive gender free educational setting. Life skills include psychological abilities; interpersonal skills that help people take decisions, solve problems, think critically, communicate effectively, build healthy relationship, empathize with others, and cope with the stress and strain of life in a healthy and productive manner. Life Skills are abilities which enable an individual to develop adaptive and positive behaviour to deal effectively with challenges and demands of everyday life. The development of Life Skills in an individual is a lifelong process that starts in early childhood and continues throughout one's life (UNESCO, 2003).

When the psychological and social needs of the youth and children are not met, they become maladjusted and the resultant behaviours are drug abuse, irresponsible sexual behaviour and STIs, increased crime, violence, school dropout, teenage pregnancy thus teenage fatherhood and motherhood (Banyard et al 1998). Life Skills comprises of competencies that can enable the youth to cope with challenges and manage their life in a healthy and productive manner. Initiative to develop and implement LSE has been undertaken in many countries around the world. The need for Life Skills Education is highlighted, directly and indirectly in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and many international recommendations (Convention of the Rights of the Child United National Assembly).

Life Skill Education

A skill is a learned ability. Life Skills are those competencies that assist people in functioning well in the environments in which they live. Life skills have been defined by the World Health Organization as “the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life”. UNICEF defines life skills as “a behaviour change or behaviour development approach designed to address a balance of three areas: knowledge, attitude and skills”. Ten core Life Skills laid down by WHO (April 1998) are Self-awareness, Empathy, Critical thinking, Creative thinking, Decision making, Problem Solving, Effective communication, Interpersonal relationship, Coping with stress and Coping with emotion.

Objective of the Study

1. To study the awareness of teachers and students on Life Skills Education.
2. To study the perception of teachers, students and parents of secondary schools on Life Skills Education.
3. To study the challenges, if any, faced by teachers and students in imparting Life Skills Education.

Research Questions of the Study

1. Whether the teachers and students of secondary school are aware of Life Skills Education?
2. What do the headmasters and teachers of secondary school level perceive about teaching of Life Skills Education to students as suggested by WHO?
3. What do the secondary school students perceive on Life Skills Education?
4. What do the parents of secondary school students perceive on Life Skills Education to their children?
5. What are the challenges, if any, faced by the teachers and students in imparting of Life Skills Education?

Design of the Study

For this present study Descriptive Survey Method was used.

Population and Sample of the Study

All the headmasters, teachers, students and parents of secondary schools in Korai block of Jajpur district comprise the population of the study. In the present study, the investigator used incidental sampling techniques to select sample from the population.

Table 1 Distribution of the Sample

Category	Headmaster	Teacher	Student	Parent
Number	5	40	75	25

Tools used for Data Collection

1. Perception Scale for teacher

The Likert Scale is a five (or seven) point scale which is used to allow the individual to express how much they agree or disagree with a statement.

2. Structured Interview for Headmaster

Semi-structured Interviews will be conducted by investigator with teachers for the collection of relevant data for objective (2) which is to examine the perception of headmaster.

3. Semi Structured Interview for parents

Semi-structured interview will also be conducted by investigator with parents for the collection of relevant data for objective (2) which is to examine the First, the researcher should establish good rapport with interviewee (parents) so that the interviewee feels comfortable revealing his feelings.

4. Focus Group Discussion with the students

In the present study, the investigator collected data by interacting with students. Focus group discussion with students provides more information regarding the perception life skills education.

Result and Discussion

1. Awareness of Teachers and Students on Life Skills Education

Awareness of teachers and students on Life Skills Education : Majority of the teacher 30(75%) were said that time allocated for life skills education is not sufficient. They were given reason that-innovative teaching learning material is not sufficient, proper building of library facilities is not available at school, for building of teacher and students relationship specific time period is required, need for special awareness programme to involve the students in social activities, LSE can be taught by providing practical experience and organising social service activities and lastly LSE can be successful if it is teaching through curricular activities. Majority of students expressed that various activities are held in the schools such as-sports, debates, discussions, cultural activities, awareness program etc.

2. Perception of Teachers, Students and Parents of Secondary Schools on Life Skills Education.

Table 2 Responses of teacher on Life Skills Education (N=40)

Importance of LSE	% Of Responses
Teaching and learning becomes livelihood and effective	30(75%)
Promoting quality education and development of education.	25(62.5%)
Acquiring knowledge and solving emerging problems.	35(87.5%)
Promote healthy living and enable them to take responsibility.	20(50%)
For building personal and professional life.	15(37.5%)
LSE develops positive attitude to solve problems.	26(65%)
LSE is essential to make education lifelong.	30(75%)
LSE is essential to enrich democratic country.	36(90%)
LSE is essential to face the challenges of modern societies.	40(100%)

From the above table (2) shows that perception of teachers towards life skills education. Majority of the teachers were said that life skills education helps in acquiring knowledge and solving problems, enriching democratic country, promoting quality education and development of education and modification of behaviour, majority of the teacher 40(100%) were explained that life skills education helps to face the challenges of modern society. it also helps in building personal and professional life of the individuals. while 20(50%) believe that life skills education can also promote healthy living and enable the students to take the responsibilities.

Perception of parents on Life Skills Education

Table 3 Responses of Parents on the importance of life skills education

Importance of LSE	% of Responses
Life skills education is essential for growing knowledge and skills.	15(60%)
LSE is all about to make an individual to deal effectively with confronting day by day situations.	17(68%)
It develops moral and spiritual quality of the learners.	10(40%)
It is essential for future success.	11(44%)
It makes the child to feel self-reliant in his work and duties.	19(76%)

Table 3 shows about the perception of parents regarding life skills education. Majority of parents (76%) were said that life skills education is essential to make the child feel self-reliant in his work and duties and 17(68%) were responded that life skills education is all about to make an individual to deal effectively with confronting day to day situations. 15(60%) were represented that LSE is essential for growing knowledge and skills. 11(44%) also recommended that LSE is required for future success of the child. While only 10(40%) were suggested that LSE is essential for development of moral and spiritual quality of the learners.

Perception of Headmasters on Life Skills Education.

Most of the headmasters heard of life skills educations from ministry of education, sports, and newspapers, journals, in-service and pre-service training, televisions, socials awareness programmers 'like-NCC, NSS, Red cross, green cross etc. most of the headmasters promote LSE through-effective communication, self-esteem, coping with stress, coping with emotion, critical thinking, negotiation skills, empathy, problem solving, invited guest, group discussion and personal touch in school environment.

Perception of students on like skills education Majority of students expressed that they were not aware of about the concept life skills and importance of LSE this might be possible since most of the teachers not concerned about the importance of LSE.

3. Challenges, if any, Faced by Teachers and Students in Imparting Life Skills Education.

Most of the students reported that there is no special time in schools for providing skills. Majority 40(100%) of teachers were facing problem with lack of funds. 31(77.5%) of teachers responded that lack of interest among students might be probably since they did not know the importance of LSE in their lives. Majority 40(100%) of the respondents indicated that government funds was essential for inculcating LSE. While 35 (87.5) teachers were suggested that allocations of effective TLM are not sufficient to teach different subjects of the curriculum. Challenges faced by headmasters of each school such as Lack of funds ,Negative peer pressure ,Lack of interest among students, Lack of time ,Lack of teaching staffs. 20(50%) of the teacher indicated teaching of science subjects was a difficult task due to insufficient teaching learning materials in schools. While other 10(25%) of teacher were represented that student's passiveness and inappropriate behaviour creates disturbances in inculcating life skills among the students and recommended that teaching of literature was also difficult task to elaborate the theme of the subjects in fully manner.

Conclusion

The present study may help to teachers, headmasters, authority to modify the existing systems of education and provide essential scope to promote LSE .one of the most requirement for students Government must be provided funds to develop skills education in school , Innovative Teaching learning material must be provided to schools to inculcate LSE among the students, Headmaster should sponsor teachers in the field to attend in-service training on LSE seminars and workshops where they can get acquainted with the relevant knowledge and skills which is necessary for them in teaching and guidance roles to their students. In-service workshops are likely to help teachers develop the essential LSE educational both in content and methodologies. The school administration should also provide teaching/learning resources on the subject. schools should teach LSE in accordance to the ministry guideline whose reinforcement should start immediately students join the school form one. This would help learners to acquire skills like decision making to cope with challenges. This would also help to reduce cases .

Educational Implications

1. The findings of the present study may help to teachers, headmasters, authority to modify the existing systems of education and provide essential scope to promote LSE.

2. Teacher must be trained to provide LSE.
3. Government must be provided funds to develop skills education in school.
4. Innovative Teaching learning material must be provided to schools to inculcate LSE among the students.
5. Government may take steps to appoint special teacher to address LSE.
6. Headmaster should sponsor teachers in the field to attend in-service training on LSE seminars and workshops where they can get acquainted with the relevant knowledge and skills which is necessary for them in teaching and guidance roles to their students. In-service workshops are likely to help teachers develop the essential LSE educational both in content and methodologies. The school administration should also provide teaching/learning resources on the subject.
7. The headmasters should ensure that schools should teach LSE in accordance to the ministry guideline whose reinforcement should start immediately students join the school form one. This would help learners to acquire skills like decision making to cope with challenges. This would also help to reduce cases like poor performance, repetition, drug and substance abuse and school dropout among the learners.

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