

## Life Skills Education and Its Relationship with Student Adjustment and Academic Performance in Senior Secondary Schools

Sony Kumari<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Reena Mahto<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of Education, Sonadevi University, Ghatshila, Jharkhand

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Sonadevi University, Ghatshila, Jharkhand

### Abstract:

It is often acknowledged that education is a potent tool for social and personal change. Modern education places a strong emphasis on students' holistic development in addition to academic information acquisition, giving them the behavioural, social, emotional, and cognitive skills they need to succeed in a world that is becoming more complex by the day. Students go through major developmental changes in senior secondary school that influence their academic paths and prospects for the future. Students must deal with peer pressure, family expectations, professional pathway decisions, academic pressures, and identity development issues at this crucial phase. As a result, systematic life skills education becomes more important. The term "life skills education" refers to organized courses or teaching methods intended to build interpersonal and psychosocial competences that help people solve issues, speak clearly, control their emotions, make wise decisions, and positively respond to obstacles. The process through which students adjust to the demands of the classroom, social settings, emotional strains, and institutional expectations is known as student adjustment. Grades, test scores, and other academic accomplishments are often indicators of academic performance, which is defined as quantifiable learning results.

**Keywords:** Modern education, holistic development, academic information, cognitive skills, psychosocial competences.

### Introduction:

Academic achievement, student adjustment, and life skills education have a complex and dynamic interaction. Effective life skills increase a student's likelihood of thriving in school settings and, as a result, improving academic performance. In the context of senior secondary schools, this section examines the conceptual underpinnings of life skills education, the characteristics of student adjustment, the factors that influence academic performance, and the connections between these concepts.

The foundation of life skills education is the notion that education must encompass capabilities that allow people to successfully handle life's demands in addition to topic knowledge. Critical thinking, creativity, decision-making, problem-solving, effective communication, interpersonal connection skills, self-awareness, empathy, emotional regulation, stress management, and resilience are just a few of the many qualities that make up life skills. Life skills education can be taught as a separate subject in senior secondary schools, incorporated into already-existing curricula, or incorporated into extracurricular activities including peer mentorship, leadership initiatives, debates, and community service projects. The main goal is to give kids positive, adaptable behaviours that will enable them to successfully navigate the

demands and difficulties of daily life.

**Generally speaking, life skills fall into three primary categories:**

**Cognitive skills** include the ability to think critically, solve problems, and make decisions. They give pupils the ability to assess options, analyse data, and make well-informed decisions about both personal and academic issues.

**Communication teamwork** leadership, negotiation, and conflict resolution are examples of social skills. Healthy relationships with family, instructors, and peers are facilitated by social skills.

**Self-awareness** emotional control, empathy, stress reduction, and resilience are examples of emotional skills. Students with emotional intelligence are better able to deal with stress, frustration, and academic pressure. By encouraging both thriving and survival skills, life skills education empowers children to strive for both academic and social success.

**Theoretical Foundations of Life Skills Education**

**Theory of Social Learning:** According to this hypothesis, people pick up habits through modelling, imitation, and observation. Students learn life skills in the classroom by watching mentors, teachers, and classmates. In order to reinforce positive behaviours, structured life skills programs offer opportunity for role-playing, group discussions, and cooperative activities.

**Theory of Constructivism:** According to constructivism, students actively create knowledge by experience. By including students in experiential learning activities like problem-solving exercises, role-playing, and real-world case analyses, life skills education is consistent with this philosophy.

**Theory of Emotional Intelligence:** The ability to identify, comprehend, and control emotions is emphasized by emotional intelligence. Better academic results and better adjustment are displayed by students who possess strong emotional intelligence. By encouraging self-awareness and emotional control, life skills education raises emotional intelligence.

**Theory of Ecological Systems:** This philosophy emphasizes how people interact with their surroundings. Students who get life skills instruction are better equipped to negotiate intricate social networks, such as those found in the family, peer groups, classroom, and larger society.

**Student Adjustment in Senior Secondary Schools**

The ability of students to successfully adjust to different facets of the educational setting is referred to as student adjustment. Academic, social, emotional, and institutional factors are all part of the multifaceted process of adjustment.

**Adjustment to Academics:** The ability to efficiently manage study time, adapt to the demands of the curriculum, and form fruitful learning habits are all components of academic adjustment. Strong self-regulation abilities are necessary for senior secondary students, who frequently deal with increased academic burdens and competitive exams.

**Adaptation to Society:** The ability to build and sustain healthy relationships with teachers and classmates is referred to as social adjustment. Social competency is crucial during adolescence because of the increased impact of peers during this time.

**Adjustment of Emotions:** Managing emotions including tension, anxiety, anger, and disappointment is a part of emotional adjustment. Academic deterioration, behavioural problems, and mental health issues can result from poor emotional management.

**Adjustment to Institutions:** Adjusting to school policies, customs, expectations, and culture is known as institutional adjustment. Academic success is more likely for students who respect institutional systems. Motivation, involvement in school activities, and a positive self-concept are all linked to successful adjustment. On the other hand, maladjustment might show up as psychological anguish, disciplinary problems, low academic performance, and absenteeism.

### **Relationship Between Life Skills Education and Student Adjustment**

**Improving Control of Emotions** Students are better prepared to deal with exam anxiety, peer pressure, and personal difficulties when they practice stress management and emotional control techniques.

**Improving Interpersonal Connections** Better social adjustment is facilitated by communication and empathy abilities, which also foster teamwork, lessen conflict, and build supportive peer networks.

**Encouragement of Self-Awareness** Students that are self-aware are better able to recognize their learning preferences, abilities, and shortcomings and seek out the right tools and assistance.

**Making Better Decisions** Good decision-making abilities discourage dangerous behaviour and promote wise academic decisions.

### **Relationship Between Life Skills Education and Academic Performance**

Students' cognitive functioning, emotional stability, motivation, and behavioral engagement in the classroom are all impacted by the direct and indirect relationship between life skills education and academic achievement. Critical thinking, decision-making, communication, emotional regulation, problem-solving, time management, and resilience are just a few of the crucial psychosocial skills that life skills education gives students. These skills greatly enhance academic performance, especially at the senior secondary level when academic demands become more demanding.

**1. Improvement of Mental Capabilities:** Higher-order thinking abilities, such as critical and creative thinking, are strengthened by life skills education. These abilities help students handle challenging problems, assess arguments, analyze material, and apply knowledge in tests. Students become more autonomous learners when they are taught to think critically and reflectively. Better academic success is eventually the result of improved understanding, retention, and application of academic material brought about by this intellectual independence. Students that possess decision-making and problem-solving abilities are also better able to strategically tackle academic obstacles. Students learn methodical strategies to successfully

complete academic work rather than becoming overwhelmed by challenging courses or assignments.

**2. Enhancement of Stress Management and Emotional Control:** Exam pressure, competition, and high expectations from parents and teachers are common features of academic environments, particularly in senior secondary schools. Students who struggle to control their emotions may become anxious, frustrated, and burned out, all of which have a detrimental effect on their academic performance. Self-awareness, emotional regulation, and stress management strategies are all taught in life skills education. Students keep greater focus and drive when they learn how to deal with exam anxiety and obstacles. Emotional stability promotes prolonged academic effort, increases classroom participation, and improves memory retention.

**3. Establishing Productive Study Routines Self-discipline:** goal-setting, and time management are essential elements of life skills instruction. Students who master these skills are more likely to successfully manage their study plans, adhere to deadlines, and strike a balance between their extracurricular and academic obligations. Students who are adept at making goals are better able to monitor their progress and set specific academic goals. Self-control encourages regularity in study habits. Students show increased academic production and accomplishment as a result.

### **Results:**

The connection between student adjustment and life skills education The findings showed that life skills instruction and student adjustment were positively and statistically significantly correlated. Students who participated in more structured life skills programs showed superior academic adjustment, stronger social bonds, and higher levels of emotional stability. They were better at handling tension, settling disputes, and adjusting to the standards and regulations of the institution. This shows that teaching kids life skills is essential to improving their capacity to handle the social and academic pressures of senior secondary school.

The connection between academic achievement and life skills education Additionally, the analysis demonstrated a beneficial relationship between academic achievement and life skills instruction. Students who scored higher on life skills abilities, such decision-making, will perform better academically. These pupils showed increased passion for studying, better focus, and productive study techniques. The results suggest that by enhancing the cognitive and behavioural skills necessary for learning, life skills education directly supports academic success. The connection between academic performance and student adjustment Academic achievement and student adjustment were found to be significantly correlated. Academic results were higher for those who were emotionally, socially, and academically well-adjusted than for those who struggled with adjustment. Poorer academic performance was linked to emotional instability, strained peer relationships, and an inability to adjust to school standards.

### **Conclusion:**

According to the study's findings, teaching life skills is essential for fostering students' academic achievement and overall development in senior secondary schools. According to the

report, Students' emotional, social, and academic adjustment is greatly improved by life skills education. Pupils that have adapted to their school environment more successfully Student adjustment acts as a mediating element between the direct and indirect effects of life skills education on academic achievement. In order to develop well-rounded, resilient, and academically capable pupils, life skills education must be incorporated into the senior secondary school curriculum. Academic achievement is impacted by students' ability to control their emotions, form relationships, solve issues, and adjust to new situations in addition to their intellectual prowess. The study emphasizes how crucial it is to implement a comprehensive educational strategy that strikes a balance between cognitive training and psychosocial development. Students who receive instruction in life skills in addition to academic subjects are more likely to be high achievers, emotionally secure, socially conscious, and capable of lifelong learning. To sum up, teaching life skills is a fundamental tool that improves academic achievement and helps students transition more effectively. In order to foster long-term academic success and personal growth, educators, parents, administrators, and educational policymakers should work together to guarantee the successful implementation of life skills programs in senior secondary schools.

#### References:

1. Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. W.H. Freeman and Company.
2. Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press.
3. Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development, 82*(1), 405–432.
4. Eccles, J. S., & Roeser, R. W. (2011). Schools as developmental contexts during adolescence. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 21*(1), 225–241.
5. Elias, M. J., Zins, J. E., Weissberg, R. P., Frey, K. S., Greenberg, M. T., Haynes, N. M., ... Shriver, T. P. (1997). *Promoting social and emotional learning: Guidelines for educators*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
6. Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence*. Bantam Books.
7. Gresham, F. M., & Elliott, S. N. (2008). *Social skills improvement system rating scales*. Pearson Assessments.
8. Masten, A. S. (2001). Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development. *American Psychologist, 56*(3), 227–238.
9. Pajares, F. (2002). Overview of social cognitive theory and of self-efficacy. *Theory Into Practice, 41*(2), 97–104.
10. Santrock, J. W. (2018). *Adolescence* (16th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.
11. Zimmerman, B. J. (2000). Attaining self-regulation: A social cognitive perspective. In M. Boekaerts, P. R. Pintrich, & M. Zeidner (Eds.), *Handbook of self-regulation* (pp. 13–39). Academic Press.
12. World Health Organization. (1997). *Life skills education for children and adolescents in schools*. World Health Organization.