

LIFE SKILL APPROACH IN B. ED. CURRICULUM

Dr. Kalpana Modi,

Associate Professor,

P.V.D.T. College of Education for Women, S.N.D.T.

Women’s University, Mumbai. Pin- 400020. India.

Abstract

Adolescence is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood. During this stage, rapid physiological and psychological changes are taking place. Children develop abstract thinking and also independent ideology. At this stage, young people make relationships out of their family members. During this period, they want to do experiments. They become victim of negative peer pressure. Also they need to take decisions about their bodies and sexuality. Thus, at this stage, potential of adolescents are increased but their vulnerability to undesired factors also increase.

The report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first century, known as the Delor’s Reports talks about four pillars of education. These four pillars are learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be. These four pillars of education can be best achieved by life skill education. Life skill education can encompass a wide variety of educational inputs. These are aimed at enabling the learners to build on their capacities, acquire skills to reduce risk and face challenges. This helps in making decision. In the present paper, author has tried to explain various life skill approaches for B.Ed. curriculum which prepares youth for the future.

Keywords: Adolescents, life skills, B.Ed. Curriculum

Introduction

Life Skill is defined by WHO as The abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable an individual to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. When the person is able to adjust in different circumstances, it is called adaptive behavior. When the behavior becomes positive in difficult situation, a person can find a ray of hope and tries to find

solution. Life Skills include factors such as taking decisions, solving problems, think critically, communicate effectively and build healthy relationship. The skills which are related to thinking process are called thinking skills and skills related to dealing with people around us are called social skills. When a person has these two skills than that person can negotiate effectively with the environment. One has to develop emotional skills also, where a person learns self-management, coping with feelings, stress & peer pressure. Young people need to develop all these skills.

Life Skill by WHO

Life Skills can be taught if they can be broken down into a set of sub-skills. When the teachers are aware of these sub-skills, they can integrate with the curriculum of different subjects. WHO has laid down ten core Life Skills

- 1) **Self – awareness** – Young people very often ask a question ‘Who am I?’ Answer to this question can be obtained by thinking about their roles in family, community and working place. In self-awareness, one recognizes ‘self’. One has to find out one’s strengths and weaknesses. Self awareness is useful in coping with stressful situation.
- 2) **Empathy** – Cultivation of empathy for different groups in society can reduce incidents of violence in society. In order to have successful relationship in society, we need to understand people’s needs, desires and feelings. Empathy can be defined as ability to imagine what life is like for other people. When we understand others, we can communicate better.
- 3) **Critical thinking** – The students should develop ability to listen and read critically so that they can differentiate right from wrong. Debate is one technique which can be used for critical thinking. In critical thinking, a person analyzes the information and experiences in objective manner.
- 4) **Creative thinking** – For creative thinking, students must be encouraged to use their intuition, reason and problem solving skills to find new solutions to old problems. The novel way of seeing the things leads to creative thinking. Creative thinking requires patience and persistence.
- 5) **Decision Making** – The curriculum in social sciences provides opportunity to understand how decisions are made in political democracy. School can organize mock parliament, and

students can see for themselves, how decisions are made. This helps students to make decisions about their lives.

- 6) **Problem Solving** – Problem solving helps us to deal constructively with problems in our lives. If there are problems which are not resolved than that causes mental stress. In this situation, problem solving skill helps an individual.
- 7) **Interpersonal relationship** - Interpersonal relationship helps to interact with people in positive way. It is necessary to maintain friendly relationships. This helps to relate to the people in positive way. Due to healthy interpersonal relationship skill, people relate to each other positively. Family members are source of social support. If one needs to break relationship, than it can be broken constructively.
- 8) **Communication** – Communication means expressing one’s own view and interacting with others. The communication can be verbal or non-verbal. Person is able to express opinions & desires. By right communication, a person is able to seek advice, express fears & needs.
- 9) **Stress Management** – For stress Management, person has to find out what are the sources of stress. One has to understand how these stresses affect us. One has to learn how to relax, how to change environment and lifestyle.
- 10) **Emotion Management** – The first step in emotion management is recognizing one’s own emotions. One has to understand how emotions influence our behavior. One should learn how to react to emotions appropriately. Sadness, depression, anger etc. have negative effect on health. We have to learn to manage our emotions appropriately.

Life Skill Approach in B.Ed. Curriculum :

In order to integrate life skills in B.Ed. Curriculum, the nature of classroom transaction was changed. Learning was made more participatory and learner centered. All teachers discussed about various strategies they will be using in the classroom. The teachers finally decided to use following strategies for development of life skills.

Group Work

Activity	Observation	Units used
In this activity the students worked in groups. Groups are small. Ideas discussed are recorded and then presented in the class in front of large group. A question or a problem is given to the students. Each student gives her new idea for the solution. Teachers write all the solutions on Black Board and they are discussed in the end.	Due to group work, many new ideas were generated. Rather than using expository method of giving information, this approach was more enjoyable for learners and teachers. This activity forces students to think divergently. It developed communication skills among learners. It stimulated brains of learners. Students learn to wait for their turn to speak and they learn to appreciate other's ideas.	Effect of gender bias on learning. How to improve interaction in the classroom?

Case Study

Activity	Observation	Units used
The students were oriented about procedure of case study. They were asked to select a special child. Students had to prepare a tool for collecting data from the child, parents and teachers.	The classroom teaching and theories do not sensitize students towards disabilities. But when they study a child, they sympathize & empathize. Students understand social problems.	Study a special child and write a report.

Role Play

Activity	Observation	Units used
Students have to collect data on the unit. They have to write a script. So there is a need to study the unit in detail.	Role-Play helped students to vent off their emotions. This develops creative thinking. Students learn to work in collaboration and co-ordination.	Conservation of environment

While organizing various activities for life skill development, following things were considered.

1. Many alternative modes of transaction were used.
2. Flexibility by both teachers and students were made available.
3. Activities were planned in such a way that learners used both the sides of brain and also manual skill.
4. Tried to involve family, peer group & community in these activities.
5. All activities were learner friendly.
6. Integrated life skill approach with planners.
7. Tried to make life skill learning fun.

While we accept that life skills plays a major role in life, in India there is heavy emphasis on information in our current educational practice. Skill teaching needs special planning in methods, materials and training. Activities such as group work, Brain storming, case study and role play were used in B.Ed. Classroom. The results were satisfactory and learning became enjoyable. This enabled learners to build on their innate capacities and prepared them to face challenges.

Conclusion :

Children are important human resources in India. It is necessary to device ways of giving them life skills. With these life skills, they can handle adult responsibilities without failure or stress. They can be strength of their community instead of being its weakness. This will help our youth to grow strong and our country too.

References:

1. Life skills in non-formal Education: A Review. Indian National Commission for Co-operation with UNESCO, Ministry of HRD: New Delhi.
2. Weissberg R.P., Kumpfer K.L. & Seligman M.E. Prevention that works for children and youth- An introduction. *The American Psychologist*. Jun-Jul, 58 (6-7),2003,pp.425-32.
3. Bharath Srikala, Kumar K. V. Kishore, *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, Oct-Dec, 52(4), 2010,pp.344–349. doi: 10.4103/0019-5545.74310

