



## Attitude of Secondary School Teachers towards Life Skill Education in relation to some Personal Variables

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### Abstract:

*Life Skills are abilities that help in promotion of mental and social wellbeing, and competence in young children to face the realities of life. The ultimate aim of education is the overall development of a child's personality which cannot be achieved without exposing to various components of life skills. The purpose of conducting this study was to find out the attitude of secondary school teachers towards life skill education in relation to some personal variables (Age, Gender, Academic Streams and Locale). A sample of 120 secondary school teachers from Namchi, Sikkim were selected through Stratified Random Sampling technique. The findings of the study revealed that there is no significant difference in the attitude of male and female secondary school teachers towards life skill education, Significant difference was found in the attitude of secondary school teachers from rural and urban areas & age wise variation towards life skill education. Significant difference was found in the attitude of secondary school teacher's Academic streams towards life skill education.*

**Keywords:** Life Skill Education, Attitude, Personal variables.

### Introduction:

In the era of globalization human beings encounter numerous challenges especially during adolescence stages which mark the period of transition from childhood to adulthood. These challenges may be related to physiological, psychological, social and economic which may render the youth vulnerable to social and health risks, such as drug abuse, irresponsible sexual behaviour, increased in crime, violence, school dropout, teenage pregnancy and general indiscipline among adolescence. Hence, life skills are one of the methodologies which are adopted by many developing countries to cope up with the developed ones. Over the last decade there has been an increased interest among mental health professionals and educationist in the area of life skills. Varied views and definitions have been propounded by different professionals and world bodies. According to Wikipedia, life skills are problem solving behaviours used appropriately and responsibly in the management of personal affairs. They are a set of human skills acquired via teaching or direct experiences that are used to handle problems and questions commonly encountered in daily life. World

Health Organization (WHO) in 1993 defined life skills as “the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enables individuals to deal effectively with demands and challenges of everyday life. Positive behaviour refers to a positive outlook even in the most difficult situations or anticipating of a “way out” in the difficult situation. UNICEF (2005) defines life skills as, “a behaviour change or behaviour development approach designed to address a balance of three areas: Knowledge, attitude and skills”. Powell (1995)) define life skills as the life coping skills consonant with the development processes namely those skills necessary to perform tasks for given age and gender in the following area of human development psychological, physical, sexual, vocational, cognitive moral and emotional. Life Skills are abilities which enable an individual develop adaptive and positive behaviour deal effectively with challenges and demands of everyday life. The development of life skills as an individual is a lifelong process that starts in early childhood and continues throughout one’s life (UNESCO, 2003). Essential life skills include such things as being able to recognize and describe one’s feeling, giving and receiving feedback, recognizing assumptions, setting realistic and attainable goals, and employing problem-solving strategies. Thus, life skills are essentially those abilities that help promote mental wellbeing and competence in young people as they face the realities of life. Life skills have been defined as follows: “Personal and social skills required for young people to function confidently and competently with themselves, with other people and with the wider community”

The world bodies such as UNICEF, UNESCO and WHO have identified the ten core Life Skills with three main dimensions as discussed hereunder;

**Social Skills:** Social skills include the skills related to recognition of self, communication and interpersonal relationship.

**Self-Awareness:** Self Awareness includes recognition of ‘self, our character, Our strengths and Weaknesses, desires and dislikes. Developing self-awareness can help to recognize when we are stressed or feel under pressure. It is often a prerequisite to effective communication and interpersonal relations, as well as for developing empathy with others.

**Effective Communication:** Effective communication means that we are able to express ourselves, both verbally and non-verbally, in ways that are: appropriate to our cultures and situations. This means being able to express opinions and desires, and also needs and fears. And it may mean being able to ask for advice and help in a time of need.

**Interpersonal Relationship:** Interpersonal relationship skills help to relate in positive ways with the people we interact with. This may mean being able to make and keep friendly relationships, which can be of great importance to our mental and social well-being. It may mean keeping, good relations with family members, which are an important source of social support. It may also mean being able to end relationships constructively.

**Thinking Skills:** Thinking Skills are of four types. They include critical thinking creative thinking, decision making and problems thinking skills.

**Critical thinking:** Critical thinking is an ability to analysis information and experiences in an objective manner. Critical thinking can contribute to health by helping us to recognize and assess the factors that influence attitudes and behaviour, such as values, peer pressure and the media.

**Creative thinking:** Creative thinking is a novel way of seeing or doing things that is characteristic of four components fluency (generating new ideas), flexibility (shifting perspective easily), originality (conceiving of something new), and elaboration (building on other ideas).

**Decision making:** Decision making helps to deal constructively with decisions about our lives. This can have consequences for health. It can teach people how to actively make decisions about their actions in relation to healthy assessment of different options and, what effects these different decisions are likely to have.

**Problem solving:** Problem solving helps to deal constructively with problems in our lives. Significant problems that are left unresolved can cause mental stress and give rise to accompanying physical strain.

**Emotional Skills:** Emotional skills include empathy, coping with stress and managing emotions.

**Empathy:** To have a successful relationship with our loved ones and society at large, we need to understand and care about other peoples' needs, desires and feelings. Empathy is the ability to imagine what life is like for another person. Without empathy, our communication with others will amount to one-way traffic. Worst, we will be acting and behaving according to our self-interest and are bound to run into problems. No man is an island, no woman either! We grow up in relationships with many people - parents, brothers and sisters, cousins, uncles and aunts, classmates, friends and neighbours. When we understand ourselves as well as others, we are better prepared to communicate our needs and desires. We will be more equipped to say what we want people to know, present our thoughts and ideas and tackle delicate issues without offending other people. At the same time, we will be able to elicit support from others, and win their understanding. Empathy can help us to accept others, who may be very different from ourselves. This can improve social interactions, especially, in situations of ethnic or cultural diversity.

**Coping with Stress:** means that we take action to reduce the sources of stress, for example, by making changes to our physical environment or lifestyle. It also means learning how to relax, so that tensions created by unavoidable stress do not give rise to health problems.

**Coping with emotions:** includes skills for increasing the internal locus of control for managing emotions, anger etc.

Attitudes, values and social and psychological skills to an individual to enable him/her develop their full potentials. Thus, the Life Skills approach is an interactive, educational methodology that not only focuses on transmitting knowledge but helps the youth to explore their attitudes, feelings, opinions and values thereby developing psychosocial competencies to face life's challenges effectively. Attitudes have a topic (the object); are relatively long lasting (thus the readiness) to respond. This definition is quite general and the social psychologists who are interested in attitudes have tried to refine the concept. Attitudes comprise components corresponding to three domains namely, cognitive, affective and conative (Oscamp, 1977). In the present study, the term attitude was accepted as an enduring system of positive or negative evaluation, emotional feeling, and pro and con action tendencies with respect to life skills. This operational definition was accepted in the tool used for study. Therefore, the present study was focused on the following aspects in which teachers were expected to develop positive attitudes. The topic life skills being emerging area of the study was accepted very recently as a popular term in the context of transferable skills, emotional, intelligence, social skills or intelligence which are synonymous with life skills.

### **Life Skill Education in Sikkim.**

Sikkim is one of the smallest states of India. It was the 22<sup>nd</sup> state of India. The total geographical area of the state is 7096 Sq.km. It lies in the Eastern Himalaya, and shares international border with three countries viz, Tibet in the North, Bhutan in the East, and Nepal in the West.

The education system of Sikkim is undoubtedly at its best when it comes to providing over all development among the students. As a matter of fact, there are many schools in Sikkim. The number of schools in Sikkim increasing day by day. These schools are either government or Private Aided School or semi government school. Every school in Sikkim is either affiliated with CBSE or ICSE Board. Through the curriculum of the education system of Sikkim aims at bringing out the best among the students hence focusing on their overall development, however life skill as a separate subject has not been included in the curriculum of the schools. The none the less the schools focus on the life skills of the students through various activities or co-curricular activities that every school organised at frequent intervals. Similarly, the various Organization like SATHI (**Sikkim against Addiction towards Healthy India**) and **Reckitt Benckiser Health AMESA** also provide the life skills activities to the students in Sikkim.

### **Review of Related Literature**

**Keya, John & Wycliffe (2021)** studied on teachers' perceptions on the influence of life skills education on moral behaviour among students in secondary schools in Emuhaya sub county - Kenya. The objective of the study was to establish the extent to which teachers are trained to teach life skills education with an emphasis on moral behaviour. The findings indicated that Heads of Department and teachers slightly agree on the influence of teachers training in life skills education with the emphasis on moral behaviour.

**Mairaj (2021)** studied that there is an unusual increase in the cases of child abuse, early marriages, suicide, physical and mental violence causing a large number of school dropouts in elementary classes. This calls for the requirement to investigate or evaluate the perceptions of teachers about life skills education in public sector elementary schools. The study was conducted using qualitative interviews from twelve teachers of two public schools where life skill education is being taught. Thematic analysis was used for data analysis. The findings of the study revealed that teachers are aware and have a positive attitude towards life skills education.

**Wangdi (2022)** examined the attitude of Bhutanese teachers towards implementing Life Skills Education in different level of Schools. The researcher used quantitative research approach with descriptive survey design. Simple random sampling technique was employed to select a total sample of 100 teachers from the Eastern part of Bhutan. The data collected were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings revealed that the teachers with science background hold comparatively higher attitude towards imparting Life Skills Education compare to non-science teachers and significant difference was also found between the teachers holding post graduate and B.Ed. qualification towards infusing Life Skills Education.

### **Rationale of the study:**

In the context of present change in social order, the younger generations is swayed by the modern technological innovations and are in the attempt of experimenting with new ideas. This makes the pupils vulnerable to many bad habits. Ancient cultures which was the strength of human life, and respect to elders, respect for the social norms, proper reading habits for acquisition of knowledge by developing thinking, reasoning and creativity are missing. Even pupils are facing hard situation to make right decision. Hence worldwide there appeared value crisis. In order to infuse value laden thoughts, UNIESCO, UNICEF and WHO have thought of inculcating life skills from the early ages. Therefore, a need has arisen to assess the responses of teachers towards the instruction of life skills in school curriculum.

### **Objectives of the Study:**

- To study the significant difference in the attitude of school teachers towards Life Skill education in relation to age.

- To study the significant difference in the attitude of school teachers towards Life Skill education in relation to gender.
- To study the significant differences in the attitude of teachers toward Life Skills Education in relation to Academic Streams.
- To study if there exist significant differences in the attitude of teachers toward Life Skills Education in relation to Rural and Urban place.

### **Statement of Hypotheses:**

Ho1: There will be no significant difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers of Namchi, Sikkim towards Life Skills Education in relation to age.

Ho2: There will be no significant difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers of Namchi, Sikkim towards Life Skills Education in relation to gender.

Ho3: There will be no significant difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers of Namchi, Sikkim towards Life Skills Education in relation to academic streams.

Ho4: There will be no significant difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers of Namchi, Sikkim towards Life Skills Education in relation to locale.

### **Operational Definitions:**

**Attitude:** is the degree of positive or negative effect associated with some psychological object. (Thrustone 1948). An inclination to respond to Life Skills Education as a subject in a generally favourable or unfavourable manner.

**Life Skill Education:** is a structured programme of needs and outcomes- based participatory learning that aims to increase positive and adaptive behavior by assisting individuals to develop and practice psycho-social skills that minimize risk factors and maximize protective factors.”(UNICEF 2003).

**Secondary School Teachers:** Teachers who work in Government Secondary school in South District of Sikkim.

**Personal Variables:** it refers age, gender, academic streams and locale.

**Delimitation of the Study:** The study was delimited to study the attitude of secondary school teachers towards Life Skill Education of Namchi district in Sikkim.

### **Methodology of the study:**

**Design:** A normative survey method was adopted for the present study to obtain pertinent and precise information concerning current status of phenomenon. It was based on what exists at present in the form of conditions, practices, trends and attitudes. The attitude towards life skill education was studied in relation to their age, gender, academic qualifications and locale. Therefore, descriptive survey method was used in the present study.

**Sample:** The target population of this study included Secondary School teachers of Namchi, Sikkim, serving 33 Secondary Schools of Namchi, Sikkim. 120 teachers were selected using simple random sampling technique as a sample for study.

**Tools Used:** Self-developed tool was used for the present study to order to generate appropriate evidence and information. It consists of 25 statements based on 5-point Likert scale having reliability 0.71.

## Results and Discussion:

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data.

### Age wise difference of Attitude of Secondary School Teachers towards Life Skill Education:

One of the objectives of the study was that whether there is any age wise difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers towards life skill education; therefore, the null hypothesis was stated that there was no significant difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers towards life skill education in relation to Age variation.

#### Calculation of “t” for medium of instruction sub sample

Variation	Contrast	Number	Mean	SD	SE <sub>D</sub>	‘t’	df	Remarks
Age	Above 40 years	60	112.5	10.84	1.86	11.52	118	Significant
	Below 40 years	60	91.08	9.51				

In case of age difference on attitude of secondary school teachers towards life skill education, the calculated “t” 11.52 was found to be significant as its value greater than the table value. This was 1.98 at 0.05 level and 2.62 at 0.01 levels in 118 degrees of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis  $H_{01}$  there was significant difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers towards life skill education in relation to age variation was rejected. So, from the study it was revealed that difference in age among secondary school teachers affect their attitude towards life skill education. This finding was not in conformity with the study conducted by Rose Savati Keya, John Agak O, Odiwuor Wycliffe H. (2021) & Bushra Mairaj (2021).

### Gender wise difference of Attitude of Secondary School Teachers towards Life Skill Education:

One of the objectives of the study was that whether there is any gender difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers; therefore, the null hypothesis was stated that there was no significant difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers towards life skill education in relation to gender variation.

#### Calculation of “t” for Gender sub sample

Variation	Contrast	Number	Mean	SD	SE <sub>D</sub>	‘t’	df	Remarks
Gender	Female	48	103.73	16.33	2.9	0.83	118	Not significant
	Male	72	101.33	14.12				

In case of gender difference on attitude of secondary school teachers towards life skill education, the calculated “t” 0.83 was found to be insignificant as its value less than the table value. This was 1.98 at 0.05 level and 2.62 at 0.01 levels in 118 degrees of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis  $H_{02}$  there was no significant difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers towards life skill education in relation to gender variation was accepted. So, from the study it was revealed that gender difference among secondary school teachers does not affect their attitude towards life skill education. This finding was in conformity with the



studies conducted by Vinay Kumar Cherukuri, C. Grace Indira. (2020) & Khadija Sittar, Sumaira Munawar and Misbah Malik (2020).

### Academic streams wise difference of Attitude of Secondary School Teachers towards Life Skill Education:

One of the objectives of the study was that whether there is any Streams difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers; therefore, the null hypothesis was stated that there was no significant difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers towards life skill education in relation to variation in academic streams (science, commerce and arts).

#### Calculation of Analysis of Variance for Academic Streams sub sample:

Source of Variations	SS	df	MS <sub>v</sub>	'F'	Remarks
SS <sub>A</sub>	2958.5	2	1479.25	6.83	Significant
SS <sub>B</sub>	25345.5	117	216.63		
SS <sub>T</sub>	28304				

In case of Streams difference on attitude of secondary school teachers towards life skill education, the calculated "F" 6.83 was found to be significant as its value greater than the table value. This was 3.07 at 0.05 level and 4.78 at 0.01 levels in 2 and 117 degrees of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis  $H_{03}$  there was significant difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers towards life skill education in relation to Streams variation was rejected. So, from the study it was revealed that difference in academic streams among secondary school teachers affect their attitude towards life skill education. This finding was in conformity with the study conducted by Rose Savati Keya, John Agak O, Odiwuor Wycliffe H. (2021) & Bushra Mairaj (2021).

### Locale wise difference of Attitude of Secondary School Teachers towards Life Skill Education:

One of the objectives of the study was that whether there is any locale difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers; therefore, the null hypothesis was stated that there was no significant difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers towards life skill education in relation to locale variation.

#### Calculation of "t" for Locale sub sample

Variation	Contrast	Number	Mean	SD	SE <sub>D</sub>	't'	df	Remarks
Locale	Rural	60	108.25	15	2.51	4.75	118	Significant
	Urban	60	96.33	12.37				

In case of locale difference on attitude of secondary school teachers towards life skill education, the calculated "t" 4.75 was found to be significant as its value greater than the table value. This was 1.98 at 0.05 level and 2.62 at 0.01 levels in 118 degrees of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis  $H_{04}$  there was significant difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers towards life skill education in relation to locale variation was rejected. So from the study it was revealed that difference in locale among secondary school teachers affect their attitude towards life skill education. This finding was in conformity with the studies

conducted by Vinay Kumar Cherukuri, C. Grace Indira. (2020) & Khadija Sittar, Sumaira Munawar and Misbah Malik (2020).

### **Findings of the study:**

The major findings of the study were presented briefly in the following manner:

- The sample mean, median, mode is found to 102.29, 100.5 and 96.92 respectively.
- The skewness was found 0.36 and kurtosis was 0.31 as against the normal value of 0 and 0.263 respectively. Thus, the investigator concluded that the scores obtained by attitude towards life skilled education scale deviates slightly from normality. The whole distribution was positively skewed and tending to leptokurtic.
- Age difference on the attitude towards life skill education of secondary school teachers play significant role in their attitude towards life skill education.
- Gender difference on the attitude towards life skilled education of secondary school teachers does not play any significant role in their attitude towards life skill education.
- Locale difference on the attitude towards life skill education of secondary school teachers plays significant role in their attitude towards life skill education.
- Academic stream difference on the attitude towards life skill education of secondary school teachers plays significant role in their attitude towards life skill education.

### **Conclusion:**

There is a significant relationship between Attitude and life skills education as they are complementary to each other in various ways. It helps in promoting effective communication, thinking skills, collaborative skills, teamwork, interpersonal relationship, self-awareness and make the adolescents more motivated and engaged in constructive tasks and thus minimizes the risky behaviours. It fills the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-life applications of life skills and prepares the adolescents for educational, professional and personal lives and make them competent enough to face the challenges of the present world. At the same time life skills supports lifelong learning.

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