Impact of Various Life Skills Aspects on Academic Attainment of Students: A Reviewed Study

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Abstract

Life skills encompass a broad range of abilities that are essential for individuals to navigate the challenges of everyday life successfully. These skills extend beyond traditional academic knowledge and play a crucial role in personal development, social interactions, and overall well-being. Recognizing the importance of life skills in our education, schools around the world are increasingly integrate them into their curriculum. Life skills are integral to the holistic development of students, playing a vital role in their academic success. The benefits of life skills extend beyond the classroom, preparing students for the challenges they will face throughout their lives. Schools and educational institutions must continue to recognize the importance of integrating life skills into their curricula to ensure that students are well-equipped not only with academic knowledge but also with the essential skills needed to thrive in various aspects of life. By fostering the expansion of life skills, educators contribute significantly to the overall well-being and success of their students. The present research paper reviewed so many research papers, articles and found that life skills helps in improving the student's academic performance and suggest various ways to achieve our goal.

Keywords: Life Skills, Academic Attainment, Students.

Introduction

The crucial role of education in developing life skills, particularly in the contemporary era where traditional methods for imparting these skills are considered insufficient. According to the World Health Organization, life skills encompass an individual's potential to maintain mental well-being and exhibit adaptive and positive behaviour in interactions with others and the environment. WHO identifies various life skills, including decision-making, problem-solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, effective communication, interpersonal relationship skills, self-awareness, empathy, coping with emotions, and handling stress. These life skills are viewed as essential capabilities that every individual should strive to acquire, and they are developed throughout one's life. Interaction with peers, relatives, and friends plays a crucial role in honing these skills, with the individual being receptive to feedback and incorporating it into their thoughts, feelings, and actions. Life skills, often categorized as soft skills, are psychological skills that emphasize accepting one's own feelings and behaviors while fostering harmonious living with others. Fundamentally, life skills contribute to making an individual fully alive and fully human,

complementing other types of skills such as hard skills (technical skills) and natural skills (learning to walk). (Lawrence, 2015).

Achievement means proficiency attained by an individual, generally measured with standardized test or tool. Achievement in the field of educational includes various assessment process it not only include their core subject achievement but it includes the holistic development of the individual. Achievement means accomplishment of various tasks of day to day life successfully. In fact, education has always been concerned with the academic achievement. In rapidly changing world and society so many people are becoming education minded. Parents have higher aims for their children, they helped their children to achieve that aims. At each step of life their academic records of an individual shows the performance level of individual at the time of admission, for scholarship, for entrance of a job and for further studies, good academic results are signals of our capabilities . In school it shows teachers and students, how much objectives we have fulfilled and what strategies we have to adopt for future or the scores obtained in annual examination conducted by the institutions or the board at the end of the years as the end product of the student's hard work for the whole year (Hurlock, 1976).

Academic achievement refers as all the behavioural changes associated with the domains such as cognitive, affective and psychomotor. Academic achievement is also defined as the excellence achieved by the individual in all academic disciplines, as well as in the co- curricular activities. It includes brilliance in punctuality, sporting behaviour, communication skills, culture, confidence, art and the like, and it also indicates the learning outcomes of the students (Sharma, 2018). It helps the students, teachers, institutions to know about the level of their achievement or attainment of their goals. Academic achievement helps the individual to know about their personal progress by measuring their capacities and total potentialities. the main objectives in education is the whole development of students by providing them proper conditions, so that they can reach the highest levels of academic achievement. In the field of education, academic achievement plays a very important role and is considered important for the progress of individuals. It is also an indicator of success and failure of an individual achievement, effort of teachers, aims of education and significance of the curriculum. In school life, it is one of the most desirable outcomes (Raino, 2017).
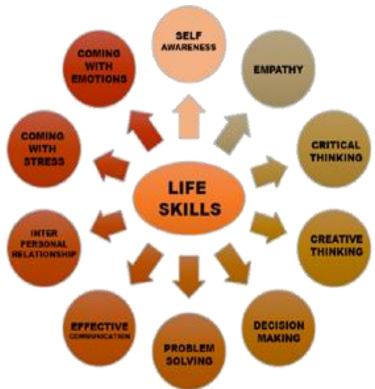
According to Ryan and Deci (2000) academic achievement refers to school performance outcomes as grades on report cards. So the word achievement means the capabilities and abilities of the learner in their academic subjects in relation to their knowledge achieved. Different researchers have attempted to explain the complexities with academic achievement. Different psychologists have put forward different reasons about the disparities exist in achievement. There are various external factors that need attention such as school location, type of school, teaching methods, instructional materials, teacher's experience, and so on. Many people invest a lot of money for taking admission in good schools either for themselves or for their children's and those who can afford can send their children abroad for study, they believe that it will enhance their children's academic achievement and will help them in securing good jobs in future. Different psychologists have given different opinion about student's academic achievement, why some students are excelling and why others are underachievers.

Many psychologists have tried consistently to recognize factors affecting the individual academic achievement in a direct or indirect way. Factors such as intelligence, adjustment, self-concept, gender, study habit, maturation, etc are the factors that are widely liable for academic performance of the students studying in secondary schools. Another factor that has been researched in past include: peer group influence, child rearing patterns, learning environment, socio-economic background, socio-

emotional and 21ˢᵗ century skills. Life skills are also part of 21ˢᵗ century slkill considered as one of the important factor responsible for intensity of academic achievement of the students (Ikpi, Enya & Johnny, 2014).

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NEP 2020 about Life Skills

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 focuses on the holistic education, recognizing the significance of life skills alongside academic knowledge. NEP 2020 advocates for the inclusion of life skills education in the school curriculum, encompassing critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, and emotional intelligence. The policy encourages experiential learning, allowing students to learn through hands-on activities and real-life experiences. It promotes a flexible curriculum, vocational education, and early childhood care and education (ECCE) to nurture individual talents and skills. NEP 2020 envisions a shift in the assessment system towards competency-based assessments, emphasizing the application of skills, including life skills. While the implementation is gradual and may vary across states, the policy sets a foundation for fostering holistic development and practical skills in students.

Relationship of various life skills and academic achievent on the basis of literature available.

- **Decision Making Skills and Academic Achievement**

The relationship between decision-making and problem-solving, with decision-making seen as the final step in the problem-solving process. While some consider decision-making a part of thinking strategies, distinct processes and steps set it apart from problem-solving. The importance of problem-solving in daily life is emphasized, and students learn to solve problems to make informed decisions. Mathematics is highlighted as a discipline that enhances thinking and problem-solving skills due to its logical and interrelated structure. It offers rich problem situations that encourage students to seek multiple solutions

and objectively critique problem scenarios, fostering flexibility in thinking patterns and performance strategies. The decision-making process is presented as having commonalities, including the existence of a problem, organized procedures, logical approaches, mental processes, and the generation of alternatives for solving the problem. Personal values and experiences play a role in decision-making, and the process involves evaluating alternatives based on specific criteria. Teachers can support students in making logical decisions by providing alternatives and helping them understand the consequences. As training progresses, the complexity and number of alternatives can increase to enhance students' self-confidence and their ability to make informed decisions (Majeed,B.H.;2021).

- **Creative thinking and Academic Achievement**

Creative thinking in education, emphasizing its diverse manifestations from entirely new ideas to innovative problem-solving approaches. Creativity is explained as the capacity among individual to produce new and innovative ideas or modifying or remix the older ones, and various writers in the field contribute to understanding this multifaceted concept. Creativity may be linked to a state of consciousness where individuals are receptive to experiences and ideas, often in a passive state. Van Hook's definition characterizes creativity as an interpersonal and intrapersonal process leading to the development of original, high-quality, and genuinely significant products. This process involves openness to ideas and a willingness to explore the unknown. The relevance of creativity in education has grown globally since the late 1990s, transitioning from being solely considered an artistic quality to a sought-after skill in various fields. Creative thinking is solely an inherent trait, suggesting that it can be developed by doing activities and teaching strategies. Creative thinking, as a way of generating applicable ideas, encompasses problem-solving skills tied to linguistic, mathematical, and interpersonal intelligence. The essential components of creative thinking include fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. Educators believe that, in the information age, thinking skills are crucial for individuals to navigate a rapidly changing world, emphasizing the importance of creativity in stimulating curiosity and promoting divergence (Anwar, M.N., Aness, M., Khizar, A., Naseer, M. and Muhammad, G.; 2012). The importance of creative thinking for students' success in various aspects, including academic achievement and future employability in a competitive society. However, it notes the existence of ambiguous results regarding the association between creativity and academic achievement. There are two perspectives on creativity: one that views it as a mental capacity, focusing on cognitive procedures, and another that sees it as a skill rooted in personality, considering various factors such as cognitive capacities, cognitive methods, and motivation. The multidimensional nature of creativity is emphasized, incorporating personality characteristics, cognitive capacities, cognitive methods, and motivation. There is a need for a more accurate focus on cognitive and trait creativity and their impacts on academic achievement (Surapuramath, A. K.; 2014).

- **Critical Thinking and Academic Achievement**

Academic achievement is defined as the manifestation of a student's educational status, measured by various subject tests. Critical thinking is identified as a key factor influencing academic achievement, with its application essential for success in today's rapidly advancing world. Critical thinking should be a goal and an inseparable part of education at all levels. The influence of critical thinking on cognitive information processing and better utilization of concepts is highlighted, linking it to improved academic achievement. The educational system in Iran, suggesting a teacher-centered approach that may hinder

the development of a critical atmosphere in the classroom. The overarching goal of education is described as guiding the child from darkness to light, with individual development occurring physically and psychologically through education. The importance of critical thinking in teaching and learning is stressed, as it maximizes students' academic achievements by enhancing higher-order thinking abilities and learning skills. Critical thinking can be developed among students through activities such as discussions, posing questions, problem-solving, and decision-making. As the ability to think critically is associated with academic achievement (Selvarani, S. C., and Saroja, M.M.; 2022).

- **Self-Awareness and Academic Achievement**

Self-awareness skills for students and the role parents play in supporting their development. Self-awareness involves recognizing and understanding one's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, as well as being aware of strengths and weaknesses and how actions impact oneself and others. Self-awareness is crucial for a child's personality, mindset, and overall well-being, enabling them to make informed choices in various aspects of their lives. One significant area where self-awareness plays a role is academic performance. Self-aware children can identify their strengths and weaknesses, allowing them to focus their efforts on areas that need improvement. This skill also helps them make informed decisions about their academic path and cope with the stress of schoolwork. By developing self-awareness, children become more confident, resilient learners, ultimately enhancing their potential for success in both academic and personal pursuits. Parents should actively assist their children in acquiring and honing these crucial self-awareness skills. Retrieved From: https://articles.unishanoi.org/what-are-self-awareness-skills-for-students/ (UNIS HANOI)

- **Interpersonal skill and Academic Achievement**

Interpersonal skills encompass cooperative learning behaviours and effective communication in educational settings. Researchers suggest that these skills influence student learning from the beginning of formal education. Some studies propose that students with competent interpersonal skills tend to achieve higher grades compared to those with less competence in cooperative learning behaviours. A specific study by Lim and Kim explores the causal relationship between students' social behaviours and their reading performance through a longitudinal study. They find a significant difference in interpersonal skills between female and male students, with females generally exhibiting higher levels. The study establishes that interpersonal skills play a crucial role in students' reading performance, although the magnitude of the relationships varies. Additionally, positive social skills are correlated with reading abilities and academic success, according to Wentzel's findings. Contrastingly, Tsai and Liu's examination reveals an adverse impact of interpersonal skills on academic achievement. In their study, interpersonal skills were found to be negatively related to students' academic success. This suggests that the influence of interpersonal skills on academic achievement may vary across different contexts and dimensions, highlighting the complexity of the relationship between social behaviors and academic outcomes (Abid, N., Samuel, A., Ali, R., Shoaib, A., and Warraich, W. Y.;2022).

- **Effective Communication and Academic Achievement**

Effective communication plays a crucial role in academic achievement, both for teachers and students. The exchange of information between teachers, students, and other stakeholders contributes significantly

to the learning process. Here are some key points regarding the relationship between effective communication and academic performance:

➢ **Clear Transmission of Information:**

Effective communication ensures that information is transmitted clearly from the teacher to the students. This involves the use of language that is easily understandable and relevant to the students' level of Comprehension.

➢ **Teacher-Student Interaction:**

Good communication skills are essential for teachers to interact with students. Teachers need to make a positive and engaging classroom conditions where students undergo enjoyable asking questions and seeking clarification.

➢ **Motivation and Engagement:**

Positive communication motivates students and fosters engagement. Teachers who use encouraging and motivating language can inspire students to participate actively in class, leading to improved academic performance.

➢ **Feedback and Guidance:**

Effective communication includes providing constructive feedback to students. Teachers should offer guidance on areas of improvement, praise accomplishments, and communicate expectations clearly. This helps students understand how to enhance their performance.

➢ **Avoidance of Negative Language:**

Teachers must be mindful of the words they use. Negative language can discourage students and negatively impact their self-esteem, leading to a decrease in academic performance. Positive and encouraging words create a conducive learning environment.

➢ **Classroom Management:**

Communication skills are crucial for maintaining effective classroom management. Teachers need to convey instructions clearly, manage discussions, and address any disruptions promptly. A well-managed classroom enhances the learning experience.

➢ **Understanding Students Needs:**

Effective communication allows teachers to understand the individual needs of students. This understanding enables personalized approaches to teaching, helping students overcome challenges and excel academically.

➢ **Parent-Teacher Communication:**

Communication between teachers and parents is vital. Keeping parents informed about students' progress, challenges, and achievements fosters a collaborative approach to education, which can positively impact academic outcomes.

➢ **Building a Positive Learning Environment:**

Good communication contributes to the creation of a positive learning environment. Students are more likely to thrive academically in an environment where they feel valued, supported, and understood.

So, effective communication is a cornerstone of academic success. It involves not only the transmission of information but also the creation of a positive and motivating atmosphere that encourages student engagement, understanding, and achievement. Teachers with strong communication skills contribute significantly to the academic development of their students.

Table1 : Meta- Analysis of the literature reviewed for the paper

Author	Theme	Findings
Mati, A., Gatumu, J.C., and Chandi, J. R.; (2016) and Majeed, B. H.; (2021).	To study the impact of students involvement in decision making have impact on their performance,	Findings revealed that involvement of students in decision making havev definitely increase their academic performance.
Anwar, M.N., Aness, M., Khizar, A., Naseer, M. and Muhammad, G.; (2012).	To see the relationship between creative thinking and academic achievement.	Positive correlation was found between the creative thinking and academic achievement.
Surapuramath, A. K.; (2014).	To see the relationship between creativity and academic achievement	A slightly positive correlation was found between creativity and academic achievement,this may be due to (Yang, J., and Zhao, X. ; 2021) found that there is heterogeneity among individuals.
Selvarani, S. C., and Saroja, M.M.; (2022) and (Pozhhan, P., Goodarzi, K., and Roozbehani, M.; 2019).	To see the relationship between critical thinking and academic perfdormance	A high positive correlation was seen between critical thinking and academic performance of students.
Dost, E.N., Hashemifardnya, A. and Jalali, V. (2017)	Experimental study was conducted to see the self awareness instruction on students academic performance.	The findings showed that self awareness instuctions have impact on students performance. It helps to improve their performance.
Abid, N., Samuel, A., Ali, R., Shoaib, A., and Warraich, W. Y.;2022).		
Alva, C. M., Mostacero, M.P., Aliva, N. C., Gastanaduy, C.C. 2021	To see students performance is influenced by interpersonal skill.	Results showd that academic performance is influenced by theinterpersonal skills ability of teachers, how they speak listen, their gestures etc.

Recommendations

Recommendations for teachers

1. Incorporate Life Skills into Lesson Plans:
Atively integrate life skills into the curriculum to ensure students receive direct instruction on essential skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and decision-making.

2. **Real world Applications:**

Provide examples and activities that demonstrate the practical application of life skills in various contexts, making the learning experience more relevant and engaging for students.

3. **Interactive Teaching Methods**

Utilize interactive and experiential teaching methods, such as role-playing, group projects, and simulations, to encourage active participation and hands-on application of life skills.

4. **Open Communication:**

Foster an open and supportive classroom environment where students feel comfortable discussing their challenges, goals, and aspirations, promoting effective communication and interpersonal skills.

5. **Guest Speakers and Industry Experts:**

Invite guest speakers and professionals from various fields to share their experiences and insights, providing students with real-world perspectives and emphasizing the importance of certain life skills in different careers.

6. **Individualized Support:**

Recognize and address the unique needs of each student by offering individualized support and guidance, helping them develop a personalized set of life skills tailored to their strengths and interests.

7. **Promote a Growth Mindset:**

Encourage a growth mindset by praising effort, resilience, and perseverance. Help students understand that acquiring life skills is a continuous process that involves learning from both successes and failures.

Recommendations for Students:

1. **Set Personal Goals:**

Encourage students to put sensible little and everlasting aims that align with their aspirations, fostering motivation and a sense of purpose.

2. **Self-reflection:**

Incorporate regular self-reflection exercises to help students identify their strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. This process promotes self-awareness, a foundational life skill.

3. **Time Management and Organization:**

Educate students effective time management and organizational skills, serving them stable academic liability with extracurricular pursuit and personal commitments.

4. **Initiate peer Collaboration:**

Facilitate peer collaboration and group projects, allowing students to develop teamwork, communication, and leadership skills while learning from one another.

5. **Seek Mentorship Opportunities:**

Encourage students to seek mentorship from teachers, professionals, or community members, providing them with guidance and insights that contribute to their personal and professional development.

6. **Problem-Solving Strategies:**

Equip students with various problem-solving strategies and encourage them to approach challenges with a positive mindset, resilience, and creativity.

7. **Utilize Resources:**

   Teach students how to access and utilize available resources, both within and outside the school, to support their learning and personal development.

8. **Reflect on Experiences:**

   Promote reflection on experiences, both academic and non-academic, to extract valuable lessons and insights that contribute to personal growth and the development of life skills.

By implementing these recommendations collaboratively, teachers and students can work together to create an enriching educational environment that not only enhances academic achievement but also equips students with the life skills essential for success in various facets of life.

Conclusion

The critical role of education in shaping life skills, especially in the current era where traditional methods are deemed insufficient. Life skills, as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO), encompass various abilities such as decision-making, problem-solving, creative and critical thinking, effective communication, interpersonal relationships, self-awareness, empathy, and stress management. These skills are considered fundamental for human development and are cultivated throughout one's life through interactions with peers and the incorporation of feedback. The NEP 2020 in India aligns with this perspective, emphasizing holistic education with a focus on life skills. The relationship between life skills and academic achievement is discussed, including decision-making, creative thinking, critical thinking, and self-awareness, highlighting their impact on students' success. Additionally, factors influencing academic achievement, such as intelligence, adjustment, self-concept, socio-economic background, and 21st-century skills, are examined. The text emphasizes the multidimensional nature of creativity and the need for a nuanced understanding of cognitive and trait creativity in relation to academic achievement. The importance of critical thinking in today's rapidly advancing world is underscored, linking it to improved academic outcomes. Finally, the text explores the complexities of the relationship between interpersonal skills and academic achievement, noting variations across different contexts and dimensions. Overall, the narrative portrays the dynamic interplay between education, life skills, and academic achievement in fostering well-rounded individuals.

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