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EDUCATION



**INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION**



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# COVID Experiences in Bhutan with Special Reference to the Children with Disabilities across the Country

Ms. Sonam Choden\*

## Abstract

Education has been accepted as a basic human right (Jomtein Education for All Conference, 1990; Dakar World Education Forum, 2000). Education is the critical element for development for individuals and nations. Education during emergencies is being considered very crucial globally to engage all children meaningfully and productively. This paper explores the experiences that the children in the special education programme have had during the pandemic across the schools with special education programme in Bhutan. To validate the above statement, a set of questionnaires is developed to survey online the various stakeholders comprising of 100 purposive samples selected, where the data have been collected through a qualitative methodology. The data gathered, were then analyzed using graphical representations, considering in the light of the existing literature in the area. Conclusions suggest that effective teacher training in education in emergencies for such an unpredictable future has been identified; as well as provision of life skills education for teachers and parents with special reference to the children with disabilities has been another area of focus that can accelerate the momentum of the most needed education during the challenging time, which can be in the best interest of each child with disabilities in the country.

*Keywords: Education in emergencies, life skills education, pandemic, special education programme, qualitative methodology*

## Introduction

The present global pandemic in relation to the children with disabilities both at home and in schools with special education programme, have been one of the issues to be taken into considerations besides other major concerns in the country. It means, life skills education has become critical for

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parents and educators in order to educate these children at school and to handle them skilfully at home. In particular, the education in emergencies curriculum demands a high degree of both the academic and other forms of skills and attitude in learning. Like any other subjects, basic life skills education can be instrumental in our life. Although inclusive education is a relatively new concept in Bhutan (RinchenDorji, 2015), the principal philosophy of inclusive education is inherent and permeates across most policy documents in Bhutan. Thus, like any other children, importance has been given to these children by the Education Ministry, particularly the Royal Education Council in order to give equal opportunity to all. The inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education classroom is a current legal requirement in the United States according to the nation's special education law identified as Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA ("Sec. 300.8 Child with a Disability." n.d.)

### **Rationale**

The purpose of the study was to identify the emergent needs and lapses in the field of practices and measures pertaining to Education in Emergencies (EIE) and basic life skills education in schools with the special education programme in Bhutan during the times of any crises; and to address both at the family level as a part of life and at the school level as a part of the school curriculum, whereby the parents and siblings get the opportunity to practise basic life skills with their child with disabilities, and also the special teacher who can use these life skills on children with disabilities in relation to improved mental health and well-being besides the effective academic (EIE) learning on virtual platforms.

### **Objective / Research Question**

The objective of the study is to find out the impact of COVID with reference to children with disabilities across the country in the context of academic learning and other related issues. It also centres on the dire need of education in emergency and life skills education in the challenging times.

### **Statement of the Problem**

According to one study, in the United States, teachers agreed, "most education teachers lack an appropriate knowledge base to educate atypically developing students effectively" (Hyunjeong et al., 2014, p. 17). Specifically, teaching children with disabilities virtually faced by the teachers during the present global pandemic has been a challenging issue; besides families of such children having a lot of issues to deal with during the lockdown

periods. Despite this lack of education, students with special needs are still placed in the general education classrooms (Hyunjeong et al., 2014, p. 16). Studies show that teachers do want students with special needs in their classroom; however, they do not feel prepared to fully address the educational needs of these students. Recent studies show that these children can be vulnerable to anxiety, violence and depression. Thus, the idea of incorporating life skills education designed for special children and their parents seem relevant.

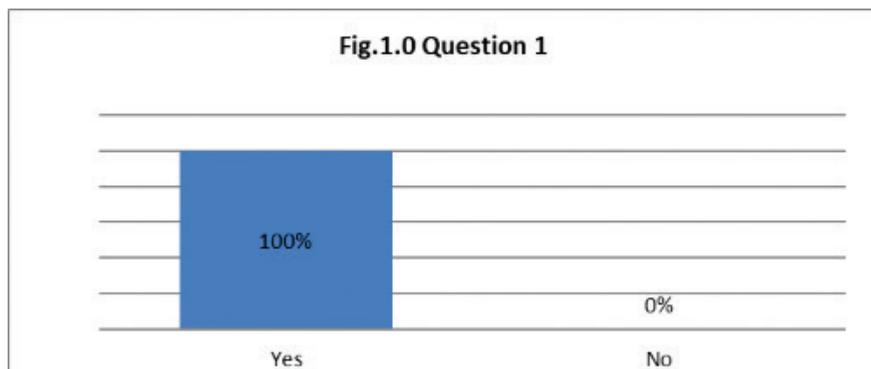
### Research Methodology

The study was undertaken using qualitative method in Bhutan, at Changkha Middle Secondary School and across the schools with special programme in the whole country. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants which included special programme teachers, special education coordinators, and teacher-parents from various parts of Bhutan. The total number of participants was 100.

An open-ended questionnaire was designed by the researcher and the responses to the questions obtained were analysed qualitatively. The qualitative responses were also converted into quantitative data in the form of percentages.

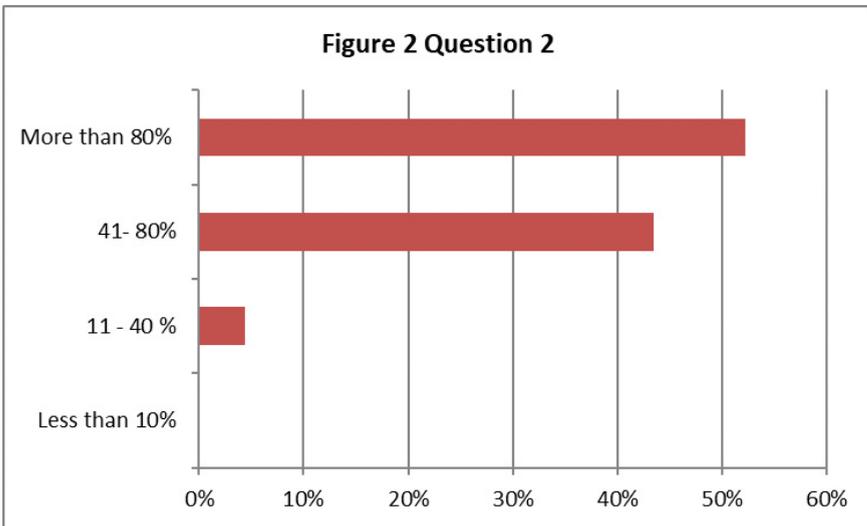
### Analysis and Interpretation

The research study followed the analysis of the questionnaire that has been linked and collected. According to Alur (2002), “Inclusion is about minimizing exclusion and fostering participation for all students in the culture within a wider framework of support for all children in ordinary schools” (p. 19). However, there are stark evidences of social exclusion in our community in the context of providing appropriate services related to education and others related to the children with disabilities although there are special education programme in schools across the country, particularly in



providing EIE and life skills during the phases of lockdown in the current pandemic situation.

As per the data collected, 100% of the respondents said that the COVID situation affected the children with disabilities in their academic learning due to the fact that relevant stakeholders were not prepared to face the situation. According to study carried out by Choden, S (2019), of the 35 parents, 56% mentioned that the special programme is still growing due to the fact that a lack of trained teachers in special education against the ever-increasing numbers of special needs children annually is seen as a driving factor that deprives off their children of the opportunity to learn in generally. 7% of the parents were not happy to mention about the discrimination and name-calling within the school. One parent remarked that there should be a way forward to enhance and incorporate maximum activities in education, cultural programmes, social activities, life skills and other related skills.



52.17% of the respondents said that their children with disabilities were affected more than 80% by the pandemic situation. 43.48% of the respondents stated that their academic learning was affected 41to 80% Therefore, the Royal Education Council in collaboration with relevant stakeholders is in the process of drafting the curriculum desired for these children in particular (Royal Education Council,2020).

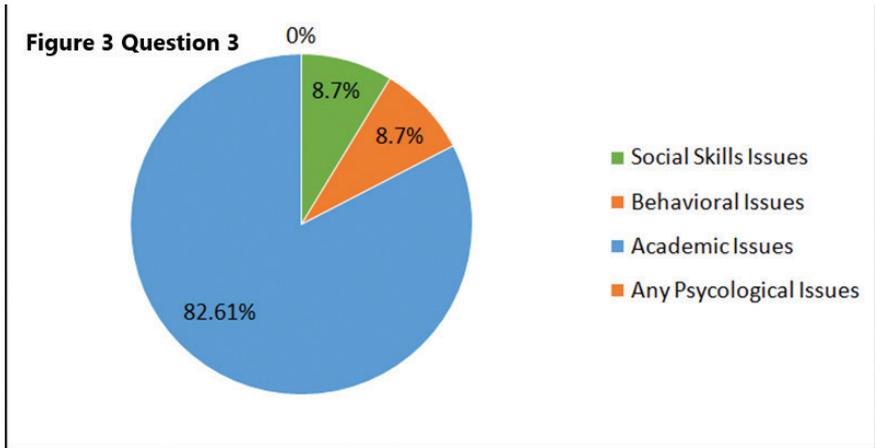
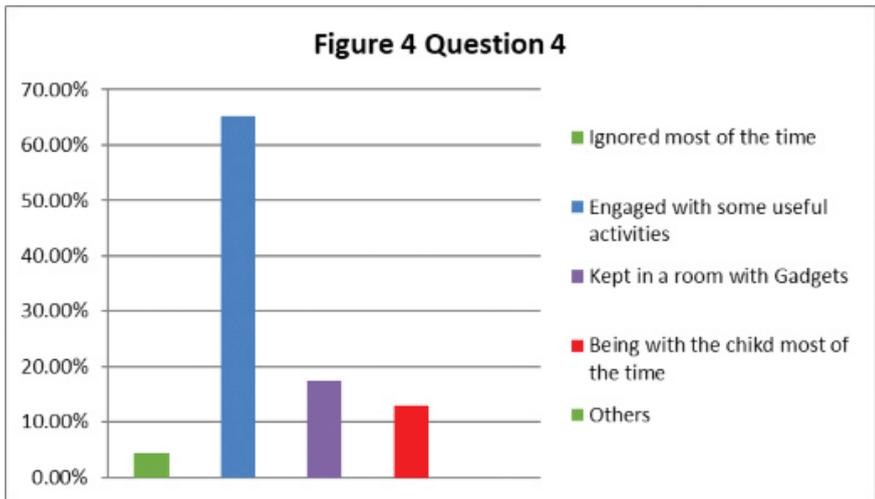
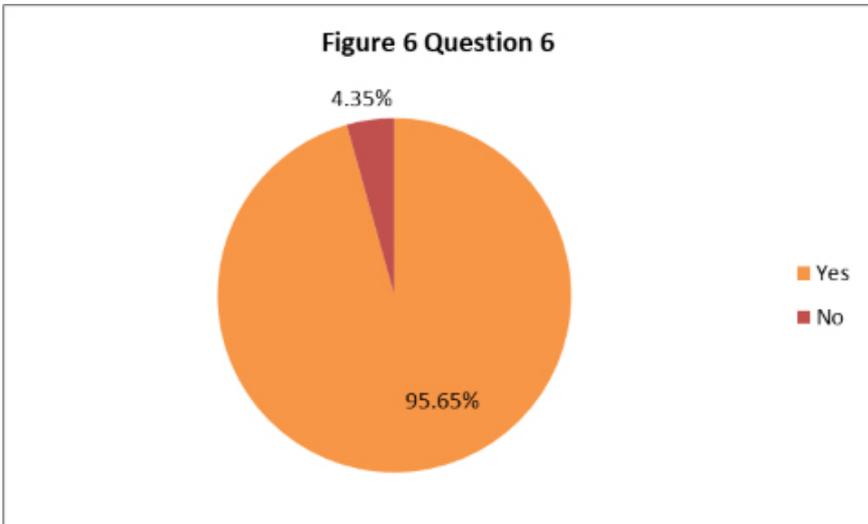
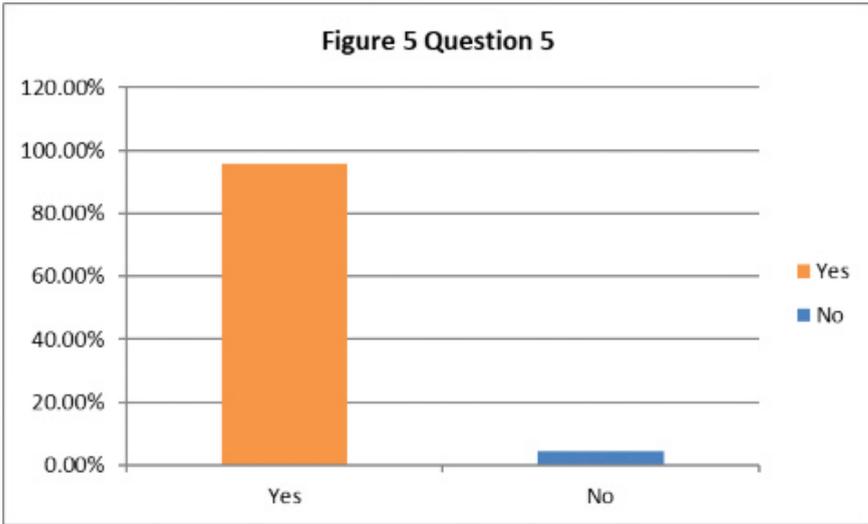


Fig 3 shows that the most challenging issue that the family, guardians, siblings or any care giver living with their child with disabilities experienced during the lockdown phases was pertaining to academic learning of about 82.61% respondents with 8.7% in social and behavioural issues, respectively.



However, it is enlightening to know that most respondents, 65.22% said that they overcame the challenging issue with engagement of these children with some useful activities. Fig 4 shows that about 17.39% used the strategy of keeping the child with phones, television and laptops while 13.04% of the respondents said that they were with the children most of the time and 4.35% seemed to be ignoring most of the time.



From fig 5, it is clear that almost about 95.65% of the respondents suggest our teachers in the special education programme go under some form of training in education in emergency (EIE) to better engage our children with disabilities in any unpredictable future. Similarly, fig 6 depicts that 95.65% of the respondents proposed for the teachers to take up any basic life skills education training to be better parents and educators for these children in particular.

The Royal Government of Bhutan made a special mention of the need to strengthen efforts to address the educational needs of children with disabilities in Bhutan in the 9th (2003–2008) and 10th Five-Year Plans (FYP) (2008–2013). The 11th FYP (2013–2018) emphasizes the “strengthening

of special education services” (GNH Commission 2013, p. 197). For instance, The National Policy on Special Education of Needs (NPSEN) states that every special educational need for children with severe disabilities shall be provided a teacher assistant, a care-giver, a counsellor/psychologist, a sports instructor, and an occupational therapist (Bhutan MoE 2012).

### **Findings**

The COVID situation has impacted in their academic learning more than 80 % which has been considered one of the challenging issues faced by the different stakeholders (Parents, Teachers and caregiver). So, in order to overcome this major challenge, the teachers, parents and the relevant stakeholders are suggested to have hands-on practice in education in emergencies besides the life skill education training to equip themselves at all times during and after the crises.

### **Conclusion**

The global pandemic has taken a toll on the lives of all the people particularly the children with disabilities. This crisis has added more to their disabilities, owing to lack of trained human resource in delivering the education in emergencies at the school level and similarly, very limited basic life skills education in teachers dealing with children in the special education programme including the families who have children with disabilities. In the difficult times/phases of lockdown, it has been found that things that needed our utmost attention, which otherwise would have been in place a long time back, had there been so much of importance given to these children with disabilities. There is a dire need of expertise on professional ground in teaching these children both virtually and face-to-face teaching to nurture the special education programme in Bhutan. Teachers are the key change agents in any inclusive education development. Ainscow (2005) and Forlin and Lian (2008) highlight the role of teachers as critical in the success of inclusive education. Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, mandates all professionals working in the disabilities area to be trained to work at all levels of education to ensure that persons with disabilities are effectively engaged to benefit from inclusion (Schulze 2010 ).

It is concluded from the study that there is a positive sign from the respondents especially from the various stakeholders like the teachers, parents, care givers and service providers towards having appropriate strategies and tools for themselves to be better service providers. So, when there is a better understanding of life among the population in the school with life

skills education in practice, any prejudices or stigma against such people with disability can naturally be eliminated. While inclusive education was – and still is – a primarily rights-based policy approach, some research has argued that it is both cost-effective (Metts, 2004) and increases overall educational quality (Ainscow, Booth & Dyson, 2006).

Thus, such a study can serve as a spring board to disseminate strategies or tools to implement during any crises in the future so that the concerned teachers and parents are well equipped besides informing the organization or agencies at the same time to sail together with a set of emergent packaged programmes to execute in a timely and appropriate manner.

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## A Systematic Review on the Effectiveness of Life Skills Programmes

Ms. Ashwini K.A.\* Dr. Sudhesh N.T.\*\*

### Abstract

A systematic review was conducted on the effectiveness of life skills programs (LSP) to gain a comprehensive understanding on the national and international life skills program, and to identify research gaps to develop future studies. The relevant studies published during 2000 to 2020 were identified from electronic databases using terms of life skills intervention/program/training/development/ with other psychological, academics, health promotion, behavioral changes and family and parental variables. Fifty six out of the 77 studies met the inclusion criteria. The Weight of Evidence (WoE) review process framework was used to evaluate a priori studies. The findings revealed that the majority of the life skills programs lack systematic monitoring post training at school and home to achieve its effectiveness for long term benefits. This study paves way to involve parents and teachers to impart life-skills in everyday lives to enhance psychological well-being of adolescents. The parental involvement in the development of life skills in young people is indispensable.

*Keywords:* Adolescents, life skills program, systematic review, weight of evidence

### Introduction

Adolescence is a transition period that bridges childhood and adulthood, during which major physical, cognitive, and psychological changes occur (Kumar & Chhabra, 2014; Bardhan & Nair, 2016). This period hosts the factors that promote high risk behaviour such as alcoholism, drug abuse and casual relationships are boredom, rebellion, disorientation, peer pressure and curiosity and the psychological push factors such as the inability to tackle emotional pain (Santrock, 2014), conflicts (Galambos and Almei-

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da 1992), frustrations, rejection sensitivity (Ashwini & Padmakumari, 2020; Manjeshwar et. al, 2018) and anxieties about the future are often the driving force for high-risk behaviours (Berk, 2007). During this period, it is crucial to develop the skills to cope with the stressors.

The strength-based practices such as life skills will pave way to strengthen the adolescent's well-being. Life-skills, according to WHO, can be best understood as the abilities for positive and adaptive behaviour, which enable individuals to deal effectively with day to day needs and challenges. "Adaptive" means that a person is flexible in approach and is able to adjust to difficult circumstances. "Positive" behaviour implies that a person is capable of handling adverse situations and can find a ray of hope and opportunities to find solutions (1993). Hamburg (1990) defined life skills training as the teaching of requisite skills for surviving, living with others, and succeeding in a complex society. By large, life skills training is provided across culture in three important ways. First, the most important aspect is learning of life skills which are essentially those abilities which help promote mental well-being. This enables one to deal effectively with every day challenges. Secondly to enable adolescents to learn and practice skills, life skills training is based on student centered and activity-oriented methodology. Thirdly, life skill training is based on the philosophy that young people should be empowered to take more responsibility for their actions (Vranda & Rao, 2011).

Life skills training is an efficacious tool for empowering the youth to act responsibly, take initiative and take control. It is based on the assumption that when young people are able to rise above emotional impasses arising from daily conflicts, entangled relationships and peer pressure, they are less likely to resort to high risk behaviours (Verma, 2007). It helps them to develop self-confidence and successfully deal with significant life changes and challenges, such as bullying and discrimination. Life skills development gives adolescents a voice at school, in their community and in society at large. It enables them to make a positive contribution by developing the expertise and experience they need to assert their rights and understand their responsibilities, while preparing them for the challenges and opportunities of adult and working life (British Council, 2020).

Life Skills programmes are based on social learning theory (Vranda & Rao, 2011; Bandura, 1965). In social learning theory, learning is considered to be active acquisition, processing and structuring of experiences. In life skills education, children and adolescents are actively involved in a dynamic teaching and learning process. The pedagogy of life skills education

is based on co-operative learning, participative activities and experimental learning.

In 1997, WHO recognized ten life skills that are very important to individuals to deal with the daily live situations. These are listed below:

1. **Decision making** helps us to deal constructively with decisions about our lives. This can have consequences for health if young people actively make decisions about their actions in relation to health by assessing the different options, and what effects different decisions may have.
2. Similarly, **problem solving** enables us 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.
3. **Creative thinking** contributes to both decision making and problem solving by enabling us to explore the available alternatives and various consequences of our actions or non-action and help us to respond adaptively and with flexibility to the situations of our daily lives.
4. **Critical thinking** is an ability to analyze information and experiences in an objective manner.
5. **Effective communication** means that individuals are able to express themselves, both verbally and non-verbally, in ways that are appropriate to the one's cultures and situations.
6. **Interpersonal relationship** skills help individuals to relate in positive ways with the people they interact with. This may mean being able to make and keep friendly relationships, which can be of great importance to their mental and social well-being.
7. **Self-awareness** includes recognition of self, of one's character, strengths, wellness, desires and dislikes. It is also often a prerequisite for effective communication and interpersonal relations, as well as for developing empathy for others.
8. **Empathy** is the ability to imagine what life is like for another person, even in a situation that we may not be familiar with. Empathy can also help to encourage nurturing behaviour towards people in need of care and assistance, or tolerance.
9. **Coping with emotions** involves recognizing emotions in self and

others, being aware of how emotions influence behaviour, and being able to respond to emotions appropriately.

10. **Coping with stress** is about recognizing the sources of stress in individual lives, recognizing how this affects them, and act in ways that help to control the levels of stress.

The life skills described above are dealt with here in so far as they can be taught to young people as abilities that they can acquire through learning and practice. Life-skills play an important role in the promotion of mental health to motivate to understand self and that of others to deal with relationships, friends, parents, teachers, etc (Thomas, Parthasarathy, & Bhugra, 2013). Positive approaches learnt at the early age of life will take a smooth road in the future years of life in individuals.

In India, the life skills training is providing with less attention and encouragement. Therefore, it is the demanding attention to the stakeholder and to the teachers to provide essential training. By addressing these issues in future research, scholarly knowledge will be increased, but more importantly, the lives of young people can be greatly enhanced.

There are various literature and policies on the life skills training module and implementation. However, in most of Indian education institutes, it is considered as complementary course for moral values and are unattended. The life skills training conducted for the research project and workshops has no long-term effect or evaluation. In general, developed countries conducted more systematic life skills education programmes promoting positive behaviour, with research articulating outcomes on individual youth (Nasheedaa, Abdullaha, Kraussb&Ahmeda, 2018). In contrast, the majority of developing countries' life skills programmes lack systematic implementation, evaluation and monitoring. Therefore, it is important to understand the previous literature through systematic review process to provide new arena for the future research to implement the intervention for long term follow up and monitor such that once the habit is formed, the ability of imbibing skills in daily activities are learnt.

## **Aim**

This systematic review was carried out to establish the effectiveness of life skills programmes for young adolescents aged 10-24 years old to understand the quality of the previous literature and to identify and evaluate the review studies to provide new arena for future research and research gaps thereby promote their psychosocial and emotional, academic wellbeing, and healthy lifestyle behaviours through life skills training.

## Objective

1. To understand the effectiveness of life skills training for young adolescents using systematic review approach
2. To highlight, assess and discuss the quality of the reviewed literature using quality of evidence.
3. To establish the significance on life skills training for young adolescents in Indian perspective.

## Review of Literature

This section presents the literature related to the variables of the present study on life skills programmes among young adolescents. The literature is documented between 2000 and 2020 from the electronic databases such as Ebsco, Google scholar, Jstor, Proquest, Science direct, Elsevier, and research gate. The literature reviewed are mostly empirical studies to support homogeneity and quality of the present study. Research revealed that life skills programmes not only help curb risky adolescent behaviour but also promote better learning outcomes amongst them (Bardhan& Nair, 2016). Empowering Adolescents with Life Skills Education in Schools – School Mental Health Programme (Srikala, Kumar, 2010) showed improvement in adjustment of the adolescents with teachers, school and helped in increasing pro-social behaviour, coping, and self-esteem, promoted psychosocial competence and reduce problem behaviours in secondary school adolescents. Puspakumar (2013) in his study showed that life skills training was effective in preventing a wide range of problems such as substance abuse, teenage pregnancies, violence Bullying & to promote self-confidence and self-esteem among the adolescents. Nair, (2005) suggested that life skill education programme as a good supportive system for adolescents. Life skills training enhanced their psychosocial competencies among middle adolescents in rural places in Bangalore (Vranda& Rao, 2011).

From the literatures, it is found that imparting life skills education to the students are helpful. The provision of life skills training is taking children at the cross roads. The middle school years, a time of increasing risk for negative health-related outcomes, are examined as a key period for intervention (Elias & Kress, 1994). The quality of research articles is also important to identify the research gaps and its effectiveness of the programme. The systematic review helps to examine the multiple research methods, data collection and analysis conducted and new arena to future researches.

## Method

### Definitions of the variables

**Life skills:**The abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individual to deal effectively with the demands and challenges (WHO, 1997).

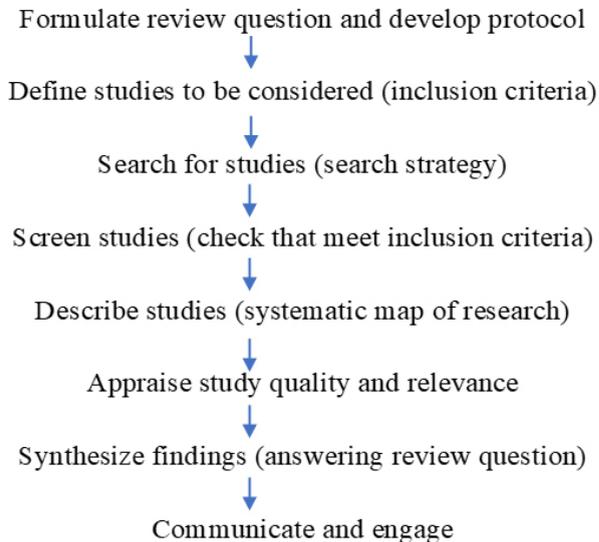
**Effectiveness:**It simply assessing whether research is effective simply means finding out if it produced any outputs, outcomes and/or societal benefits or impact.

**Young people:** ‘Adolescents’ as individuals in the 10-19 years age group and ‘Youth’ as the 15–24-year age group. While ‘Young People’ covers the age range 10-24 years (WHO, 1993).

**Systematic review:** Systematic reviews is a detailed and comprehensive plan and search strategy derived a priori, with the goal of reducing bias by identifying, appraising, and synthesizing all relevant studies on a particular topic (Uman, 2011).

### Systematic process stages

A systematic review of literature included quantitative, qualitative and mixed method studies for evaluation. In the paper, the Gough’s (2007) model for the stages of a systematic review has been followed (Figure 1).



*Figure 1: stages of systematic review*

*Source: Gough (2007, p. 5).*

## Formulate the Research question

This systematic review paper was carried out to know the comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of life skills training globally and to identify research gaps to develop future studies. In order to address the aim of the present study, the following aspects were considered: a) to identify the relevant literature on the selected search articles b) to gain the comprehensive knowledge on the effectiveness of the LSP in the national and international studies c) to correlate with the different variables to investigate its influences d) to synthesis and interpret the findings e) to identify the research gaps for further studies.

## Inclusion and exclusion criterion

Table 2

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Empirical studies of quantitative and qualitative and mixed method approach	Review papers, Magazine, blog and website articles.
National and international studies	Any study other than randomized controlled trials, and multiple publications on the same cohorts, studies with data analysis still pending
Interval was set from January 2000 to June 2020.	Studies conducted on special populations of students (i.e., learning disabilities, HIV, and other severe mental disorders)
Life skills programmes for adolescents from grade two to university students (10- 24 years)	Those with other population such as adults, children
	Articles written other than English

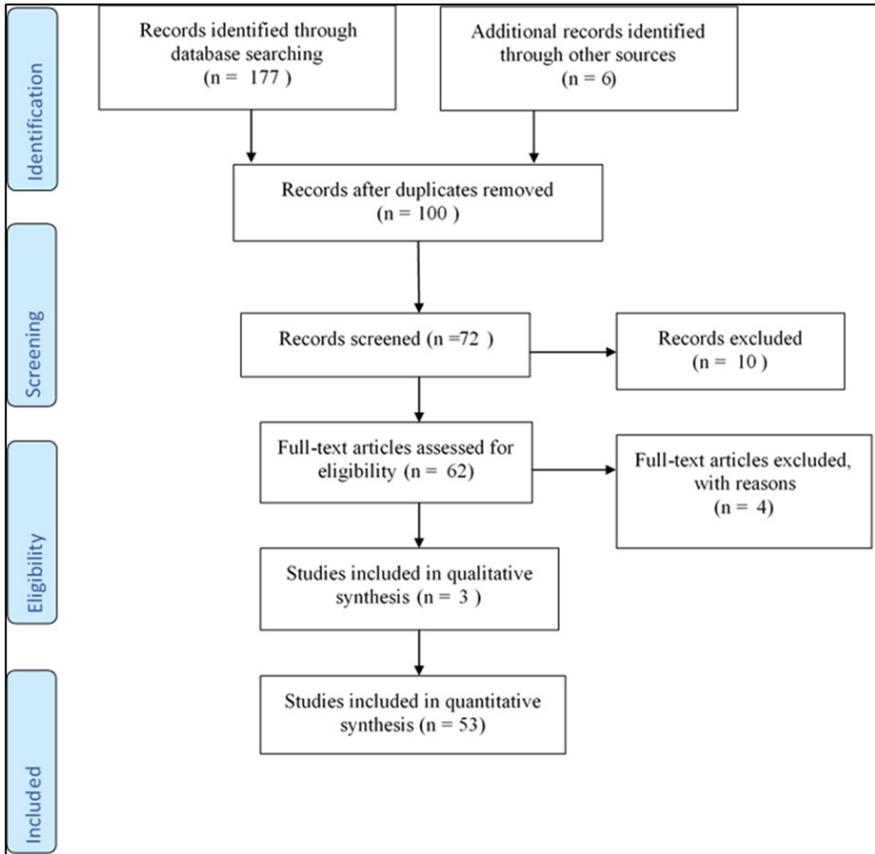
## Identification of the Studies

A search for published and unpublished literature on life skills was conducted on electronic databases such as Science Direct, Wiley, Springer, EBSCOhost, Sage, Google search, Jstor, and other open access journals. The search of the significant articles was carried out from 2000 to 2019 with the following key words: “mental health” OR “life skills education” OR “life skills development for young people” OR “life skills training for adolescents” OR “life skills and other psychological and health correlates” OR “life skills training in India”.

## Screen studies

All the studies were reviewed after meeting the inclusion criteria. The titles were cross checked with abstracts and full articles to examine whether the studies are intended to measure in the study. The review papers were exempted from the evaluation. A flowchart outlining the information required for reporting in systematic reviews according to the PRISMA guidelines.

**Figure 2: PRISMA Flow Diagram (2009)**



Sl No	Country	Author & Year	Title	AIM	Grades / students	Methods	Findings	Research outcomes
1	India	Dhingraa & Chauhan, 2017	Assessment of life-skills of adolescents in relation to selected variables	To access the life skills of adolescents	8th, 9th & 10th	Multistage Sampling technique, 14-16 years (Class 8, 9, and, 10th), Life skills scale by RGNIID NIHMANS MOD-EL	The average level of life skills. Dimension wise analysis revealed that the least score in the dimension of coping with stress. A highly significant correlation found between parental education and levels of life-skills of adolescents	The need for life skills to deal with the ever-demanding requirements of everyday life. Parental education plays a vital role in teaching life skills to their children
2	New Delhi, India	Khera and Khosla, 2012	A study of core life skills of adolescents in relation to their self-concept developed through YUVA school life skills programme	To examine the Core life skills affective and cognitive) and Self Concept of adolescents developed through YUVA School Life Skills Programme	8th & 9th	YUVA School Life Skills Programme (SLP), Ten Government Senior Secondary Schools of South Delhi. Overall, 500 students participated.	Core life skills have better self-concept and greater confidence in all aspects of life	The life skills enhance greater confidence to deal with the life situations effectively with high self-concept

3	Iran	Jamali, Sabokdast, Sharif, Nia, Goudarzian, & Al-Beik, 2016	The effect of life skill training on mental health of Iranian middle school students: A Preliminary Study	Effectiveness of life skill training on mental health of Iranian middle school students.	100 students were randomly selected and divided into two equal groups of intervention (n = 50) and control (n = 50). Qualified trainers provided eight sessions (two sessions a week for 2 hours) of life skills training to the intervention group for one month.	life skills education for middle school students had a significant effect on four variables of mental health (stress, violence, addiction, sensation-seeking)	The life skills are effective in reducing health risk behaviours and increasing academic achievement and material savings. Life skills training had a considerable effect on mental health parameters.
4	Karnataka, India	Srikala, & Kishore, 2010	Empowering adolescents with life skills education in schools – School mental health programme: Does it work?	Impact of the life skills education programme (LSE programme N I M H A N S model	The sample and control were selected from two schools in the Bangalore rural district (Chennapatna) and two schools from Udipi District. Secondary school sample. Purposive sampling	The model improved adjustment of the adolescents with teachers, school, increased prosocial behaviour, coping, and self-esteem, as there was a significant difference between the groups in the programme and not in the programme.	The model was effective to improve adjustment levels at various domains

5	Goa, INDIA	Karamadi &Am- inabhavi, 2015	Impact of Medi- um of Instruction on Life Skills of school students	To investigate the impact of medium of in- struction on life skills of school students.	8th	Purposive sam- pling method. 200 students studying in 8th standard. 100 students with primary education in mother tongue while other stu- dents with English medium	Medium of Instructions significantly influenced the life skills training. The students with prima- ry education in English medium have signifi- cantly higher level of life skills in the dimensions of self-awareness, coping with emotions and cop- ing with stress, empathy as well as overall psy- chosocial competence, than those with primary education in their mother tongue medium.	To enable behavioural transformations in chil- dren, the system needs to enrich the school curriculum with a high- ly effective life skills training programme. Medium of instruction also plays an vital role in life skills training. Females practise life skills training more ef- fective than males
6	India	Chakra, A (2016)	Influence of Per- sonal Variables on Core Affective Life Skills of Adolescents	To study the in- fluence of birth order, number of siblings, gender, family type, and income on ado- lescent	Late adoles- cents	Ex-post-facto re- search design, Simple random sampling, 522 Late adolescents	The order of birth, fami- ly income has significant influence on interperson- al relationship dimension of life skill of adolescents.	Birth order and family income influence the life skill training while number of siblings and family type do not im- pact on the life skills of adolescents
7	India	Rajeshwar, G. (2017)	Parenting and determinants of well-being among adolescents - A Psychological study	To examine the influence of life skills training to given to parents to en- hance psycho- logical well-be- ing of the adolescents			Parenting styles influenc- es the life skills and psy- chological well-being of adolescents	

8	India	Kaur, M. (2014)	Life skills among school going adolescents in relation to certain personal variable.	To examine the life skills and its relationship with certain personal variables such as gender, locale, parental education, and parental occupation.	School students	Survey method, 200 school going adolescents studying in government and private schools Punjab.	Adolescents with parental occupation as business and non-working mothers have better life skills, and female and rural adolescents	Parental education and occupation do play an important role in imparting life skills to their children. The time spend with parents can help them cultivate certain core skills
9	India	Gayatri, et al., (2017)	Life skills education programme among high school children: An intervention study	The efficacy of life skills education programme among high school children of academic backwardness.	9th grade	AB Single Subject Design, 15 ninth standard children consisting of 6 girls and 9 boys, Mixed method	Parental supervision and academic performance had been increased significantly.	Parental supervision is important in formal and non-formal education like life skills
10	India	Yadav & Iqbal (2009)	Impact of Life Skill Training on Self-esteem, Adjustment and Empathy among Adolescents	To see the impact of life skill training on self-esteem, adjustment and empathy among adolescents.	10th, 11th and 12th	60 students (30 males and 30 females) from 15-17 years	Significant difference was observed between pre and post condition on social and emotional adjustment	Effective Life skills training can modify behaviours and improved interpersonal relationships in adolescents

11	India	Daisy & Nair (2018)	An Exploratory Study On Life Skills Intervention And Its Impact On The Study Skills Among Young Adolescents	To assess the effectiveness of life skill training on enhancing study skills among going adolescents.	8th std students	Quasi- Experimental research design. age group of 12 to 15 yrs (studying in 8th Std), urban adolescents. Purposive convenient sampling. The entire training was for forty-eight hours completed in three months sessions of 50 minutes each.	Life skills intervention has an impact on enhancing study skills among young adolescents.	Life skills can improve study habits resulting in academic performance and achievements. It can be further looked at non-formal education too.
12	Iran	Ziapour et al., (2018)	The Effect of Life Skills Training on Reducing the High-Risk Behaviours among High School Students in Kerman-shah, North West of Iran	Effectiveness of life skills training on decreasing high risk behaviours among high school boy students	School students	Quasi-experimental study, Multi stage sampling, 30 students with high-risk behaviour was selected using pre assessment of high-risk behaviour questionnaire, intervention group (n=15) and control group (n=15). 12 sessions (each session was 60-120 minutes). Life Skills questionnaire was completed by two groups before, after and one month after intervention	The mean of pre-test, post-test and follow-up scores in the intervention group for variances of substance abuse, violence, insecure sexual behaviour and high-risk behaviours were lower than the control group	Behaviour modification is evident using life skills intervention

13	Iran	Hajia, Mohammad-khani & Hahtami (2011)	The effectiveness of life skills training on happiness, quality of life and emotion regulation in Tarbiat-Moallem students.	To investigate the effectiveness of life skills training to improve happiness, quality of life and satisfaction among university students	College students	University students, quasi experimental research design 2*2 repeated measure ANCOVA, MANCOVA	Life skills training (coping with negative mood, effective relationship, assertiveness, anger management) and stress programme for increasing happiness, quality of life and emotion regulation in students.	To learn and practise like skills promotes happiness and quality of life thereby increasing satisfaction.
14	Iran	Gharamalekia & Rajabi, 2010	Efficacy of life skills training on increase of mental health and self-esteem of the students	To see effects of life skills training on providing mental health and self-esteem of university students.	College students	Mancova, Experimental study, Life skills training were instructed in eight sessions, each week 2 sessions on group work.	The efficient of life skills instruction on reducing the stress of students with suspected on mental disorder.	Life skills training and instruction enhances mental health of the students while college students undergo many stressors; these life skills can promote coping strategies to overcome stressors.
15	India	Anand, Ingle, Meena, Kishore & Yadav, (2015)	Effect of Life Skills Training on Dietary behaviour of School Adolescents in Delhi: A Nonrandomized Interventional Study	To assess the effect of life skills training on dietary behaviour of adolescents	Grades 9 and 11	A non-randomized interventional study with a control group. Mixed method approaches.	Life skill approach improved knowledge, attitude and practice of healthy choices of diet among adolescents.	Apart from psychological skills, life skills do improve and promote dietary behaviour in adolescents.

16	India	Pujjar, & Patil (2016)	Life Skill Development: Educational Empowerment of Adolescent Girls	To know the life skill development among rural adolescent girls and impact of intervention on life skills.	8th and 9th standards, N= 120	Quasi experimental study, assessments were conducted at entry level	The intervention improved coping skills of stress and problem-solving adolescents girls in rural area.	The life skills training promotes positive attitude towards life in adolescents of rural area.
17	India	Bardhan (2016)	Life Skills Education: A Strategy for Handling Adolescents' Risk behaviour	To analyze the adolescents' risk behaviour and to understand the impact of life skills interventions in developing positive changes among them	7th to 11th students with mental health problems	Qualitative, case study method, intervention and counselling for identified students and their parents	Life skills intervention improved interpersonal relationship with peers, teachers and parents, academic performance and parental communication,	Schools are the appropriate place to promote life skills, the identified risk behaviours can be modified using life skills training along with parental involvement. This indicates that collaboration of schools and family enhances life skills development in adolescents.
18	Sri Lanka	Amarasinghe, (2018)	Teaching life skills through arts; an option for adolescent health promotion in resource poor settings	The art-based life skills education for health promotion of adolescents in a resource poor setting.	13 to 15 years	Intervention situation analysis, identified problems encountered by adolescents through teachers and staffs involved to the school, Observational and thematic analysis	A novel programme of Art- based approach of teaching life skills to adolescents were beneficial	The study tried a different of teaching method to impart life skills in adolescents. The art based approach was identified as a novel method. In the 2 hour session, all the life skills may not be effectively addressed, the long term intervention may yield better results.

19	Kerala, India	Parvathy & Renjith (2015)	Impact of Life Skills Education in Adolescents in Rural School	To study the knowledge of Life Skills among adolescents and To study the impact of Life Skills Education on their current knowledge level.	Adolescent boys and girls of 14-18yrs	Experimental pre-post study design	The knowledge level of life skills was significantly increase after the intervention. The impact of intervention was positively achieved	Assessment of Knowledge level on life skills is significantly important to understand the description of life skills education in adolescents. The rural school setting are even importance due to the lack of opportunities available to them. The knowledge gap can be improved using life skills approach.
20	India	Azeez (2015)	Positive Mental Health through Life Skill Education: Empowering Adolescents having Psychosocial Problems	To investigate the efficacy of life skill education on improving self-esteem and psychological wellbeing of adolescence with the psychosocial problems.	15-19 years	Intervention was provided to the students with psychosocial problems. Quasi experimental design. pre-test before three days of intervention and post-test after three weeks of the life skill training	There is significant increase in psychological wellbeing after exposing to intervention.	The life skills training can enhance PWB in adolescents with psychosocial problems. The screening assessment was not conducted to know the level of psychosocial problems. The life skills intervention would help in behaviour modification and thereby

21	India	Arulsubila, &Subasree, (n.d)	Parenting and Psychological Wellbeing of Adolescents- An Intervention Study	To investigate the influence of life skills training given to parents on psychological well-being of their adolescent children.	Adolescent students 15 – 17 years.	Simple random sampling method, Quasi experiment study, ten core life skills modules for 6 hours. Screening was done and low scored students were selected for the intervention	The intervention conducted to parents was effective and has a positive impact on psychological well-being and life skills of late adolescents	Effective parenting skills promote PWB and life skills in late adolescents. Parents are responsible to create smooth transition from adolescence to adulthood therefore parents involvement in imparting life skills is crucial.
22	Iran	Mohammadi, Kalandari, & Molav (2014)	Efficacy of Life Skills Training on Subjective Well-Being of Students: A Report from Rafsanjan, Iran	To investigate the efficacy of life skills training on subjective well-being (SWB) among high school females.	Females 15 to 19 years adolescents	Life skills trainings: eight sessions, two sessions each week.	The intervention has increased the life satisfaction, vitality, and decreased stress, anxiety and depression level among female adolescents	The life skills education influences happiness, self-originated energy and coping strategies in female adolescents.
23	Italy	Sagone& Indiana (2017)	The Relationship of Positive Affect with Resilience and Self-Efficacy in Life Skills in Italian Adolescents	To investigate the positive affect on the dimensions of resilience and perceived self-efficacy in life skills.	15 to 19 years adolescents	Survey method, PANAS, Resilience attitude and skill profile (RASP), Perceived Self-Efficacy Scales in Life Skills.	Adolescents with high positive emotions have higher levels of perceived self-efficacy in life skills than those with low positive affect	The perceived self-efficacy through life skills can decrease the influence of maladaptive behaviours during adversities. Life skills development in adolescents can promote self-efficacy which increase resilience in adolescents.

24	Kerala, India	Sya- malaDevi M.B (2014)	The effectiveness of peer mentoring in promoting life skills among higher secondary school students	To examine the peer mentoring activities can promote life skills	Higher sec- ondary school stu- dents, 11th and 12th grade	Survey and experi- mental methods	Peer mentoring influenc- es the effectiveness of life skills training in ad- olescents. Peer learning in adolescents increases positive learning be- haviour.	Apart from instructional life skills training, ado- lescents are influenced by their peers during this transition period. Therefore, experien- tial learning and peer to peer learning may promote life skills in- tervention effectively in adolescents. When peer learning oriented activi- ties are encouraged, the life skills can be impart- ed provided monitoring of peer mentoring is also important.
25	Mum- bai India	Yadav &Pingle (2016)	Effectiveness of life skills pro- gramme on mental health of adoles- cents students	To develop life skills pro- gramme and to see its effective- ness on mental health of adoles- cents	8th Grade, girls	Stratified random sampling, Experi- mental research design. Three months using dif- ferent interactive methods.	The effect size was min- imum therefore, the pro- gramme was less effec- tive to the experimental group.	The life skills pro- gramme had minimal influence on adoles- cents mental health The other factors such as relationship with par- ents, teachers and peer groups, and personal characteristic are im- portant elements.

26	Dharwad, INDIA	Pujar and Patil, (2016)	Life Skill Development: Empowerment of Adolescent Girls	To examine the life skills development in adolescent girls and its impact of life skills intervention	13 to 15 years, 8th and 9th grade, Girls	Experimental research design, Simple random sampling, baseline assessment, two days in a week for 3 months. 5 life skills (Creative thinking, critical thinking, coping with stress, empathy, problem solving	The intervention empowers adolescents' girls to deal with their day-to-day stressors	The intervention was provided to the rural girls who has less exposure to training. Life skills intervention increases a sense of education on the application and acquisition of life skills to empower rural adolescents' girls to manage their challenges in their lives. The study focused only 5 life skills however the criteria for choosing these skills are unexplained.
27	Paris	Young et al., (2006)	Effects of a Life Skills Intervention for Increasing Physical Activity in Adolescent Girls	To evaluate the effects of a life skills-oriented physical activity intervention for increasing overall physical activity in high school-aged girls.	9th grade girls	Intervention, baseline assessments on physical and sedentary, experimental design	The physical activity was improved and skills-based training was practiced and reduced sedentary activities. However, the energy was not found any changes	Life skills intervention improved overall life style and physical activities and reduced obesity and monotonous work routine was improved. Life skills development not only improves mental health, in a way it also influences physical health of the adolescents. However, the study limits to the girl's sample. The study on male sample can yield their perspectives. This is an interdisciplinary approach which can be integrated to promote physical and mental health of the adolescents.

28	France	Moulier et al., (2019)	Effects of a life-skills prevention programme on self-esteem and risk behaviours in adolescents: a pilot study	To evaluate the impact of a life-skills-based prevention programme on self-esteem, well-being, and risk behaviours among adolescents.	Between 10 and 15 years adolescents	MANOVA and ANOVA, Quasi-experimental research design	The programme was effective in reducing risk behaviours and improved self-esteem and well-being by comparing pre-test post-test assessments. The mood and depression symptoms were reduced after follow up and risk behaviours was controlled using adaptive measures.	In the adolescence period the physical self was significant with self-esteem that is body image is attributed to self-esteem and also feeling hopelessness and depressed was featured by adolescents.
29	Dublin Ireland	Barnardo (2017)	Life skills - An early intervention and prevention programme to build resilience : Dr. Botvin. Life Skills training	Did Life Skills show improvements in outcomes for children across knowledge, attitudes and skills on completion of the programme?	Children in 4th year aged 9-10 years, 5th year aged 10-11 years and 6th year aged 11-12 years	Pre-post, repeated measures design	Changes in student's knowledge, attitudes and skills are reported. The behavioural rehearsal activities modified the behaviours and children were able to understand the harmful effects of substance use.	Life skills training can change the behaviours and develop knowledge about the harmful effects of substance use or risk behaviours.

30	Iran	Dowlathi, &Parves-tan, (2016)	The role of Life skills in explaining the social competence of Boarding school students.	To examine the social competence using life skills of boarding school students	High school students	Survey method, Correlational design, Pearson's correlational, regression	Life skills development can improve social well-being and have healthy social interactions. The adolescents explore their identity during this period, social competencies are important to establish interpersonal relationships.	The life skills can promote cognitive, behavioural, emotional, and motivational skills.
31	Hamburg GER- MANY	Hanewinkel & Abhauer (2004)	Fifteen-month follow-up results of a school-based life skills approach to smoking prevention	To evaluate the effectiveness of prevention programme using life skills intervention	Grade 5 & 6	Quasi-experimental control group design with repeated measurement, logistic regression	The programme was effective in reducing the smoking behaviour on set and substance misuse. On follow up the smoking intensity was substantially reduced in experimental group compared to control group. Furthermore, on follow up, the participants mentioned that they controlled the motivation to smoke using cognitive appraisal.	Apart from anti-smoking programmes and campaign, the life skills programme was effective in decreasing on set of smoking. The life skills intervention have also improved social competencies in the experimental group. The life skills intervention enhances positive classroom atmosphere

32	Kerala, India	Prajina & Premisingh (2015)	A study on the Impact of Life Skills on the Academic Achievement Motivation of Tribal Adolescents	To find out the impact of life skills on the academic achievement motivation of tribal students	8th, 9th and 10th	Descriptive method, Proportionate random sampling, Different community tribes	The knowledge level of the life skills was low within the tribal community. The socio-demographic as well as family variables such as birth order, parental education and occupation are less influenced by academic achievement motivation. When students have imparted life skills, it is likely to influence their academic achievement motivation.	Life skills development can enhance academic achievement motivation such that the life skills improve academic performance of the tribal students. Other factors such as socio-demographic and familial contexts do not influence academic aspects. However, the level of life skills really matters in the individuals to face challenges in life. The interventions are provided more in terms of rural and urban people but less focused to marginalized society for empowerment.
33	India	Sreehari et al., (2013)	Fostering Resilience among Children: A Life Skills Intervention	To investigate the effect of Life Skills Training for fostering Resilience.	Adolescents (age not mentioned)	ANOVA, a quasi-experimental control pre-test-post-test.	A positive effect on life skills training for fostering resilience.	Life skills training enhances resilience to the individuals after the programme. The effectiveness of the training is known when it is monitored on everyday lives.

34	Karnataka, India	Rajeshwari et al. (2017)	Effectiveness of behaviour change communication for preventing tobacco use among high school children in rural area, Bengaluru	To assess the prevalence of tobacco use among high school students. To evaluate the effectiveness of behaviour change communication using life skills education on tobacco use initiation and cessation of use among high school children.	8th, 9th, and 10th classes, 12 years to 16 years	WHO Global Youth Tobacco Survey questionnaire, Intervention	After the intervention, the percentage of smokers was decreased than control group with any intervention. Peer pressure and influence is the important factor in developing smoking or other kinds of substance use.	Consistent intervention should be provided to educate adolescents as it is transition period to adapt risk behaviours. Life skills can help adolescents to cope with stressors with adaptive behaviours
35	Egypt	Sayed et al., (2019)	The Effect of Life Skills Intervention on Social Self Efficacy for Prevention of Drug Abuse Among Young Adolescents Students at Benha City	Self-efficacy, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours related drug resistance skills will be improved after implementation of life skills intervention on young adolescent students	8th and 9th grade, 14 to 17 years	Quasi-experimental research design (pre/post-test) Simple random sample technique	The knowledge and attitude levels about drug usage and its effects was significantly improved after intervention. The anti-smoking and anti-drinking attitude were developed and behaviours was modified and behavioural intervention with post intervention follow up for 3 quarters.	Life skills education was effective to dissimilate awareness about preventative measures of drug resistance and others maladaptive behaviours. Life skills can promote health behaviours apart from personality development

36	India	Sowmyashree & Sreenivasa (2019)	Effect of Life Skill Training on Government School Adolescents: Exploratory Study	To find the Effect of life skill training on Government school adolescent students.	13-17 years	Exploratory research, simple random sampling, Pre-test / intervention / post-test.	The intervention influenced life skills development among Government school adolescents irrespective of their sociodemographic status.	Life skills are essential to adolescence regardless of their sociodemographic and schooling aspects. As all the adolescents undergo stressors during that transition. Therefore, imparting life skills to privileged and unprivileged sector is the matter of concern to make them productive and healthy adults
37	Germany	Haug, Castro, Wenger and Schaub (2018)	Efficacy of a mobile phone-based life-skills training programme for substance use prevention among adolescents: study protocol of a cluster-randomised controlled trial	To test the efficacy of a mobile phone-based life-skills training to prevent substance use among adolescents within a controlled trial.	14 and 16 years	Two-arm cluster-randomized controlled trial Generalized Linear Mixed Models	Using mobile phone with automated programme, the life skills training is effective to prevent substance use in adolescents. Self-management skills, social skills and substance use resistance skills was improved with life skills training.	Life skills training can be effective through mobile phones with appropriate automated programme. However, the individuals' motivation to change is important with this kind of intervention to maintain its effectiveness. Not all adolescents can afford the network and internet support, the authenticity of the intervention also need to be checked.

38	Malaysia	Mohammadzadeh et al., (2019)	Improving emotional health and self-esteem of Malaysian adolescents living in orphanages through Life Skills Education programme: A multi-centre randomized control trial	To evaluate the effects of a life skills-based intervention programme on emotional health & self-esteem of adolescents in Malaysian orphanages.	12 and 18 years old	Single-blind (subject-masked) randomized controlled trial. Multi-stage sampling technique. A mixed between-within-subjects ANOVA	Life skills education had effective impact on adolescents' anxiety than on their depression, but among the three factors (depression, anxiety & stress) of emotional problems examined in this study, the intervention programme had the greatest impact on stress.	Life skills training promotes coping mechanisms among adolescents to face challenges in lives
39	Iran	Hajzadehanari et al., (2013)	The effectiveness of life skills education with religious approach to safety, mental health and self-esteem in elementary school students	To evaluate the life skills training on mental health, global self-esteem, family and parents' elements	5th grade male	A quasi-experimental pretest-posttest study independent T-test	Life skills intervention increased global self-esteem, socialization, and overall mental health. Since the researchers have considered religious approach to conduct life skill training. This may work for only one particular religion and not for all. However, the life skills training should consider religious sensitivity as current scenario is distancing human on religious ground.	Mental health and global self-esteem of the male adolescents was improved and reduced social dysfunction, anxiety and physical symptoms

40	Malaysia	Nair, P. K. & Fahimrad, M. (2019)	A Qualitative Research Study on the Importance of Life Skills on Undergraduate Students' Personal and Social Competencies	To gain an in-depth understanding of students' conceptions of life skills; to explore the relationship between life skills programme, student's personal efficacy, and competencies.	Fresh UG students	Semi-structured interviews to elicit students' opinion about life skills Thematic analysis	Themes identified after TA: Self-efficacy (self-belief, self-esteem, self-acceptance), Academic adjustment (Strong self-management skills to cope with academic stressors), effective communication (relationship management, cultural diversity and sensitivity)	Life skills increases academic engagement, personal and social competences. Students appreciate Life skills training to improve personal and career growth and cope with life situations by developing soft skills. The experiential learning activities can motivate them to energized to attend life skills programme
41	India	Gayatri, Chanaveer, R.M., Lakshmana (2017)	Life skills education among high school children: An intervention study	To assess the needs of referred children, impart the appropriate life skills and test the efficacy of the intervention	14 to 15 years, lower SES, low parents' education level	Single subject research design, that is A-B Design. Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test, Evaluation of academic reports.	Creative thinking, critical thinking and self-awareness skills was improved post intervention	The personal development can be improved using life skills training. The life skills education given at early stages of life will help them during life situations
42	Iran	Javidi, K. & Garmaroudi, G. (2019)	The Effect of Life Skills Training on Social and Coping Skills, and Aggression in High School Students	Whether life skills training affect the social and coping skills and aggression in high school students.	Age-matched in age group, High schools	Pretest-posttest experimental design.	Life skills intervention helped adolescents to reduce aggressive behaviours and improve coping skills	Life skills programme helps adolescents to regulate their emotions during stressful situations. Effective Intervention or training on promotes long time effects in life situations.

43	Iran	Irannezhad, (2017)	Effectiveness of life-skills training on the mental health of 2nd grade female High School students in Bam-Iran	To study the effectiveness of training life skills on the mental health of female students of 2nd-grade high school residing in Bam, Iran.	Pre-university student	A quasi-experimental pre-test and post-test design. Convenience sampling method, MANCOVA, ANCOVA	Life skills training could increase the mental health of female students on the 2nd-grade high school of Bam, Iran.	Life skills training aimed at increasing social and mental abilities, preventing harmful behaviours, and promoting mental health
44	Iran	Rahmatia, Adibrad, Tahmasian, & Sedghpour (2010).	The effectiveness of life skill training on social adjustment in Children	To study the effectiveness of training life skills on children's social adjustment in 4th grade of elementary school.	Grade 4th	Pre and post-test with control group design. Ages 10 years old (grade 4), ANCOVA, BANOVA, T student test.	Life skills has a positive impact on social adjustment through acquiring appropriate social skills and reaching peer acceptance.	Life skills training improved social adjustment and social skills for young children. Early intervention helps children to socialize and develop certain coping skills to face the challenges later in life.
45	India	Shwetha (2015)	The Role of Life Skills Training In Developing Emotional Maturity and Stress Resilience among Adolescents	To see the impact of Life Skill Training Programme on Emotional Maturity and Stress Resilience among adolescents.	Class 12	Quasi-experimental design with pre-test and post-test Purposive sampling technique, MANCOVA, ANCOVA	Emotional maturity and stress resilience were improved using life skills approach.	Life skills programme enhance students to regulate and control emotions during stressful situations thereby provide resilience to bounce back from challenging situations

46	Iran	ZareiEghbal, Akbar, & Behjat, (2012)	Effects of Life Skills Training on Stress Reduction and Coping Style in Adolescents Living in Foster Homes	To examine the effectiveness of life skills training in reducing the stress of adolescents in the foster homes centres of Shiraz.	Adolescents (age not mentioned)	A quasi-experimental method with a pre- and post-test plan, convenience sampling method, t-test and covariance analysis	A training programme which includes four skills, mainly communication, stress management, problem-solving and decision-making skills was used. The emotion oriented and problem oriented coping mechanisms were compared with academic performance using life skills approach. life skills training programmes have failed to increase the use of problem-oriented coping among the adolescents in foster homes centres.	Life skills training for adolescents in foster homes enhances coping strategies to deal with their life situations. Family support is the major crisis for them to deal with situations that they encounter during adolescents' period. Such training programme help equip them with more positive outcomes
47	India	Parmar & Jain (2019)	Effectiveness of Life Skills Training for Enhancing Self-Esteem among Tribal Youths	To see the effect of life skills training on self-esteem among tribal youths.	15 to 24 years, 10th to 12th class.	A quasi-experimental method with a pre- and post-test plan, ANOVA, ANCOVA	The self-esteem was increased after training / intervention.	Life skills training influences cognition and behaviour of the individuals. Since, life skills are the abilities to impart in the individuals to face their life situations and challenges. The under privileged adolescents face many socio-economic challenges, life skills development stands as a supportive factor to be resilient during unpleasant circumstances.

48	India	Chakra & Aruna (2016)	Influence of family variables on core affective life skills of youth	To find out the influence of certain family variables on core affective life skills of youth.	11th and 12th grade	Ex-post-facto research design, Simple random sampling	The study focused on parents' education and occupation, and family participation and income influences life skills. The adolescents' parents with less education had increased life skills than the counterparts. The parental occupation has influence on life skills, non-working mothers spend more time with their children and teach certain life-oriented skills by giving some work at home compared to working mothers. Mothers' occupation influenced interpersonal relationship than father's occupation.	Family is the important aspects in the development of life skills in children, adolescents and youth. Adolescents with Family dynamics and support have ability to cope with the stress and maintain good interpersonal relationships. Parents interaction with their children and teaching certain skills enhances healthy personality in their children.
49	India	Antara, Bansal, Gupta, Nasser (2019)	Study assessing life skills among school going adolescents in relation to personal variables	To assess the life skills of school going adolescents of urban Meerut and to determine the variations in life skills of adolescents with their personal variables.	12-19 years	Cross-sectional study, Purposive sampling technique Independent t-test	Parental education and occupation did influence life skills development. Adolescents of well-educated parents and working mothers had better self-awareness and effective communication than the counterparts	Parent's education and occupation do impact the life skills development in children. Home is the first school for learning. The parents' interaction and support influence the cultivation of life skills in the individuals. Effective communication within the family members plays an essential role in this ground.

50	South Africa	Spamer, C. J. (2017)	Family involvement in Life Skills development of learners in a primary school	To determine how families can become more involved in the life skills development of learners in a primary school	Grades 1-7	Qualitative approach, interpretive paradigm, using the hermeneutic phenomenological approach. observation, semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and document analysis	Themes identified for the barriers that parents faced to be involved in the process of life skills development are work pressure, work-life skills, immigrant families, domestic violence, unsafe neighbourhood in which some children grow up, financial hardship and grandparents who have to raise their grandchildren.	Parents are major responsible to impart life skills when they are young. Before they address identity and exploration, parents and children shall create an environment to facilitate healthy and friendly communication and quality time for each other. Parents and families could become more involved in the life skills development of their children during primary schooling. With life skills both an academic school subject and those skills necessary to enable children to cope with everyday life and its challenges can be cultivated when parents involve themselves wholeheartedly.
51	Iran	Maryam et al., (2011)	Effectiveness of life skills training on increasing self-esteem of high school students	To investigate and determine the role of training of life skills on high school students' self-esteem.	High school students (age range NA)	Pseudo-experimental research, Intervention, Questionnaire	Life skills intervention increased self-esteem of the students in experimental group compared to control group.	Life skills programme can improve self-awareness and have positive attitudes towards self, amidst life challenges and paves way to handle problems in life.

52	Iran	Ahmadia- tab et al., (2011)	Students' life quality prediction based on life skills	To predict the students' life quality on the basis of life skills.	Uni- versity students	Descriptive cor- relational cluster sampling method	Life skills in students in- creases the quality of life.	Life skills training en- hances quality of life in the individuals. Life skills lead to satisfied experiences and there- by provides quality in one's life.
53	Turkey	Akfirat and Kezer (2016)	A Programme Im- plementation for the Development of Life Skills of Primary School 4th Grade Stu- dents	Implementation of a programme experiment aimed at giving students in the fourth grade of elementary school the life skills of Com- munication, Self-recognition, Self-confidence, assertiveness and Problem-solving.	Primary school (8-11 years)	Pre-experimental design	Life skills programme was successfully im- plemented on primary school students. Life skills training improves certain skills and modi- fied behaviours	Life skills training enhances student's self-management skills however, the follow up of such skills would yield long term benefits
54	Un- known	Tajalli and Zandi (2010)	Creativity com- parison between students who studied life skills courses and those who didn't	To examine the creativity of the students who participated in life skills train- ing and who do not.	School students (Not avail- able)	Causative-compar- ative method	Participant's creativity was increased after at- tending life skills cours- es as compared to those who did not attend	Life skills training en- hances creativity as one of the core life skills is creativity. The research- ers has focused on one of the components of life skills training, the others components would have increased along with creativity.

55	India	Ayub (2017)	Effectiveness of life skills training on psychological distress, balanced emotional empathy and autonomy among adolescent students	To investigate the effectiveness of life skills training on psychological distress, balanced emotional empathy and autonomy among adolescent students.	10-19 years	Quasi experimental study, assessments were conducted at entry level, follow up was made.	Life skill training was highly effective in increasing the emotional empathy, and autonomy of adolescent students, including attitudinal, functional and emotional autonomies while decreasing psychological distress. Gender did not impact over decreasing psychological distress and increasing emotional empathy and autonomy.	Life skills training has influences emotional empathy, autonomy in students and reduced psychological distress irrespective of gender.
56	Germany	Buhler (2007)	The role of life skills promotion in substance abuse prevention: a mediation analysis.	Whether an evidence-based prevention programme targeting general competence is effective through the promotion of knowledge about life skills and enhanced related behaviours.	fifth grade	Quasi-experimental study, mediation analyses	Increased knowledge about life skills parallely increased students' distant attitudes toward alcohol and nicotine use.	Life skills training can modify risk behaviours among students. Prevention programme can contribute to increased knowledge and develop certain skills thereby reduces risk behaviours.

## Quality of assessment

In the present study, Gough’s (2007) “weight of Evidence” (WoE) framework was adopted to evaluate the quality of the research evidence. Gough (2007, p. 10-11) gave “generic” and “review specific judgement” and combined them to give an “overall assessment”.

Figure 3: Gough’s (2007) “Weight of Evidence” (WoE) review process framework

Weight of Evidence A	Generic, non-review specific judgement about quality of evidence e.g. generally accepted criteria by those who generally use and produce evidence.
Weight of Evidence B	Review specific judgement about the appropriateness of a specific form of evidence for answering the current review question e.g. the relevance of research design.
Weight of Evidence C	Review specific judgement about the relevance of the focus of the evidence for the review question e.g., type of sample, method of data gathering or analysis.
Weight of Evidence D	Overall assessment of the extent that a study contributes evidenceto answering a review question, typically a combination of A, B and C.

The present review paper evaluated the studies is based on the Gough’s (2007) “weight of Evidence” (WoE) review process framework to understand the knowledge life skills programme, assessments, research designs, methods and overall evidence. For this purpose, the table 3 outlines the application of Weight of Evidence (WoE) review process framework. Most of the review papers are Indian studies which provided importance to improve or impart life skills using intervention while international studies focused on prevention of risk behaviours and health promotion.

Table 3:Application of Weight of Evidence Framework

Weight of evidence	Implications for present review
weight of Evidence A Quality of research	Peer-reviewed and published studies
weight of Evidence B Research design	Quasi-experimental, survey, qualitative and quantitative, mixed method approach
weight of Evidence C years,	early, middle and late adolescents 10-24
Samples and data gathering/ analysis Statistical	questionnaires, pre and post-test methods, tools

## **Discussion**

Generally, the discussion aims to integrate rather than just list the findings by different studies, highlight the major contradictory data and give suggestions as to how these contradictions may be resolved by future research. The present study focuses on systematic review of the research studies on effectiveness of the life skills programme in adolescents. There are overall fifty-seven studies, out of which twenty-nine Indian studies and rest are international studies. The reviewed articles suggested that the effectiveness of the life skills training/programme are employed on multiple domains and settings such as assessment of knowledge level, prevention of risk behaviours, promotion of physical and mental health, coping behaviours, improvement and development of other skills such self-management and social skills. To evaluate the quality-of-life skills programme, a checklist was prepared. The checklist emphasized on the following parameters such as nature and focus, assessment, research methods, the outcome and the evaluation of the studies.

### **Nature and focus of studies**

The studies mainly highlighted the effectiveness of life skills training in adolescents associated with many indicators such as psychological, behavioural, social, and educational domains. Most of the Indian studies focused on improvised psychosocial and academic skills (Prajina&Premsingh, 2015; Sreehari et al., 2013; Yadav &Pingle, 2016) while international studies mostly focused on prevention and knowledge about risk behaviours and health promotion (Moulier et al., 2019; Hanewinkel&Abhauer, 2004; Buhler, 2007). The risk behaviors in adolescents' period are high in advanced countries because of the socio-cultural systems. Unlike India, adolescents are under parental observation and monitor and co-existence of collectivism and Individualism may also be the reason for the early indulge in risk behaviours as compared to other countries. The quality of nature of overall studies are moderate. After intervention, the follow up session are less conducted compared to international studies (Parmar & Jain, 2019; ZareiEghbal, Akbar, &Behjat, 2012).

### **Research methods**

Most of the reviewed articles have adopted quasi-experiment research design (Ayub, 2017; ZareiEghbal, Akbar, &Behjat, 2012). There are pre-post assessments conducted to understand the knowledge and development of the life skills in the participants. In Indian studies, life skills development scale developed by RGNIYD and NIMHANS are commonly used. Other

questionnaires are used to assess the psychological, social and educational impacts. The sample population are adolescence period from 10 to 24 years as this period. Most of the reviewed studies have not conducted follow up assessment to yield better results.

### **Evaluation and interpretation of the overall studies**

The quality of the reviewed articles is evaluated by understanding its overall studies and its outcome. Indian articles are qualified as moderate because most of the studies are conducted for research purpose to yield short term results. The knowledge, correlates and indicators of life skills are investigated to see the effects of the life skills programme. However, whereas international studies underwent follow up assessments to see the behaviour change in the individuals and the influences of the life skills in daily routine, the quality is strong as counterparts.

### **Finding**

The reviewed articles suggest that life skills programmes are conducted across the globe to impart skills in adolescents and children. However, the implementation and monitoring of life skills in daily life situation are unknown. The longitudinal studies can yield better results to examine the development of life skills on daily activities. Life skills are used in promotion and prevention programmes in India however they are poorly documented. Globally, the research studies are mainly focused on health promotion, India is less in the place. Life skills are taught in school curriculum as a part of the syllabus. The teachers who teach life skills may lack the facilitation skills. The proper training should be provided for teachers who teach life skills programme. The role of parents and teachers also play an important role in cultivation of life skills in their children. Therefore, life skills are important as formal education in individual's life. Early development of life skills will benefit in a long run.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

The present study was aimed to evaluate the previous literature to evaluate and synthesize the data and understand the studies in a comprehension understanding on the life skills training for young adolescents using systematic review process. The study evaluated fifty-six empirical articles of young people from 10 -20 years. The study included international and national studies from various databases. Gough's (2007) stages of systematic review and weight of Evidence (WoE) review process framework were used to assess the quality of the reviewed literature. The findings indicated

that that there are life skills programmes conducted across the globe to impart skills in adolescents and children. However, the implementation and monitoring of life skills in daily life situation are unknown.

In India, now-a-days adolescents are exposed to more information and cultural alternatives than in earlier periods. This provides the adolescents with culturally diverse choices, which cannot be easily exercised due to economic dependence on parents and significant others. The adolescents have to prepare for a global successful adult life of competition and independent functioning which is possible only through enhancing their psychological competencies through life skill education which results in bridging up communication barriers with parents, teachers and others and enables adolescents to handle stressful situations effectively. Life skill education can serve as a remedy for the problems as it helps the adolescents to lead a better life. Therefore, life skill education is a need of the society and every education system should impart life skill education as a part of its curriculum as it is capable of producing positive health behaviour, positive interpersonal relationships and well-being of individuals.

This study has made an effort to evaluate the literature on the effectiveness of life skills training or education provided to young people across the globe. The present study examined the quality of the previous studies on life skills training. The studies are systematically evaluated using certain criterion that was part of the objective of the present study. From the quality assessment, the present study suggests that the culturally sensitive interventions could be planned as per the need's assessment in a defined context. The content, concept, the learner, the process, awareness of own limitations, and flexible planning are quintessential elements in adapting to the life skills programmes. The school settings and home environment especially during the adolescent years provide opportunities for building skills and positive habits. The main aspects involved in implementing a life skills programme in the school context such as feasibility of the life skills programme, integrated or separated life skills programme in accordance with demographic and socio-economic status, training of the life skills educator and role of key stakeholders in adolescents' lives.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the systematic review, the following recommendations can be made for future programmes and policies. The involvement of major stakeholders such as teachers, parents and school management are must at all the stages of the life skills programme and the development of policies

(WHO & UNICEF, 2006). All life skills programmes should have a holistic approach. The programme should begin with needs assessment; it should be implemented in a contextually sensitive manner; and evaluated very vigilantly. Future programmes should build on past programme evaluation to develop new strategies to make the programme effective and conserve inputs for the success of the programme. The medium of instruction and socio-demographics plays a vital role. These factors to be considered in the training inputs. Although Government policies has made life skills programmes mandatory in schools, its efficacy is not effectively covered and evaluated. Therefore, the effectiveness of the skills learnt should be evaluated both at school and home. The application of peer educator model for life skills programmes in school may ensure greater permanence of skill development in the micro system of children and youth well-being. The parents and family involvement are also equally important as home is always the place that individual rely on for better adjustment. Therefore, parents can inculcate life skills in their children with the help of daily activities in house chores.

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## **Sustainability + Support = Pedagogy: An Emerging Formula from Covid-19 Compelled Teacher Education**

Dr. Chandrasekharan Praveen\*

### Abstract

Many of us are yet to overcome the shock that came from the impact of COVID-19 on teaching and learning in general and teacher education in particular. For professional educators associated with life skills education this is an immediate challenge to be addressed. The pandemic caused unprecedented disruptions for teacher education. The strict lockdown measures implemented in India led to a complete closure of academic activities. Endeavours to minimize Covid-induced disruptions without compromising the safety of students by switching on to distance mode through online pedagogy it was assumed, will be the much sought-after pedagogical panacea. But a common problem noticed by the teacher educator cum investigator during curriculum transaction in the online mode for a teacher education programme was a lowering of optimum levels of performance among teacher trainees. This coupled with accessibility and affordability issues for online learning during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic revealed a protracted rise of unprecedented problems among teacher trainees mostly arising from a deterioration of their mental health. Drawing on own experience as a life skills education practitioner, the investigator evolved a formula for teacher education viz; Sustainability + Support = Pedagogy and implemented the same. For the participant observer study, the investigator drew on both qualitative and quantitative data to address the issues that cropped up during the curriculum transaction of a teacher education programme. It is hoped that the lessons learned from hindsight shared in this paper can be fruitfully employed for life skills education in India.

*Keywords:* Covid 19, Life Skills, Online Pedagogy, Teacher educators, Teacher Trainees

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## **Introduction**

The unprecedented total or partial lockdown following the Covid-19 pandemic has necessitated instant adaptation to remote teaching in schools and colleges. Perhaps the most badly affected was teacher education owing to the fact that presenting, practicing and polishing the skills of teaching which is a regular feature of the pedagogical repertoire of a teacher education programme, works best in face-to-face instruction.

## **Background to the study**

The investigator cum teacher educator was assigned to teach a batch of English optional trainees of the two-year Bachelor of Education programme. Following the footsteps of peer educators, an attempt was made to redo the curriculum to teach it online. But the curriculum transaction received a huge setback owing to the prevailing issues of affordability and accessibility. The World Economic Forum report was absolutely true even among teacher trainees of a college of teacher education in a state capital like Thiruvananthapuram: “With huge regional and household disparities in access to the internet and technology, this transition has not been possible for all students and educators. The rapid shift to e-learning prompted by the pandemic has resurfaced long-standing issues of inequality and a digital divide in India...”

## **Brief review of studies**

Many teacher educators and teacher education institutions encountered challenges in carrying out their job in unexpected circumstances. (Nasri et al. 2020; Flores and Gago 2020) Joshi and Amit (2020) attempted a study of the impact of Covid-19 on the Indian education sector. The findings revealed four categories of barriers that are faced by teachers during online teaching and assessments. They include under home environment settings, a lack of basic facilities, external distraction and family interruption during teaching and conducting assessments.

Augilera& Flores (2020) attempted an analysis of 134 empirical studies about online teaching and learning practices. The study highlighted the need to relook online education that integrates technology to support teaching and learning. Murray, Cliona et al. (2020) in their study of relatedness in education reflected on the dynamics of care, control and power inherent in educational relationships. To them, relatedness expands beyond the human and the local towards fostering a common sense of global and ecological responsibility.

Hardar, Linor Lea et al. (2020) made use of the concept of VUCA: Volatility; Uncertainty; Complexity; and Ambiguity to examine the extent to which student teachers were able to cope with the dramatic changes brought about by the COVID-19. From the research we learn that the teacher education curriculum should enable and develop students' social-emotional competencies using a variety of methods, such as mindfulness, stress management techniques, case studies, teamwork around problems that happened in education during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **The problem**

The teacher trainees were accustomed only to face-to-face instruction. But during the Covid pandemic, when the in-class instruction stopped and changed to distance learning, the absence of prior training in online teaching and learning adversely affected curriculum transaction in the teacher education setting. When online instruction became the only feasible mode of curriculum transaction at a time when accessibility and affordability issues were hampering seamless delivery of instruction, ensuring progression of education became a critical challenge. The investigator cum- teacher educator also noticed that in the absence of face-to-face contact, teacher trainee performance began to affect significantly. Diligent teacher trainees who could maintain a high-level during classroom presentation began to struggle when forced to transform their presentation before a video camera with an invisible audience. This meant that the smart diligent trainee had not only to be taught how to present online but also needed a time to transform their work keeping the quality level high. Most teacher trainees were found to be going through a seismic change in not only their course work, but their living situations, family concerns and finances. The direct effect noticed by the teacher educator was a deterioration of mental health of the teacher trainees. So, it became imperative to find solutions to keep teacher trainees motivated in their route to learning.

### **Objectives of the study**

- Identify problems faced by trainees with regard to resources and support
- Identify and introduce sustainable educational tools for online learning
- Identify and provide essential resources and support for continuing online learning.

### **Methodology**

#### **Sources of data**

Needs analysis surveys were conducted among teacher trainees by the

investigator during May-June 2020. Informal interviews regarding problems related to affordability and accessibility conducted by the investigator among the teacher trainees who were assigned to teach, matched the findings arrived at an analysis of the data of the need analysis survey. During the transaction, regular feedback related to learning difficulty caused by the online mode of instruction including personal problems was collected through informal online chats with the trainees.

### **Population and Sample**

The population comprised teacher trainees of the two-year B.Ed. course offered by the University of Kerala. The sample comprised thirteen third semester B.Ed. trainees of the English optional course in a college of teacher education in the suburbs of Thiruvananthapuram, the capital of Kerala State.

### **Research Method**

The investigator cum teacher educator attempted a participant observer action research drawing on both quantitative and qualitative data. After considering the nature of the accessibility and affordability issues of individual trainees, the investigator zeroed in on the most appropriate technological tool, strategy and resources to be employed and utilized for the transaction of curriculum. Following the identification of the problem faced by the trainees, drawing on own experience as a life skills educator and experience in use of technology, the investigator identified WhatsApp as a sustainable tool for curriculum transaction and provided essential support to the trainees to ensure sustained participation and learning during the disruption of education following the pandemic crisis.

### **Research Questions**

1. What can be done to ensure curriculum transaction in the teacher education programme adversely affected by shut down of educational institutions following the Covid pandemic?
2. What steps can be taken to address issues related to accessibility and affordability of online instruction?
3. How can strategies of life skills education provide comfort and confidence to trainees who tended to display acute stress and withdrawal from learning caused by a perceptible deterioration of own mental health?

### **Theoretical base of Life Skills Education during Pandemic**

The UNICEF's Comprehensive Life Skills Framework observed : "...

In India's complex and diverse scenario, life skills have inherent attributes to elicit empowerment and active participation from children and adolescents, helping them recognize their power and potential and take positive action to promote social inclusion, harmony and promote equal opportunities for all... Research indicates a positive correlation between life skills and increased attendance levels, enhanced classroom behaviour and improved academic achievement.”

Hodge et al. (2012) proposed a conceptual framework, to determine whether individual life skills interventions achieve optimal psychological well-being. By developing the framework, the researchers sought to identify and articulate the key underlying psychological mechanisms such as, basic needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness which according to them contribute to optimal human functioning and positive psychosocial development in all life skill programmes.

An US website, Child and Adolescent Behavioural Health in a Blog post following the outbreak of the Covid -19 pandemic, quoted their Peer Counsellor Bianca Hoote: “When students are in that transition of developing independent living skills getting connected to community resources is huge!... resiliency is a powerful word!” The post makes a significant mention of resiliency skills. Though the target audience for which the post was written are college teachers and college students, it applies equally well to students across the globe. The resiliency skills identified included:

- Self esteem
- Self-control
- Problems solving skills
- Learning from mistakes
- Optimizing thinking patterns
- Goal setting with realistic expectations
- Social skills to seek assistance from others
- Ability to recognize own emotions and those of others
- Understanding and acceptance of our strengths and weaknesses

## **Findings**

### **A. Addressing research questions**

1. What can be done to ensure curriculum transaction in the teacher education programme adversely affected by shut down of educational institutions following the Covid pandemic?

The needs analysis survey revealed restrictions on movement following the pandemic which prevented visit to libraries to access learning resources and absence of proper connectivity with the teacher education institution and the teacher educator. The use of WhatsApp and 24X7 teacher educator support was ensured for curriculum transaction.

2. What steps can be taken to address issues related to accessibility and affordability of online instruction?

The scope for employing the popular social media tool which trainees use for connecting with peers were found to be suitable for adoption for pedagogical purposes as all the trainees had a smart phone. Further, the limited use of data for WhatsApp at a time when trainees did not own a lap top or an internet connection, made possible continuing online instruction among trainees affected by accessibility and affordability issues during the pandemic crisis.

3. How can strategies of life skills education provide comfort and confidence to trainees who tended to display acute stress and withdrawal from learning caused by a perceptible deterioration of own mental health?

Life skills education particularly aspects of resiliency skills mentioned above were discreetly introduced in the pedagogical practice employed by the investigator cum teacher educator who occasionally assumed the garb of the counsellor to address specific mental health issues of own teacher trainees.

## **B. Sustainable practices for online pedagogy**

(Challenges, Strategy employed and Advantages identified)

### **Challenges**

The data collected revealed that the teacher trainees faced several challenges. They include:

- Unfamiliarity with online instruction
- With regard to technology-based education, many teacher trainees did not have a lap top nor a good internet connection.
- It is commonly agreed that interaction is the key to learning. But several technological tools were found to be unsuitable for introducing pair and group work during online instruction.

## Strategy employed

A policy brief on Education during Covid-19 and Beyond (2020) of the United Nations observed: "... the education disruption has had, and will continue to have, substantial effects beyond education... Governments and stakeholders should build resilient education systems for equitable and sustainable development. Remove barriers to connectivity ... strengthen the articulation and flexibility across levels and types of education and training". This necessitated identification of a sustainable tool like WhatsApp for online instruction.

Even the author's own experience of using WhatsApp of revising content during vacation (Praveen, C. 2015) which was rated as a best practice by the State Institute of Educational Management and Training-Kerala, led to choosing WhatsApp as the most affordable and sustainable tool for online instruction during the Covid-19 pandemic.

- A common device regularly used by the trainees identified through a survey was a smart phone with WhatsApp. Though the average weekly consumption of one GB data to keep connected with peers was meagre for online instruction it was found to be appropriate to commence teaching online using WhatsApp.
- While using WhatsApp the trainees were given tasks which gave plenty of opportunity to work together in groups outside of class time.
- In choosing the tasks, care was taken to make it interesting thereby ensuring that the content received on WhatsApp turns out to be a proven motivator for learning.
- The investigator cum teacher educator collected regular feedback from the teacher trainees to identify the effect of online learning. For this, the online activities given to the trainees were continuously monitored. Then through regular checks with the expected learning outcome, necessary changes were incorporated.

## Advantages identified

- Unlike textbook learning, the scope for learning in a collaborative environment in which the teacher educator and peers are always connected 24X7 on the WhatsApp group, obliterated the feeling of isolation normally felt by students in a large class.
- The availability of quality B.Ed. related content on WhatsApp, which never incurred any charges at a time when quality education is

increasingly becoming a big business helped familiarize the teacher trainees with the possibilities of sustainable teaching-learning practices. This is significant given the fact that the teacher trainees will be taking up the teaching profession shortly.

### **C. Support during online pedagogy**

(Challenges, Strategy employed and Advantages identified)

#### **Challenges**

When the Covid Pandemic struck, even the University Grants Commission directed universities and colleges to set up mental health help lines for students (Economic Times). Lee, in a post in The Lancet, a website on Child and Adolescent health as early as April 2020 cautioned: “As the pandemic continues, it is important to support children and adolescents facing bereavement and issues related to parental unemployment or loss of household income...strict social distancing measures, and the pandemic itself affect the wellbeing of children and adolescents...”

The B.Ed. trainees whom the investigator was assigned to teach were showing a failure to participate and a tendency to withdraw. Discrete informal inquiries revealed that being accustomed to face-to-face instruction, the teacher trainees were experiencing several problems which include:

- Poor internet facility
- Rising expenses for purchase of data cards
- Inability to meet deadlines for submitting assignments
- Delay in receiving feedback regarding accuracy of comprehension
- An inability to cope with the insistence on online teaching and learning
- Absence of a human touch in the interaction mode of a computer screen
- Lack of connectivity with peers and the stress and isolation that followed
- Those whose parents were not literate, failed to get any assistance from homes
- Inability to seek immediate clarification possible earlier in face-to-face instruction
- Non availability of reference materials owing to local quarantine and travel restriction to local libraries
- With the restriction in movement following hike in Covid related cases, several trainees were experiencing a complete absence of human connection

Such problems and challenges identified through an analysis of the data collected from the survey and informal interviews revealed that the mental health of almost all the trainees were affected. This led to the investigator's realization that a lot was dependent on making own presence felt, adopting a caring attitude, providing essential resources, leading the trainees by offering necessary support to ensure effective transaction of curriculum.

### **Strategies employed**

Both before, during and after each teaching encounter, the investigator cum teacher educator, shared essential learning materials and specially prepared notes via email and WhatsApp. The data revealed that the support the teacher trainees needed differed in degree. Being adult learners, a majority of them were found to be ones who can handle minor mental health related issues. But to ensure nurturing of a positive climate for wellbeing of the teacher trainees, the following was attempted:

- Online instruction invariably began with the creation of a rapport
- An attempt was made to get into the shoes of the trainees to get a feel of isolation if any experienced
- A willingness was shown to listen to the concerns of the trainees even as they tried to overcome the tough situation
- Periodic messaging and telephonic conversation with trainees were meticulously undertaken to drive out the sense of isolation and help trainees develop the feel that they are being supported and cared for
- Occasionally the investigator assumed the garb of a counsellor especially while interacting with those trainees who experienced problems of a psychological nature

### **Advantages identified**

- The 24X7 connectivity established was found to motivate the teacher trainees and give them the feel that they are not alone and disconnected
- The support rendered by the investigator cum teacher educator basically addressed the ever-present possibilities of insecurity and relentless change likely to be a characteristic of post Covid pedagogy

This narrative basically shows that when necessity is the mother of invention, it is possible for indigenous pedagogic practices to address the unprecedented problems brought about by the pandemic. The research undertaken has also shown that life skills educational practices have a big

role to play in addressing educational disruptions which affect the performance and mental health of teacher trainees. More significantly it has helped evolve a new formula from the Covid-19 compelled teacher education viz; Sustainability + Support = Pedagogy.

### **Lessons from hindsight: What Life Skills Education can focus on during pandemic**

The American Psychological Association published a timely post on building resilience as “we all face trauma, adversity and other stresses”. The post provides a roadmap for adapting to life-changing situations. To help learners develop resilience, things which we could do include: make them realize that change is part of living; do everything possible to help learners nurture a positive self-view; and see that learners maintain an outlook that is hopeful. They should be made to realize that even the current hopeless situation will pass. These aspects ought to form the prime consideration during life skills education during the pandemic crisis.

Some teacher trainees adapt well and others do not. We need to identify what exactly can be done to help such trainees who are destined to remain stressed which will continue to affect their performance. During face-to-face instruction, hearing a teacher trainee’s tone of voice, seeing the confusion or delight on their face, a quick check on the work submitted, is incredibly helpful and important in the educational process and in building relationships. An alternative for this pedagogical aspect during the distant online mode of instruction has to be identified. Perhaps teacher educators too have to be trained to engage in conversation with teacher trainees over the mobile phone aimed at inquiring about their health or their family and try to re-establish the relationship that has been threatened by distance. It appears that the time has come for integrating life skills into the Bachelor of Education curriculum.

### **Limitations of the study**

This is basically an action research undertaken to address an immediate problem. The sample size is small and the duration of the study, comparatively short. In fact, several organizations have commenced free online teaching and support to help learners across the globe to tide over the crisis. It is not known whether the participants of the study received any academic/ financial assistance from any agency during the study.

### **Scope for further research**

Many experts in the field of academics are of the opinion that the difficul-

ties which trainees have encountered since the pandemic started will continue to persist and will have to be faced in the near and not so near future. Perhaps the present study can form the base for further research in the area of teacher education. It is possible to utilize life skills education strategies to come up with ways of supporting innovation and improvements of traditional and online teaching and teacher education. In fact, more and more organized research is needed to contribute to a body of knowledge, theoretical and practical, for teacher education to use in the changing educational landscape.

Practitioners of the use of technology for teaching know that online instruction is a finely honed skill, practiced over many academic years just like classroom strategies and skills. So, for teaching continually online without any sort of training is not only daunting, but dissatisfying too. Studies mentioned earlier in this paper has shown how it affects teachers' too. Perhaps, just as for the trainees it would be worth exploring the utilization of strategies of life skills education for addressing issues caused by the Covid pandemic.

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# Self-Efficiency and Techno-stress Management of Primary School Teachers during COVID 19

Ms. Fousiya O.P.\* & Dr. SaleemT. M\*\*

## Abstract

The Covid 19 crisis has changed fundamentally the whole spheres of our life. The exploration of modern technology and the techno-pedagogic applications shifted the teaching learning instructions to online mode. Here, the sudden changes in the teaching learning environment create many problems in teachers. One of the problems they have to face is the techno-stress, which refers to the -negative impact on attitudes, thoughts, behaviors, or body physiology that is caused either directly or indirectly by technology(Well and Rosen, 1997). This study explores the self-efficiency and techno-stress management of primary school teachers during Covid-19. The period is the toughest and over-stressed for all academia especially primary school teachers. The study consisted of 100 primary school teachers working in government and unaided schools of Kerala from Palakkad, Malappuram and Trissur district. The study also focused the difference in married and unmarried teachers. Self-efficiency and techno-stress management scales were administered for the study. The data was subjected to statistical analysis using mean, SD and t-test. The result of the analysis indicated that there was a significant relation between the self-efficiency and techno-stress management of primary school teachers with respect to type of management and marital status.

*Keywords:* Primary school teachers, self efficiency, techno-stress

## Introduction

The outburst of Corona virus has extensively been affecting the life and life style of everyone all over the world. The Covid 19 pandemic has affected educational systems worldwide leading to the near total closure of schools, universities and colleges. In the field of education, a drastic change has been ensued which expect later somewhere in the distant future. In re-

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sponse to the sudden closure online learning has been a critical life line for instruction. The offline mode of education has been changed to online and the education being given virtually. Teachers are forced to conduct their classes through online learning management platforms such as Zoom, Google meet, Google classroom etc. have to work more with extra effort especially primary school teachers.

Needless to say, the pandemic has transformed the centuries old chalk, blackboard classroom etc. to those driven by technology. Even though the teaching effectiveness and efficiency has increased with the introduction of technology, the extra use of technology and its extent effected teachers and students definitely. Techno-stress is the negative psychological effects with the introduction of innovative technology. The teachers are experiencing techno-stress since they can't ready to regulate the over use of technology.

Techno-stress becomes even more imperative with the transition to the era of connection where information is everywhere. Techno-stress, as a dark side of ICT, is a relatively new and understudied area, in contrast to considerable numbers of topics on benefits associated with ICT to people's work and life (Tarafdard et al., 2010). Never before in the history of education happens such a long stretch of lockdown due to this epoch of Covid 19. The change of teaching to online mode also creates many problems even though the teachers are efficient in teaching, some teachers are facing stress due to the illiteracy on technology and its applications. This is areality that the teachers are the prime victim of this pandemic situation since the instructional mode shifted to online.

### **Need and significance of the study**

Teacher quality and efficiency are the most important factors that influencing student's achievement. A teacher can exhibit efficiency in the manner she gets things done, how she manages her class and her time in getting things done. Efficiency of teachers matters the outcome of the students. Basically, an efficient teacher can handle her class effectively, thriving her classroom with student's engagement and certainly focuses on student's total development. The online mode of study diminutions the students' achievement, skill development and commitment to some extent. The teachers are whole heartedly working hard to hit the students' progress and development, but the over use of technology creates problems especially primary school teachers.

The government and aided school teachers have to follow up the IT mission Kite Victors channel, assessing the worksheets and have to clear

doubts using social media such as WhatsApp, telegram etc. In the case of unaided school teachers, they are forced to create videos and schedule live classroom instructions through Google meet, zoom etc. They have to over-strain due to work load and have to face physical as well as mental issues. With the concern of efficiency, the teachers can handle any situation effectively and thus the issue of technological stress also be taken. Here a focus on teachers' efficiency and techno management are related and get studied. The study tried to relate the efficiency and the management of technological stress. Whether an efficient teacher can manage techno-stress or not is the centre of the study.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To study self-efficiency and techno-stress management of Primary School Teachers during Covid 19
2. To compare self-efficiency and techno-stress management of male and female Primary School Teachers during Covid 19
3. To compare self-efficiency and techno-stress management of government and unaided Primary School Teachers during Covid 19
4. To compare self-efficiency and techno-stress management of unmarried and married Primary School Teachers during Covid 19

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

- H1-There is no significant difference between mean scores of self-efficiency and techno-stress management of primary school teachers.
- H2-There is no significant difference between mean scores of self-efficiency and techno-stress management of male and female primary school teachers.
- H3-There is no significant difference between mean scores of self-efficiency and techno-stress management of government and unaided primary school teachers.
- H4-There is no significant difference between mean scores of self-efficiency and techno-stress management of married and unmarried primary school teachers.

### **Methodology**

Normative survey method was selected for the present study. The survey was conducted by using the Google forms.

## Sample

The sample of the present study were 100 primary school teachers from Malappuram, Palakkad and Trissur districts.

## Tools

Self-Efficiency and Techno-Stress Management Rating Scale were constructed and standardized by the investigators and validated.

## Statistical techniques

Statistical techniques used in the study were Mean, Standard Deviation and t- test.

## Analysis and Interpretation

The objectives of this study are to find out the difference between the self-efficiency and techno-stress management of primary school teachers and also to find the difference with respect to gender, type of management and marital status.

H1:-There is no significant difference between mean scores of self-efficiency and techno-stress management of primary school teachers.

The significant difference between the self-efficiency and techno-stress management of primary school teachers were tested for the total sample and the details are shown in table 1.

**Table 1: N, Mean, SD and t-value for Self-Efficiency and Techno-stress Management of Primary School Teachers**

	Variables	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of significance
N=100	Self-efficiency	39.26	5.591516	0.002728	0.05
	Techno-stress management	41.64356	5.543616		No significance

The mean, SD and t-value of self-efficiency and of primary school teachers were calculated and the calculated mean value is 39.26, SD is 5.591516. The mean value of techno-stress management is calculated as 41.64356 and the SD as 5.543616 and the t-value is 0.002728. From the findings it is clear that the calculated t-value is less than the table value at 0.05 level of significance which shows there is no significant difference in self-efficiency and techno-stress management.

H2-There is no significant difference between mean scores of self-efficiency and techno-stress management of the male and female primary school teachers.

The significant difference between mean scores of self-efficiency and techno-stress management of the male and female primary school teachers were tested for the total sample and the details are shown under table 2.

**Table 2: N, Mean, and SD and t-value of Self-Efficiency of Male and Female Primary School Teachers**

	N	Mean	SD	t- value	Level of significance
Male	40	39.425	5.551103	0.936059	0.05 No significance
Female	60	39.33333	5.604679		

The calculated mean of self-efficiency of male and female primary school teachers is 39.425 and 39.3333 respectively. Corresponding SD is 5.551103 and 5.604679 respectively. Calculated t-value is 0.936059, which is less than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. So, there is no difference in relationship of self-efficiency of male and female primary school teachers.

**Table 3: N, Mean, and SD and t-value of Techno-Stress Management of Male and Female Primary School Teachers**

	N	Mean	SD	t- value	Level of significance
Male	40	40.025	5.166398	0.010932	0.05 No significance
Female	60	42.86667	5.494116		

The calculated mean of techno-stress management of male and female primary school teachers is 40.025 and 42.86667 respectively. Corresponding SD is 5.166398 and 5.494116 respectively. Calculated t-value is 0.010932, which is less than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. So, there is no difference in relationship of techno-stress management of male and female primary school teachers.

H3-There is no significant difference between mean scores of self-efficiency and techno- stress management of government and unaided Primary School Teachers.

The significant difference between mean scores of self-efficiency and techno-stress management of the government and unaided Primary School Teachers were tested for the total sample and the details are shown under table 4.

**Table 4: N, Mean, and SD and t-value of Self-Efficiency of Government and Unaided Primary School Teachers**

	N	Mean	SD	t- value	Level of significance
Government/ Aided	73	39.06849	5.857874	0.37485	0.05 No significance
Unaided	27	40.18519	4.641262		

The calculated mean of self-efficiency of government and unaided primary school teachers is 39.06849 and 40.18519 respectively. Corresponding SD is 5.857874 and 4.641262 respectively. Calculated t-value is 0.37485, which is less than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. So, there is no difference in relationship of self-efficiency of government and unaided primary school teachers.

**Table 5: N, Mean, and SD and t-value of Techno Stress Management of Government and Unaided Primary School Teachers**

	N	Mean	SD	t- value	Level of significance
Government/ Aided	73	42.78947	5.03049	0.621717	0.05 No significance
Unaided	27	43.44444	5.542378		

The calculated mean of techno-stress management of government and unaided primary school teachers is 42.78947 and 43.44444 respectively. Corresponding SD is 5.03049 and 5.542378 respectively. Calculated t-value is 0.621717, which is less than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. So, there is no difference in relationship of techno-stress management of government and unaided primary school teachers.

H4-There is no significant difference between mean scores of self-efficiency and techno-stress management of the unmarried and married primary school teachers.

The significant difference between mean scores of self-efficiency and tech-

no-stress management of the married and unmarried primary school teachers were tested for the total sample and the details are shown under table 6.

**Table 6: N, Mean, and SD and t-value of Self Efficiency of Unmarried and Married Primary School Teachers**

	N	Mean	SD	t- value	Level of significance
Married	51	39.45098	5.115911	0.882663	0.05 No significance
Unmarried	49	39.28571	6.031169		

The calculated mean of self-efficiency of married and unmarried primary school teachers is 39.54098 and 39.28571 respectively. Corresponding SD is 5.115911 and 6.031169 respectively. Calculated t-value is 0.882663, which is less than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. So, there is no difference in relationship of self-efficiency of unmarried and married primary school teachers.

**Table 7: N, Mean, and SD and t-value of Techno Stress Management of Married and Unmarried Primary School Teachers**

	N	Mean	SD	t- value	Level of significance
Married	51	42.68627	5.829203	0.077011	0.05 No significance
Unmarried	49	40.73469	5.044698		

The calculated mean of techno-stress management of unmarried and married primary school teachers is 42.68627 and 40.73469 respectively. Corresponding SD is 5.829203 and 5.044698 respectively. Calculated t-value is 0.077011, which is less than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. So, there is no difference in techno-stress management of unmarried and married primary school teachers.

### Findings

From this study it is shown that:

- There is no significant difference in relationship between self-efficiency and techno-stress management of primary school teachers
- There is no significant difference in relationship between self-efficiency and techno-stress management of male and female primary school teachers

- There is no significant difference in relationship between self-efficiency and techno-stress management of government or aided and unaided primary school teachers
- There is no significant difference in relationship between self-efficiency and techno-stress management of married and unmarried primary school teachers

## Conclusion

Based on the objectives of the present study the following conclusions were drawn. There is no significant relationship between self-efficiency and techno-stress management of primary school teachers. Efficiency of a teacher may not be related to technological instructional strategies and the stress caused by technology. As far as a teacher is concerned, he or she should be acquainting with new innovations and strategies to deal with the updated students. Students are aware about technology and its applications and they are not seeming to be bored. They have enough knowledge on different aspects and perspectives of technology. Thus, the teacher is to be changed according to the demanding needs of the students and society. Also, present study observed that on the basis of gender, school management type and marital status there is no relative difference in self-efficiency and techno-stress management of primary school teachers.

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## Interpersonal Relationships, Life Skills and Character Strengths of Secondary School Teachers in Suburban Mumbai during Challenging Times

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### Abstract

Education during this pandemic has seen a shift in its mode of physicality to virtual medium. Teachers had to adapt to online teaching without much training and also had to accommodate to the needs of their students whilst maintaining interpersonal relationships amongst their peers and students. The quality of relationship is one of the most powerful psychosocial predictors of one's physical and mental health outcomes. Life skills are the psychosocial competencies for positive behaviours and what directs these behaviours is our 'values'. According to Martin Seligman, "character strengths are values in action". The aim of this study is to explore the association between teacher-student interpersonal relationship, life skills and character strength of in-service school teachers and secondary school students of suburban Mumbai. The sample of this study were 157 in-service school teachers (M=21, F=136) and 300 students from suburban Mumbai (M= 140, F=160). The research methodology is mixed method. The findings reveal the top character strengths and values of the teachers who were high scorers in life skills as well as the life skills and character strengths of teachers who were able to maintain meaningful interpersonal relations with their colleagues and were positively perceived by their students in terms of their interpersonal relationships. Further implications for positive education for interpersonal relationships of teacher-student, life skills education and character strengths are discussed.

**Keywords:** Character strengths, Interpersonal Relationships, In-service teachers, Life skills, Positive Emotions, Positive Education, Student's perception, Values

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## Introduction

Education during this pandemic has seen a shift in its mode of physicality to virtual medium. Teachers had to adapt to online teaching without much training and had to explore e-learning options by themselves or with the help of their peers. Also, teachers had to accommodate to the needs of their students whilst maintaining interpersonal relationships amongst their peers and students. Teachers had to correspondingly develop their own character strengths too so as to engage the students in a relatively new medium of digital learning.

The closing of schools and the move to distance learning during the covid-19 crisis has led to changes in the way teachers interact with their students. (Valerie Strauss, 2020).

Interpersonal Communication is at the root of human existence itself and through it, that the relationships are formed and managed.

Strong and positive teacher-student bonds are important during the pandemic, says Dr Rebecca Collie (2020). According to Dr. Collie, caring, fair and attentive teacher-student relationships will help ease COVID-19 anxieties and uncertainties. Dr Collie in her study (2019) titled Teacher-student relationships and students' engagement in high school, found that the more positive relationships students had with their teachers, the better their engagement was in school.

There is abundance of evidence suggesting that social support is integral to wellbeing (Deiner& Seligman 2002; Meyers 2000). Feeling connected to friends and families is essential for students' emotional and social wellbeing in the present and for their healthy development as they approach adulthood (O'Connor et al., 2011).

The positive relationship is strong and nourishing relationships with self and others. Many at times people are less kind to themselves than they are to their friends or acquaintances. People including students and teachers are in a relatively strange situation due to this lockdown, which is very critical of their own actions and social interactions.

Education is the primary mode for facilitating life skills and it must have life building, man making and character making assimilation of ideas (Draft National Education Policy 2019). Teachers are thus the key, to provide holistic educational opportunities to learners at all times.

Life skills are the most crucial skill sets that enable people to live mean-

ingful lives as well as helping them reach their maximum potentials while surviving and enabling people to cope with life and its challenges and changes especially during a crisis. Life skills is a set of transformative competencies and a group of empowering skills that strengthen over time and it includes knowledge, attitude, skills and behaviour and what directs all this is our ‘values’ that reinforce these into empowered actions.

According to WHO, Life skills have been defined as “the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life”. The ten core life skills as listed by WHO are classified into three categories as Social Skills includes Communication, Interpersonal Relationship, Empathy; Emotional Skills includes Coping with Stress, Coping with Emotions and Cognitive Skills that includes Problem-Solving, Critical Thinking, Creative thinking, Decision Making and Self-Awareness.

According to Martin Seligman, character strengths are values in action, it can be defined as positive traits reflected in thoughts, feelings, and behaviour which exist in degrees and can be measured as individual differences.

Character strength is developed empirically and scientifically to assess ideal human values (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). There are six virtues and 24-character strengths developed by Martin Seligman and his colleagues as Values in Action (VIA) built by systematic classification of positive values researching all major religions and traditional philosophies and cultures.

**Table 1: Character Strength & Virtues**  
(VIA Classification of Character strengths)

Virtues	Wisdom	Courage	Humanity	Justice	Temperance	Transcendence
Character Strengths	Creativity	Bravery	Kindness	Fairness	Forgiveness	Appreciation of beauty
	Curiosity	Honesty	Capacity to Love	Leadership	Humility	Gratitude
	Love of Learning	Perseverance	Social Intelligence	Teamwork	Self-Regulation	Hope
	Judgement	Zest			Prudence	Humour
	Perspective					Spirituality

Individuals when aware of their character strengths can adapt positive behaviours and deal effectively with demands and challenges of their everyday life.

There is growing consensus that the nature and quality of children's relationships with their teachers play a critical and central role in motivating and engaging students to learn (Wentzel, 2009). Effective teachers are typically described as those who develop relationships with students that are emotionally close, safe, and trusting, who provide access to instrumental help, and who foster a more general ethos of community and caring in classrooms. (Wubbels., et. al, 2012).

The present paper is an attempt to explore the association between teacher-student interpersonal relationship, life skills and character strength of in-service school teachers and secondary school students of suburban Mumbai during the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **Review of Related Literature:**

There have been numerous researches carried out to emphasize the effectiveness of life skills education in the development of students' social, emotional and cognitive development & dealing with their psychosocial problems as also on the importance of character strengths in education and interpersonal relations of teacher-teacher or teacher-student, but there hasn't been much studies exploring the associations between the three.

The reviewed literature titled 'Teacher-student relationships and students' engagement in high school', found that the more positive relationships students had with their teachers, the better their engagement in school and by engagement, it meant that they looked at the students' enjoyment of school, how much they participated in activities, and what their future aspirations were." (Collie,2019). Also, research shows that integrating life skills and character strengths helps to enhance social, emotional and thinking skills and also helps individuals to achieve their goals and strengthen their abilities to be successful in life (Chadha, Nidhi, 2017). In the foreseeable future- digital platforms have a large part to play in how to maintain one's interpersonal relationships during this pandemic. (Pennington,2020). According to Liz Willen, editor of the Hechinger Report (2020), the relationships teachers form with children and vice versa are often the key to educational success. Character strengths education of teachers enhanced teacher professionalism (Lim Chin Yin et al,2018).

### **Aim of the Study:**

The aim of this study is to explore the teacher-student interpersonal relationship, life skills and character strength of in-service school teachers and secondary school students of suburban Mumbai.

### **Research Question:**

1. What are the life skills scores of teachers who were able to maintain positive interpersonal relationships with their peers and students during Covid-19 times?
2. What is the relationship between students' perception of teachers who connected with them positively during the lockdown and the teachers' life skills and character strengths?
3. What is the association of interpersonal relations of teachers with their peers and the teachers' life skills and character strengths?

### **Objectives of the study:**

1. To assess the level of life skills of in-service school teachers of suburban Mumbai who helped and maintained interpersonal relationship with their peers during the Covid-19 pandemic period.
2. To assess the level of life skills of in-service school teachers of suburban Mumbai who connected meaningfully with their students during the Covid-19 pandemic period.
3. To explore the character strengths of teachers who helped and maintained interpersonal relationship with their peers during the Covid-19 pandemic period.
4. To explore the character strengths of teachers who connected meaningfully with their students during the Covid-19 pandemic period.

### **Sample of the Study:**

The sampling technique used for this study was purposive sampling. The sample of this study were 157 in-service school teachers (M=21, F=136) and 300 students from suburban Mumbai (M= 140, F=160). The age of the students was 11-15 years and age range of teachers was from 22-58 years.

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

The present study deals with exploring the teacher-student interpersonal relationship, life skills and character strength of in-service school teachers

and secondary school students of suburban Mumbai. The research methodology for this study is mixed methods. The quantitative data involved finding the character strengths and life skills using the tools while the qualitative data involves asking open ended questions to the teacher-peers and students about the teachers who had positive interpersonal relationships (IPR) with them.

**Tools:**

For the present study, following tools are used to collect data

1. Qualitative data of open-ended questions was asked for interpersonal relationships for teachers and students.
2. Value in action Inventory of Strength Scale (VIA- IS; Peterson, Park, & Seligman, 2005)
3. Life-skills Assessment Scale (Nair et.al, 2010).

**Reliability & Validity of the tools:**

1. **The Values in Action Inventory of Strengths Scale (VIA-IS;** Peterson, Park, & Seligman, 2005a) shows good reliability on measures of internal consistency and test-retest correlations and correlates substantially with self-nominations of strengths.

Reliability: N=150,000 adults who responded to the VIA-IS using the internet from various backgrounds.

**Table 2: Reliability of VIA-IS:**

Method	Reliability Co-efficient
Test Retest	>0.70
Cronbach's Alpha	>0.70

Validity: The VIA-IS was developed out of the Wellsprings and Gallup Organizations Strengths Finder measure. Items for scales were suggested by experts in the field of positive psychology and self-nominations of strengths correlate substantially ( $r = 0.5$ ) with the matching scale scores for all 24 strengths.

2. **Life-skills Assessment Scale** is a tool by Dr. A Radhakrishnan Nair, Dr. R Subasree& S. Ranjan (2010). It is a multidimensional test with a five-point Likert scale that assesses 10 core life skills defined by WHO.

Reliability:The pilot study was conducted on 890 students from various backgrounds such as rural, urban, tribal, schools and colleges from across the country.

**Table 3: Reliability of Life Skills Assessment Scale**

Method	Reliability Co-efficient
Split Half	0.82
Test Retest	0.91
Cronbach's Alpha	0.84

Validity: The developers of the life skills assessment scale established face, content validity and criterion validity (N=30). The correlation between percentage obtained by each students' in each skill and their teacher's judgements were calculated which indicated 89% concurrence.

Validity: The developers of the life skills assessment scale established face, content validity and criterion validity (N=30). The correlation between percentage obtained by each students' in each skill and their teacher's judgements were calculated which indicated 89% concurrence.

#### **Data Analysis: (Descriptive)**

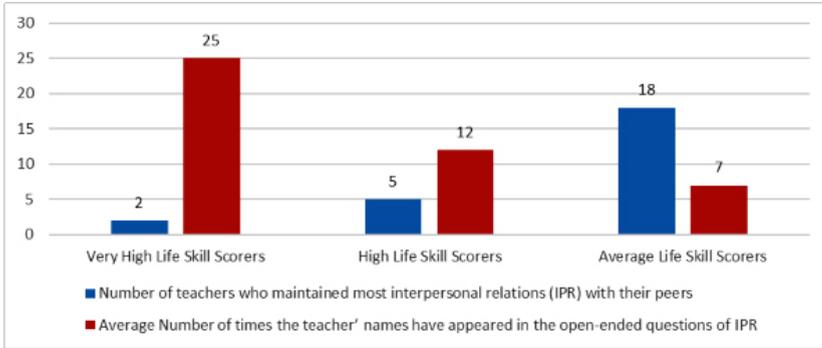
Objective 1: To assess the level of life skills of in-service school teachers of suburban Mumbai who helped and maintained interpersonal relationship with their peers during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 4: Life skills scorers of in-service school teachers of suburban Mumbai who helped and maintained interpersonal relationship with their peers during the Covid-19 pandemic.

N=25	Number of teachers who maintained most interpersonal relations (IPR) with their peers	Average Number of times the teacher' names have appeared in the open-ended questions of IPR	Percentage of teachers who maintained most IPR with their peers
Very High Life Skill Scorers (Above 417)	N=2	25	8%
High Life Skill Scorers (387-417)	N=5	12	20%
Average Life Skill Scorers 325-386	N=18	7	72%

{Norms for Interpreting Life Skills Scores Taken from Manual for Life Skills Assessment Scale- (Nair, Subashree& Ranjan,2010)}

Figure 1: Bar diagram of teachers who helped and maintained interpersonal relationship with their peers and life skill scores during the Covid-19 pandemic.



Interpretation: Thus, the teachers who helped and maintained interpersonal relationship with their peers during the Covid-19 pandemic period were majorly from the very high life skill to high life skill and average life skill scorers.

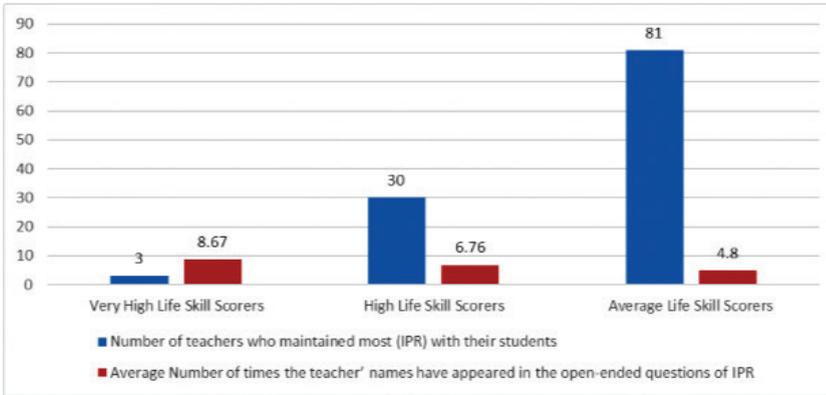
Objective 2: To assess the level of life skills of in-service school teachers of suburban Mumbai who connected meaningfully with their students during the Covid-19 pandemic period.

Table 5: Life skills scores of in-service school teachers of suburban Mumbai who connected meaningfully with their students during the Covid-19 pandemic period.

N=114	Number of teachers who maintained most (IPR) with their students	Average Number of times the teacher' names have appeared in the open-ended questions of IPR	Percentage of teachers who maintained most IPR with their students
Very High Life Skill Scorers (Above 417)	N=3	8.67	2.6667%
High Life Skill Scorers (387-417)	N=30	6.76	26.31%
Average Life Skill Scorers 325-386	N=81	4.8	71.05%

{Norms for Interpreting Life Skills Scores Taken from Manual for Life Skills Assessment Scale- (Nair, Subashree& Ranjan,2010)}

Figure 2: Bar diagram of teachers who connected meaningfully with their students and life skill scores during the Covid-19 pandemic.



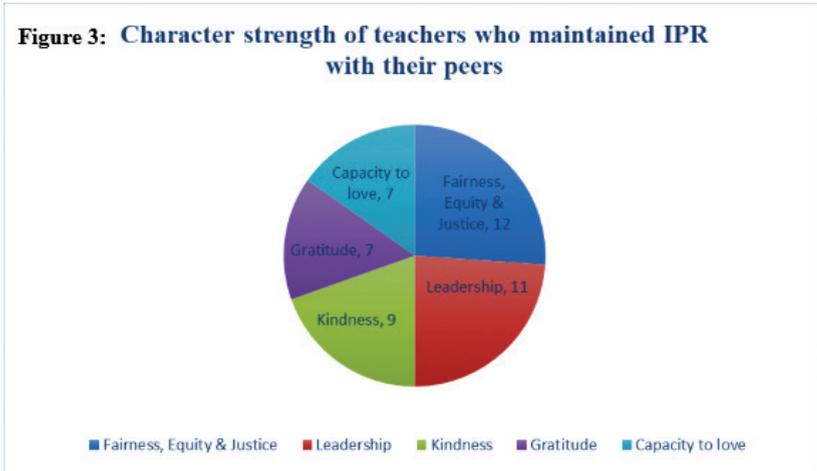
Interpretation: Thus, the teachers who connected meaningfully with their students during the Covid-19 pandemic period were majorly from the very high life skill to high life skill scorers and average life skill scorers. Also, there no teachers mentioned by the students from the low life skill scorers' group.

Objective 3: To explore the character strengths of teachers who helped and maintained interpersonal relationship with their peers during the Covid-19 pandemic period.

Table 5: Character Strengths of Teachers who helped and maintained interpersonal relationship with their peers during the Covid-19 pandemic period.

Peer connections		Character Strengths of Teachers who helped and maintained IPR with their peers during the Covid-19 pandemic period.				
Teachers who maintained IPR with peers the most (as given by their peers in the open-ended questions)	N=25	Fairness, Equity & Justice	Leadership	Kindness	Gratitude	Capacity to love
Frequency of character strengths		12	11	9	7	7

Figure 3: Pie chart of teachers' character strengths who maintained IPR with their peers during the Covid-19 pandemic.



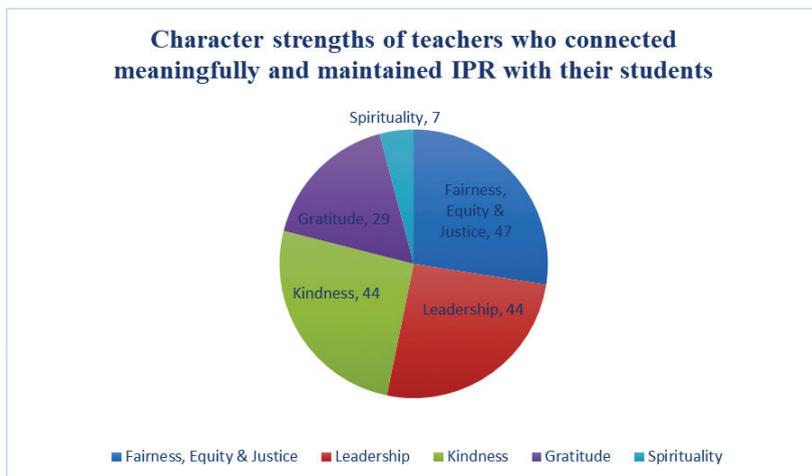
Interpretation: Thus, it can be concluded that the teachers who helped and maintained good interpersonal relationships with their peers during COVID-19 pandemic period mostly had character strength of fairness, equity and justice, kindness, leadership and gratitude.

Objective 4: To explore the character strengths of teachers who connected meaningfully with their students during the Covid-19 pandemic period.

Table 6: Character Strengths of Teachers who connected meaningfully with their students during the Covid-19 pandemic period.

Student connections		Character Strengths of Teachers who connected meaningfully with their students during the Covid-19 pandemic period.				
Teachers who connected meaningfully and maintained IPR with students the most (as given by their students in the open-ended questions)	N= 114	Fairness, Equity & Justice	Kindness	Leadership	Gratitude	Spirituality
Frequency		47	44	44	29	27

Figure 4: Pie chart of teachers' character strengths who connected meaningfully and maintained IPR with their students during the Covid-19 pandemic.



Interpretation: Thus, it can be concluded from figure 4 that the teachers who connected meaningfully with their students during the Covid-19 pandemic period mostly had character strength of fairness, equity and justice, kindness, leadership, gratitude and spirituality.

### Findings:

1. The teachers who helped and maintained interpersonal relationship with their peers during the Covid-19 pandemic period were majorly from the very high life skill to high life skill scorers and average life skill scores.
2. The teachers who connected meaningfully with their students during the Covid-19 pandemic period were majorly from the very high life skill to high life skill scorers and average life skill scorers. Also, there no teachers mentioned by the students from the low life skill scorers' group.
3. Teachers who helped and maintained good interpersonal relationships with their peers during COVID-19 pandemic period had mostly character strengths of "Fairness, equity & Justice" (Virtue of Justice), Kindness (Virtue of Humanity), Leadership (Virtue of Justice), Gratitude (Virtue of Transcendence) and Capacity to love (Virtue of Humanity), were the other top character strengths.
4. Teachers who connected meaningfully with their students during the

Covid-19 pandemic period mostly had character strength of Fairness, equity and justice, Leadership (Virtues of Justice), Kindness (Virtue of Humanity), Gratitude and Spirituality (Virtues of Transcendence).

### **Discussion:**

In a crisis, the virtue of humanity and justice in the society has always stood out. Also, many teachers all around the world have gone an extra step by being true leaders, showing kindness and empathy while connecting with students on the virtual medium. Teachers have taken care of the fact that several students were inaccessible to the internet and online classes thus taking extra measures to teach them via telephone, sending worksheets on messaging applications etc.

Studies suggest that relationship among teachers are important in building strong school communities (Penuel, Riel, Krause & Frank, 2009). Also, strong teacher networks can enhance teacher commitment and give teachers a sense of belonging and efficacy (Grotsky & Gamoran, 2003). Research shows that students and teachers match a great deal in their perceptions and teachers positively support students to promote resilience and help in self-development and other virtues. (Andrew Everett Reich, 2014).

In Covid-19 pandemic, during the lockdown, most school teachers in the Indian subcontinent were unaware of the virtual mode of teaching. Teachers along with their peers worked tirelessly in learning technology and also patiently teaching and helping one another. Studies show that a good teacher-student relationship is an important determinant for classroom environments and is also beneficial for student learning outcomes. (Davis, 2003; den Brok, Brekelmans & Wubbels, 2004; Henderson, Fisher & Fraiser, 2000; Opdenakker, Maulana & den Brok, 2012). Research also shows that the top seven strengths were forgiveness, self-regulation, leadership, kindness, hope, love of learning and fairness (Abasimi, Gai & Wang 2017 Ghana).

### **Scope & Limitations:**

In challenging times like the Covid-19 pandemic, schools were shut and were in complete lockdown leaving the student and teacher isolated at their homes. Therefore, there was an urgent need to re-conceptualize education to meet the challenges and changes of the society in a crisis. As time kept passing, educators had to think alternatively to bring students and teachers on one platform via the virtual medium. Teachers had to be innovative and creative in making videos, online lessons and presentations very cre-

ative and exciting based on the pedagogy while keeping it child- centered. Also, students had to quickly adapt to online learning and classes, as it was the need of the hour. Though the internet played a great role to connect many students and teachers, inaccessibility to the internet, one mobile phone shared amongst students' parents and their siblings, vulnerability of teachers of stepping into the unknown zone of the virtual education were the limitations.

On a global scenario, every individual needed to be more humane and have values of kindness, fairness to look at others compassionately during a world crisis besides also having life skills which would help to cope with the demands and challenges of a crisis like Covid-19 pandemic. As humans cannot live or work in isolation, interpersonal relationships helped teachers as well as students to survive and handle demanding situations in a crisis.

This study deals with interpersonal relationships, life skills and character strength of teachers and students' perception of character strengths of teachers who connected meaningfully with their students during the Covid-19 pandemic period. The study includes in-service school teachers from suburban Mumbai schools and secondary students from suburban Mumbai schools.

### **Limitations:**

The study was conducted for in-service teachers of only one state board school of English Medium in suburban Mumbai. It deals with only students' perception of secondary students.

### **Suggestions:**

1. There is a need to further explore the association of interpersonal relations, life skills and character strengths of students and parents
2. There is a need to further include study of these variables on teachers and students of the other boards and mediums.

### **Conclusion:**

All human beings are born with social and emotional needs, thus, apart from one's families, one need friends/peers to give us comfort and pleasure. In challenging times like the Covid-19 pandemic, where families though isolated, individuals could connect with their peers via the internet, social media, messaging apps, voice and video calls, thus making individuals take and receive social and emotional support from each other. In view of the mental aspect of health, according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs,

love and belonging are essential for establishing self-esteem and self-actualization when a sense of security is achieved.

Enhancing life skills enables individuals to translate knowledge (what one knows), attitudes and values (what one believes and feels) into actual abilities and action (what to do and how to do it). Studies have also shown that life skills are helpful for human happiness (Kumar P. And Kumar A., 2016). Research shows that character strengths and virtues have important consequences for an individual. They are critical for the well-being of an entire society. Individual's Strengths need to be recognized, celebrated, strengthened, and used.

No one will live one's own life without challenges and setbacks, but to the degree that young people have greater life satisfaction, character strengths, and social support, they will experience fewer psychological or physical problems in the wake of inevitable difficulties (Park, 2004b; Peterson, Park, & Seligman, 2006).

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## Assessment of the Role of Yogic Practices in a Post-retirement Period of Teachers

Ms. Thakur,S.A.\* & Dr. Deshmukh, N.D.\*\*

### Abstract

Teaching is a noble profession as it molds the future of children. However, studies have indicated that this profession is one of the most stressful occupations in the world. The respect they get in society also comes with a lot of responsibilities. Being a role model for their student is sometimes an extra burden. The work of teachers often demands prolonged standing, significant use of head down posture for reading, assessment, report writing, etc. They are subjected to occupational voice disorder due to large size classrooms and noisy environments. They are held responsible for the grades of the students. These and many more such situations increase job stress and lead to burnout. This leads to countless health hazards like musculoskeletal disorders, voice problems, cardiovascular diseases, obesity, hypertension, breathing disorders etc. These often cause various chronic health consequences and compromise the quality of life of teachers especially after retirement, as the problems increase with age for themselves. During the study, it is found that due to the above never-ending responsibilities teachers hardly get time for themselves. This study is an eye-opener for future research to look at the noble professionals differently. Taking a short meditation break during the day and attending regular yogic practices can help to reduce anxiety level and give the energy. It also help to better cope with the physical demands. Studies have suggested some measures which could prove life-changing and can enjoy their working hours with confidence. This can be made easily achieved with a calm and content mind. The best way to march towards good mental and physical health is by practicing yoga and meditation.

*Keywords:* Teaching profession, stress, yogic practices

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## Introduction

Retirement is thought of as a relatively new phenomenon in the world as it dates back to the 20th Century. According to Kleiber and Linde (2014) retirement is a transition from being in occupation to other life options such as leisure, volunteering to help others or to engaging in business activities. This is the time when one permanently leaves his or her job either due to official or personal reasons. Mandatory/official and early/voluntary retirement are the two broad categories of retirement. Mandatory retirement is the time that one is asked by the employer to stop working upon attaining the retirement age which ranges from 58 years to 60 years in India. Early or voluntary retirement is when a person chooses to retire either due to health reasons or wishes to change his/her socio-economic lifestyle (Milligan and Wise, 2011). At old age, the workload would be adjusted to what one could manage given the state of his/her body and health due to ageing (Seattle Times, 2013). Ejorume et al (2012) states that old age has been associated with a myriad of problems that ranges from physical, mental, economic to social problems. Psychologically, it is a time of engaging in a different life journey where there are possibilities of uncertainty, fear, anxiety and confusion (Nikolova and Graham, 2014).

By 2020, the World Health Organization predicts that depression and anxiety will be the second largest contributor to the global disease burden, after heart disease. Effectively addressing mental health concerns entails a comprehensive approach that addresses the root of the problem/s (da Silva et al, 2009). Yoga has a powerful effect on stress and hypertension and can help people reduce the amount of medication they need,” says Amy Wheeler, yoga professor at California State University at San Bernardino. In a review of 17 studies published in Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine, researchers reported significant reductions in blood pressure for interventions incorporating three basic elements of yoga practice: postures, meditation, and breathing. Researchers speculate that the slow, controlled breathing inherent in yoga practice decreases nervous system activity, which helps manage blood pressure levels. Yoga is an individual activity that has social implications. According to Ramanathan et al (2017) yoga should be a part of health-care facilities for elderly as it can enhance the quality of life by improving their overall mental health status. It could provide a healthy and positive alternative from depressing negative thoughts, and give them a sense of purpose and hope. As the Patanjali Sutras note that yoga is the practice of quieting the mind (Patanjali, 2003). Positive mental health is “a state of well-being in which every individual

realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community (WHO, 2020). Yoga is a form of promoting mental wellbeing for healthy people. Yoga has consistently yielded encouraging results in the treatment of generalized anxiety disorder and panic disorder and has also been shown to be effective in improving mood, decreasing symptoms of depression and trait anxiety in young and old patients (Kabat-Zinn et al, 1992). Various research studies found that yoga is as effective as or better than exercise at improving a variety of mental and physical health measures such as stress, quality of life, mood states, heart rate variability, and pulmonary function. On a physical level, it helps each bodily cell to revitalize itself, it facilitates digestion, it makes inspiration more efficient and improves circulation and quality of blood (Shyam Sunder Sarkar, 2018).

### **Yogic practices:**

Yoga is a holistic practice combining physical poses (asana) with mindfulness, breathing techniques, and meditation. The combination of these practices promotes functional mobility, self discovery and helps rebalance the nervous system. For millennia, yoga practitioners have attested to the benefits of yoga. While these anecdotal reports are compelling, modern science is now able to validate these claims. The research on yoga is preliminary; however, initial studies have found a yoga practice to positively correlate with both physical and mental wellness. It's uncontroversial that yoga can improve strength, flexibility, and endurance, but studies have also found that regular practice may help:

- Lower the risk of cardiovascular disease
- Recovery from strokes and surgery
- Prevent falls
- Manage arthritis, pain and inflammation
- Manage diabetes
- Manage digestive issues like IBS
- Improve sleep quality
- Facilitate the grieving process
- Manage depression and anxiety

When we consider these benefits on the whole, it's not surprising that several studies concluded practicing yoga measurably improves seniors' self reported sense of well-being. While some of the benefits on this list can

be derived from other fitness programs, yoga outperforms other exercises on several key metrics. For example, one study found that elderly adults assigned a yoga practice experienced greater improvements in regulating feelings of anger and anxiety, as well as increases to their sense of well-being and self-efficacy, than those in an exercise control group. This is not to say that going for a run or lifting weights is not beneficial, but it appears yoga is unique in its scope and its ability to address a broad spectrum of wellness indicators.

### **Role & Responsibilities of a teacher**

Education is the fundamental aspect in the development of a country. If the youth is educated, a future is born. Teachers provide education that improves quality of life. Students are considered as the future of the nation and human kind and a teacher is believed to be a credible guide for their advancement. Teachers are responsible for shaping a child's future, making him/her a better human being. Teachers of all walks of life and subjects have the ability to shape opinions and help form ideas about society, life & personal goals. Teachers can also expand students' limits & push their creativity. The teacher plays an important role in educating an individual. Teachers' role is not only in teaching the syllabus but to mould the habits, traits, character, attitude & young population so that they become responsible citizens of the country. They encourage students to achieve the educational goals and transform them to be able to take responsibilities assigned to them. In order to discharge their duties effectively teachers are required to possess certain qualities. They not only should have basic educational qualifications but also update their knowledge regularly. They must be familiar with the changing educational, technological world with which their students are surrounded. Whatever their personal problems, they are supposed to face the children with some dedication and enthusiasm.

### **How do health problems originate in teachers?**

Teaching is considered as a noble profession as it create the future of children. However, studies have indicated that this profession is one of the most stressful occupations in the world. Not only do teachers are assigned innumerable duties in school but also being a teacher they have to handle many responsibilities at home. Society too expects them to find solutions for general problems. These expectations many times become burdens that affect a teacher's mental & physical health. It involves many aspects of an individual's life such as mental, organizational, physical & cognitive disturbances. Studies have shown that many several risk factors are as-

sociated with teaching jobs and in the long run, it induces many health problems such as cardiovascular disease, obesity, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, glucose intolerance, IR, and may come discomfort and dysfunction in many organs. Some of the diseases identified after an individual takes up the teaching profession in school are generalized health problems due to environmental conditions prevailing in the school are musculoskeletal disorders, voice problems, breathing, etc. Research done by Abirami M.T & Raj Kalat, gives a condensed version of the research done on this topic during the past two decades both in India and globe wise. The content of this review article is an eye opener for future research and to bring out standardized guidelines to be followed for school teachers. The different forms of work, reflected in their organizational aspects, may cause various health consequences & compromise the quality of life of teachers especially after retirement.

According to WHO, quality of life (QPL) is based on the individual's position in life, in the content of culture and the system of values in which they live as well as their goals, expectations, standards and concerns. It is important to maintain good nutrition & regular physical activity for teachers to maintain good health and be a role model for their students. To overcome occupational stress studies have suggested some measures which could prove beneficial to teachers in coping with stress are ; improved self-esteem, build self-confidence, work on building emotional intelligence competencies, develop a good sense of humor, foster a supportive friend circle, cultivate hobbies, develop effective communication. All these can be achieved with calm & content minds by practicing yoga and meditation.

Time pressure to complete syllabus, working hours, noise in school, excessively large sizes of classrooms, problems with school authorities, lack of autonomy, student's behavioural problems, lack of motivation, parents behavior, duties other than teaching lead to psychosomatic complaints. They experience exhaustion, fatigue, headache, tension, sleep & concentration disorders, inner restlessness and increased irritability. Occupational stress is common among teachers as they are held responsible for the success or failure of educational results. A study also indicated that teachers working with low social-economic status have more mental health problems, health-risk behaviors and poorer psychosocial work environment.

### **Retired Teachers & Yoga – Why I Selected This Topic**

After retirement when I started my regular routine, I started my life which

I had planned before retirement. It included regular morning walk, healthy and timely meals. I had missed many things due to a busy schedule of service and related activities. After about two years when I could join yoga practice. I realized that a lot of damage was already there physically and mentally. During initial yoga sessions I could not fold my right leg while sitting, vajrasana was a distant dream. It was difficult to sit comfortably in any position to concentrate on breathing. After a long period, almost 7-8 months, I was not only able to fold my both knees comfortably while sitting but also started focusing on breathing in vajrasana. That I felt, a great achievement for me. Slowly I started regular one hour & 15 min yoga practice. I learnt pranayam and it also became part of my daily routine. I picked up healthy eating habits and could handle hunger pangs easily. I could face any problem with a very balanced mind. During ups & downs in life problems, the mind remained stable. Tantrums of surrounding situations could not fluctuate peace of mind. Most importantly I could observe my life – river sitting on the bank of it. Look at my life like an outsider, analyse it and think of improving it. Whenever during early yoga practice, our trainer would say, understand your limitations while during various asanas. I really understand my limitations and capabilities. I knew where I should stop and where I should proceed in life. It helped me to try to follow yogic lifestyle. It made my life stable and content. I started learning everything that I wished to dream during my life but could not do due to responsibilities I attached to myself and enjoyed them too. I buried myself in subjects of my interest while fulfilling my family expectations.

Now, when I look back to my post retirement period, I realize that my life is moving like a slowly running river and I am happy about it. When I contacted my friends who retired after a long teaching career, I find that those who started practising yoga after retirement, their health is stable compared to others.

So my project can be a guideline for others especially from a teaching background.

### **Research Method:**

The study adopted a qualitative research design. Responses of the participant teachers:

*Mr. Kiran*

Teaching is a noble profession, and a teacher moulds the careers of his/her students to prepare for the future. In my span of 35 years of teaching junior college students, I found the job exciting, rewarding and challeng-

ing. In my initial years of teaching I had lots of energy and enthusiasm, but as years went by health issues cropped up. These occupational hazards were voice disorders due to long term verbal communications with students. Talking by raising voice in overcrowded classrooms, to overcome outside disturbances, presence of background noise etc. This puts strain on the vocal cords leading to pain, hoarseness etc. Musculoskeletal disorders especially of the neck, shoulders, back and spine. This is due to poor working postures, long hours of standing, extensive use of the blackboard etc. Skin allergies are a common form of disorders caused by use of chalk sticks. Appearance of rashes on hands, face and body is possible. Chalk dust, when inhaled, causes respiratory disorders. Mental health issues like stress, anxiety, burnout, etc have been there among teachers. The need to complete the syllabus, assigned topics and other related academic tasks within a timeframe adds to the burden. Some of these occupational hazards are common occurrences, given the environment. Added to this is the woes faced by commuting. It is the responsibility of an individual to be aware of the hazards one faces in an occupation and to take preventive steps so as to minimise risks.

*Mrs. Nandini*

In the era of the internet, it is important for a teacher to strike the right balance between being abreast with the latest developments and covering what is prescribed in the textbooks. Teachers are unabashedly blamed for being bookish and not touching upon practical aspects. Teachers ability to go beyond the prescribed portion also depends on the student's willingness to learn more and not just for the examinations.

Teacher-student ratio:

The teacher-student ratio in most junior colleges is 80 to 1 which is very stressful. The teacher not only needs to teach but also needs to mind the students' moods and pranks. Some do not have the grit to persevere and give in. This could lead to a mental burden and could negatively affect a teacher's self-confidence.

Planning for a class:

Enough training should be given for teachers to plan their portion and teaching pedagogy. Also, time must be allotted for this planning so that teachers can shape the learning journey of a student. If a teacher is better prepared for her classes, the students will be able to make the most of the learning process.

### Physical challenges:

Improper facilities and lack of understanding of one's posture while teaching can lead to permanent physical damage. Writing on a blackboard can lead to spondylitis, constant standing can lead to stress on the knees. Taking required breaks, sitting correctly, stretching, walking around while teaching, etc need to be included in teachers' training.

### Being relevant while covering the prescribed portion:

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*Mrs. Chitra, retired teacher, BMC School, Mumbai*

“I used to have headache and throat pain quite often due to speaking continuously. Writing on a blackboard always causes pain in the arm. I also used to feel restless until the experiment in the lab was done successfully.”

*Dr. Ranjana*

“During my service as a teacher, I happened to be very allergic to the chalk dust..Almost every day I had sneezing... Owing to noisy surroundings in the institute, I always had to raise my voice to reach the last row which caused throat pain, change in my natural scale of voice. Subsequently, it also caused my inability to pronounce the letter ‘h’ (□). It suppressed my natural sound of laughing even for which I had to undergo a treatment.I suffered severe Spondylitis due to writing on board as well as checking innumerable answer books during the tenure. Gradually, I also developed blood clotting in legs as I had to be standing all the time while in class.”

*Mrs. Prasanna*

Teachers represent one of the most important and growing sectors of the workforce in India, but they are often overwhelmed with multiple duties which make them vulnerable to stress and other physical and mental health issues.

**Physical problems:** Some of the physical problems we face are back ache,neck pain,eye strain,shoulder pain,leg pain, etc.Allergy due to chalk powder also is another problem. Teachers spend a massive amount of time standing and walking in the classroom. We have to see that the discipline is maintained in our classroom. Usually class strength is more than eighty. When we give lectures in the classroom we are shouting maximum. Continuous lectures really cause strain in our throat.Science teachers have practical sessions where we have to give individual attention to the students. We always try to do our best for students. We forget our physical problems then.Our work is not limited in our institution. To prepare for our lectures, paper setting,paper correction all are our homework related to our profession. It causes eye strain, neck problems,back ache, etc.Usually we neglect all these problems when we are working. At home also we have equal responsibilities. We should manage our household duties as well.

**Mental stress:** Teachers are supposed to be the role model for students. Our college starts at 7 am.Reaching on time to college is our first task of the day. Being a single parent it was very difficult for me. Arranging everything ready for our children and getting out of the house to catch the bus to reach the college in time indirectly gave me mental stress.In college,dealing with so many students at a time, completing the syllabus in time,exams,paper correction,student discipline everything was a challenge. We never think how much strain we are taking daily to complete

a day. Those days we never thought of ourselves. Small health issues we neglected. When I was in the administration side, I had to spend a lot of time in college. So much responsibility like admission of the students, class distribution, different streams, preparing timetable, discipline, conducting exams, result work, etc. It took a considerable time in our daily routine. The mental stress also was there. To consider the issues of students, and fellow staff was not that easy. Though we want to provide more teaching facilities, it may not be possible due to our limitations.

Sometimes sandwiched between management and colleagues make us miserable. It affects us emotionally too. Anxiety is another stress. At homefront as well as our working field we have our own ideas and plans to fulfill. But always we may not be successful. That creates a lot of tension and anxiety.

After retirement I am having breathing problems. I am not in a position to exert myself for doing kitchen work and all. I get a cough if I exert much. I am on inhalers now. Other problem is anxiety. I can't take even any tension. Frozen shoulder I get sometimes. I do exercise for it. Pranayam I do but not on regular basis. But it helped me a lot when I attended my yoga class. I personally feel we should start Yoga as a part of curriculum at a young age itself. Meditation and Yoga will help a lot to overcome our physical and mental stress.

*Ms. Nandini.S.*

Yoga is a Sanskrit word derived from two roots one meaning 'union' and the other 'samadhi'. In the sense of union it means the union of individual soul (Jeevatma) with universal soul (Paramatma) or the union of body with mind which is taken as the common meaning throughout the world. nowadays mostly everybody understand yoga as only 'asanas' which is actually one of the eight parts of yoga and it is the physical aspect of yoga.

Yoga can be said as a way of living with a healthy body. Body is the primary medium for performing our duties. Patanjali the great seer of yoga says that, yoga help one to stop all worries in life. Patanjali has laid down the best and useful methods for this known as 'ashtanga yoga' (eighthfold limbs of yoga) which are :

- 1) Yama-social conduct for all
- 2) Niyama- individual behaviour
- 3) Asana-body postures
- 4) Pranayama- controlling breath

- 5) Pratyahara-withdrawal offenses from expired objects
- 6) Dharana-concentration /fixing the mind on one object
- 7) Dhyana-meditation /concentrating for a long time
- 8) Samadhi-contemplation /self realization

Yoga asanas makes the body fit to have a stable and balanced mind. Increases the capacity for concentration for meditation.

*Mrs. Veena Purohit*

Post retirement I became an active yoga enthusiast, practicing some asanas, pranayama on a regular basis. Within a few months my body become more flexible, minor aches and pains disappeared. I began feeling more enthusiastic, energetic and viewed life positively. The ‘feel good factor became more dominant. Today my only regret is why I did not take up this practice during my active life as a teacher.

Looking back, I began reflecting about the problems faced by teachers and reasons for teacher ‘burnout’. There few random thoughts about teachers at the junior college level faced are penned here. Teachers belong to professions involving direct interaction with students. The teacher is always putting a live show to the classroom environment.

New teachers enter the profession with a sincere desire to help student to motivate them and mentor them. The new enthusiasm, ideals make them feel that they can make a difference in the life of students. Then why do most people “burn out” over a few years in the profession? Expectations fail, enthusiasm wanes and most of us face this and begin to view students impersonally, which is not a good state of mind. This condition is due to many reasons.

Outwardly the job looks easy. Handling bunch of students, preparing endless question papers, conducting examinations, assessment and result work. This is followed by vacations. So everyone feels teachers have it eight months and then enjoy the vacation. But the demands of this job are very stressful. Research shows by the end of their career, many suffer from occupational stress and experience ‘bum out’.

Teachers at junior college level face many problems. The teenagers who join at this level are fresh out of school and are in a common pot based on the subjects selected. They come from different mediums, different socio economic backgrounds. At the end are those who are well educated and well off and at the other end there are students from poor economic back-

ground and some of them are first generation educated. These different levels have to be handled differently. But being put together in the same classroom environment the teacher has to balance their teaching methods to suit all categories. So it becomes very stressful. Science teachers are luckier they can interact on one to one basis in the laboratory work. But the high strength of students in Commerce and Arts does not allow this kind of one to one interaction which is very much needed. Salaries of teachers are not very attractive. So the best talent [exceptions are there] do not want to join this profession. Today the government has introduced contract teaching jobs, where the teacher is paid on hourly for a few years and then given a permanent job. The miserable pay, the uncertainty of the job affects the morale of teachers.

Teachers take up part time jobs, tuition to add to their of meagre pay packets. This leads to mental and physical stress managing with this meagre salary is next to impossible in big Cities. To add to this burden school and college managements give additional duties without extrapayment. Election duty and Census duty given by the government adds to the strain.

Poor infrastructure problems, badly ventilated classrooms and large number of students per class leads to a lot of physical wear and tear. Over the years inhaling of chalk dust, standing endlessly, continuous lecturing adds to the physical deterioration. Most teachers by the time they retire suffer from back aches, slip disc, spondylitis, allergic cold, etc. This level lets me add that if we take up some relaxation techniques like yoga, it can be a stress buster and the wear and tear can be contained. Most of us realise this a little late in life. The new generation is more health conscious, the facilities they have are slightly better, so stand a better chance.

Researchers, educationists, government bodies have realised the multifaceted role of teacher in society where they teach, guide and become role models. This is needed for the younger generation. Today we see more progressive managements who are teacher friendly making a pretty impact on their staff. More and more teachers are encouraged to update their skills and take research work, adding to the enthusiasm of the profession. Bold teachers are the paving way and the future looks brighter.

Yogapractices will help in coping with the physical and emotional problems they face. This will not solve all the problems, but help us in maintaining a healthy frame of mind. It is nice to see Yoga has now attained a new position in the field of education and is slowly becoming a part of the curriculum. This will help in shaping both the teachers and the students into becoming better citizens.

## Conclusions

Yoga has evolved from an ascetic practice to become a universal language of spiritual exercise crossing barriers of religions and culture. All human beings, whether young, old, weak or ill can get benefitted by regular yoga practice. This proved true during our study. When we received the responses of the retired teachers, who retired after long teaching experiences, we found that as worked in similar working conditions, they had similar health problems. Out of the 22 responses we received, 3 teachers had started yoga practices at the age 35-40 yrs had no significant health problems. 4 teachers, who started practicing regularly after retirement, did not get rid of the problems but the process of deterioration stopped at the time of commencement of regular yoga practice. Two teachers were not doing yoga but some other exercise had less health problems, while remaining 14 teachers are undergoing some or the other medical treatment and also on some medication.

Yoga is a solution for most of the adverse side effects of modern life system. It is helpful to elevate health and wellness at physical emotional and spiritual level. Yogic life system can be acquired for:

1. People either with particular health disorder and want customized, effective solution for it and quickly return to good health
2. People wish to exercise with appropriate purpose
3. People wish to have to ageing slowly and gracefully
4. People looking for simultaneously strengthening and relaxing both the body and mind.
5. People who aim to use yoga as complementary and alternative medicine therapy in the treatment of chronic and systemic diseases.

Teachers are required to make conscious changes in their daily routine by including yoga in it. Yoga practice is time tested and safe. It is economical in terms of time, energy and resources. Yoga should be practiced during the service, after retirement as and when you start practicing yoga and you start getting benefits from it. The biological clock of working people is decided by the requirements at job. Responsibilities at job at home and society minimize your own space so also space for good exercise. There is least time left for introspection due to busy life schedule. Proper posture is extremely important for teaching profession as they have to perform lessons in front of the class. From Yogic point of view proper posture and

proper body movements are important components of healthy lifestyle. Posture is a manifestation of physical and mental balance and has powerful influence on physical aging and mental mood. All of it is taken care by 'including yoga in daily life'.

We suggest that Yoga practice should be included during the teacher's training syllabus. It will not only benefit the teachers but students and society as well. Because yoga is not a purely physical practice, there is flexibility to adapt one's practice to meet one's needs. This is a significant factor why yoga has become so popular with seniors. As you age, your bones naturally lose density and joints become stiffer. A gentle yoga practice can be effective in preventing and slowing bone density loss, and is safe for those with osteoporosis. Whether you are looking to prevent osteoporosis or relieve painful symptoms caused by an existing bone condition or fracture, yoga postures and stretches can be extremely beneficial. Regularly moving your joints can help reduce stiffness and joint tenderness.

Teaching profession demands prolonged standing when teaching in the classrooms or even outside the classroom that may lead to a varicose vein for some teachers. The work of teachers often involves significant areas of a "head down" posture, such as frequent reading, marking of assignments, writing the reports etc. It is formed that spondylosis is common among the teachers. S.Ramprasad & Y.A.Maruti in their research paper, "Vocal problem: Neglected occupational hazard in teaching profession", insisted that teachers represent noble professionals who use their voice as primary job risk. They are vulnerable to occupational voice disorder due to cessation of voice usage in large size classrooms; noisy environment increases the incidence of vocal problems. Teachers are held responsible to raise the standard. Which in return increases job stress? Stress, burnout are some emotional factors which can arise from facing the everyday challenges (Giacometti, 2005).

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