

Life Skills Education in Developing Academic Resilience Among Learners

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ABSTRACT

In the present generation, the world is increasingly competitive. One of the most important abilities for overcoming obstacles in life and developing into well-rounded people is resilience. The capacity to recover from hardship is resilience. In order to provide individuals, the abilities they need to deal with the challenges of everyday life, life skills education is essential. Numerous problems arise for students in academic environments. These problems need critical life skills that foster resilience in educational environments. The capacity of a student to achieve successful academic results in spite of academic failures, stress, and demands associated to school is known as academic resilience. Resilience, collaboration, teamwork, and management are examples of life skills that assist learners in leading fulfilling lives. On the secondary data, the current investigation is built. This study examines the role that life skills education plays in helping students build academic resilience that encompasses mental, emotional, and social aspects. It does this by looking at the ways in which certain life skills help students become more resilient. Additionally, this research makes recommendations regarding how educators, schools, families, and the community may help kids become more academically resilient.

1. Introduction:

An integral part of every human being's lifespan occurs throughout adolescence. The modern world, which is typically characterised as a realm of achievements, is also a realm of practical knowledge and abilities. When people have the skills necessary to succeed in life, they are able to contribute more effectively to society. Everyday social and personal attributes may be enhanced via the acquisition and use of life skills. According to the World Health Organisation (1993)¹, "the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life" are life skills. One of education's main purposes is to produce holistic persons who can take charge of their own lives. Life skills are crucial because they help us grow as people and allow us to appreciate each moment for what it brings. There are several challenges that students encounter in school, college, and society at large. Unfavourable circumstances or difficulties must be overcome. They are said to be resilient if they can triumph over such difficult situations. It is known as Academic Resilience in academic environments.

1 A. Understanding Life Skills Education

Various life issues in the current context force us to consider something in this way. In order to have healthy and productive lives, life skills are crucial. Life Skills can be categorised as General life skills and Critical life skills. General Life skills include social skills and personal skills whereas Critical Life skills include Problem solving, Critical thinking, Coping with stress and emotions. A person's ability to succeed in life depends on their life skills. They help us achieve success in every sense of the term by fostering emotional and psychological wellness.

The ability to competently handle these challenges is known as life skills. Competencies like self-directed learning, dealing with challenging situations, and flexibility are examples of life skills, which are a combination of information, behaviour, attitude, and values. Academic resilience may be fostered when students acquire "life skills" (WHO) including the ability to solve problems, think critically, manage stress, and control their emotions. These are fundamental traits that are necessary for successfully navigating developmental tasks and obstacles. The psychological abilities needed in today's ever-changing classrooms may be honed with the aid of Life Skills Education. According to Weichold et al. (2008), life skills are the capacity to think critically and act constructively in order to guarantee one's own well-being and to have fruitful social connections; these talents assist one to better handle life's difficulties. Many students at this age just can't seem to get over the obstacles they encounter in the classroom. So, coming of age is a pivotal period, both in terms of potential and risk. Present statistics on adolescents' mental approach reveal an inadequate state. There has been an uptick in major mental disturbances and other issues affecting teenagers, according to studies. Psychological considerations, such as an inability to cope with emotional distress, disputes, academic pressure, or future concern, are common motivators of high-risk activity. Personal abilities Many risk factors may be mitigated and students can develop academic resilience via education.

1 b. Academic Resilience: A Multidimensional Construct

The ability to recover quickly from adversity is known as resilience. A good self-concept, optimism, and life skills are all part of this connected idea. I HAVE (social and interpersonal strengths), I AM (inner strengths), and I CAN (interpersonal and problem-solving abilities) are the three resources that have lately been used to describe resilience. It takes a combination of qualities for a person to be resilient. Alternatively, resilience may be seen as an ongoing process. According to this theory, resilience is best understood as the dynamic interplay between a person and their environment that allows them to overcome hardship. The results of child longitudinal studies show that many people grow up to be powerful and affectionate people, even if they face tremendous risks due to poverty and other socioeconomic disadvantages. Both protective and risk variables are involved in the complex process of resilience. Marsh (2006) provided a definition of academic resilience as the capacity of students to overcome academic obstacles, stress, and pressures in order to achieve good school results.

Academic resilience may be influenced by two types of factors: those that put one at risk and those that save one from falling victim. Unhealthy relationships, mental anguish, academic failure, and misbehaviour are greatly increased by these risk factors. Good character traits, social support, good role models, and efficient use of resources are examples of protective factors. Adolescents who scored higher on measures of resilience compared well with those who scored lower in a broad academic setting (Sagone & De Caroli, 2013).

1 c. Research Gap-

Life skill education and academic resilience among learners are further highlighted by the study of the publications, research papers, reports, surveys, and theses. It has not been the primary focus of the majority of research. So, the researcher set out to investigate the role of Life Skills Education in helping students become more resilient in the face of academic challenges.

1 d. Research Questions:

1. How does life skills education influence students' ability to cope with academic challenges?

1 e. Objectives of the Study

1. To study life skills and academic resilience among learners.
2. To explore life skills education in developing academic resilience.

2. Methodology

This study is a qualitative approach. Secondary data is the foundation of our investigation. The secondary sources that were used for this include books, websites, journals, papers, and theses that have already been published.

3. Showing Different Aspects of Life Skills in Developing Resilience

Education in life skills fosters resilience in students in a variety of mental, emotional, and social domains.

- Mental development: In order to properly handle a given scenario, life skills are necessary. In order to come up with creative solutions, students often think critically and weigh the benefits and drawbacks of a scenario.
- Social Development—The approach used when instructing students in practical life skills is based on research on how teenagers learn by seeing the actions of others and the results of those actions. (Bandura, 1997).
- Emotional Development—Developing resilience in school and in life depends on a person's emotional development. In times of academic stress, students who are emotionally intelligent perform better. Deskmukh (2014) investigated and found that the intervention group had much better emotional and social adjustment. His research sheds light on how children can learn to control their anger, communicate effectively, and overcome emotional difficulties.

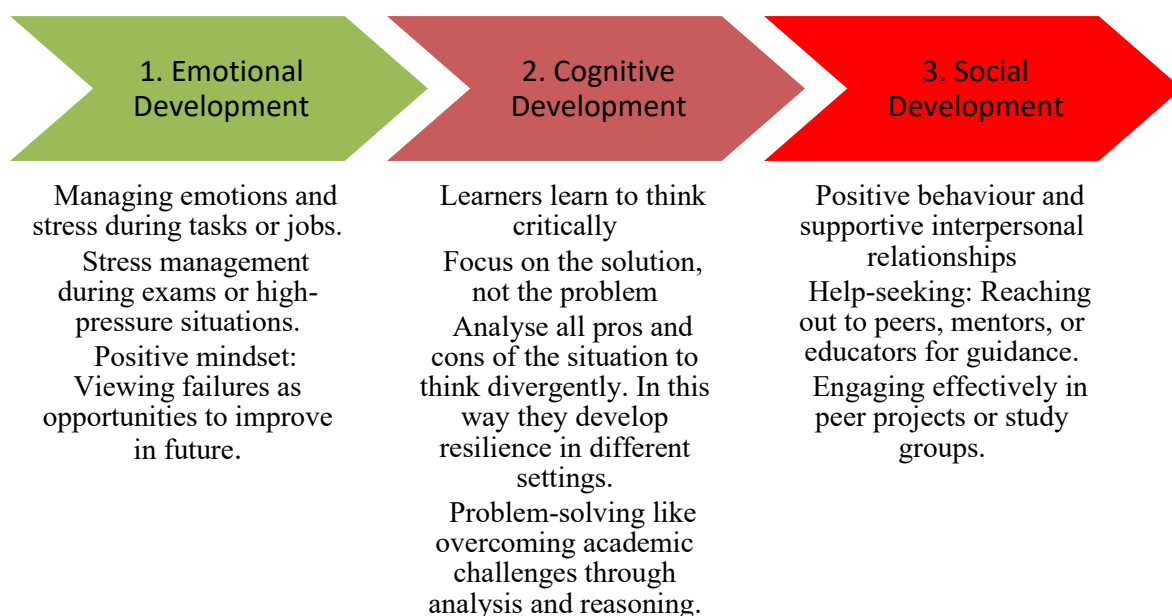


Figure 1.

The ability to think critically, solve problems, cope with stress, and be resilient are all strengthened by having strong life skills. The WHO has outlined a basic set of life skills are Decision making – The ability to make choices equips us to handle life's challenges in a positive light. There is a strong correlation between resilience and decision-making, especially in trying times.

- Problem solving –The capacity to adapt and think creatively in the face of adversity is a key component of resilience, which may be developed by people and groups over time.
- Creative thinking – It is an innovative approach. As a key ingredient for original thought in the classroom, resilience is a must-have quality for students.
- Critical thinking –The ability to critically evaluate academic-related ideas is a hallmark of the resilient learner.
- Effective communication – It is the capacity for both verbal and nonverbal communication.

- Interpersonal relationship skills – It aids us in forming constructive relationships with others. Students develop more resilience in a variety of contexts when they have better interpersonal skills in school.
- Self-awareness – It is essential for navigating our own lives and for building resilience in our interactions with others.
- Empathy – The capacity to empathise with and comprehend the inner experiences, perspectives, and sentiments of another person.
- Coping with emotions and stress – It is basically sharing our emotions with others. Resilient learners have the ability to cope with emotions in challenging situations. In order to manage stress, one must first identify its causes, then understand its effects, and last take steps to reduce their stress levels.

3 a. Conceptual Framework of Life Skills in Developing Academic Resilience:

Learners need to improve academic resilience by learning life skills including problem solving, critical thinking, stress management, and emotional regulation. Adolescents need life skills, which are basic competencies that aid in promoting general resilience, well-being, and competence when confronted with life's challenges.

Mathematically gifted students are resilient, according to research by Attami, Budiyo, and Indriati (2020). This means that they are able to cope with and ultimately triumph over challenges and difficulties that arise when solving mathematical problems. Research by Isabella Meneghel (2019) verified the unique significance that various coping mechanisms play in resilience. Important personal resources for improving kids' academic achievement include academic resilience and emotional regulation skills. Elisabetta Sagone (2013) studied 89 Italian teenagers in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic to determine the impact of coping mechanisms on life satisfaction, resilience, and perceived self-efficacy in life skills. Students in life skills programs engage in an interactive learning environment that is often grounded on social learning theory.

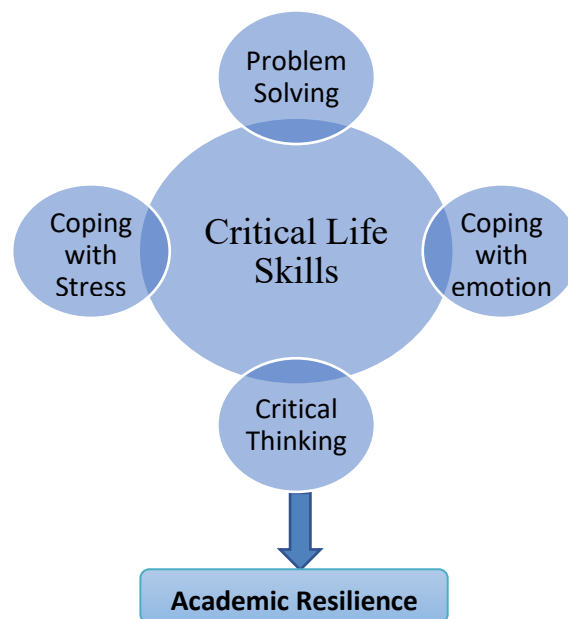


Figure: 2

3 b. Role of School and Teacher in Developing Academic Resilience -

Adolescents may benefit from schools because they provide a safe space, encourage a growth mentality, and provide tools for kids to deal with difficulties. According to Williams and Bryan et.al. (2013), students' academic resilience is influenced by factors such as their positive relationships with teachers and classmates, an engaging classroom environment, the availability of a school counsellor, extracurricular activities, a strong focus on subject understanding, a challenging curriculum, and overall positive attitudes towards school and education. In addition, when instructors are supportive and friendly, students feel comfortable enough to talk about their struggles, which in turn improves their academic performance. Students' resilience is, therefore, a result of these changes.

It is crucial for kids' social and moral growth to occur alongside their intellectual progress. Hence, measures should be put in place to strengthen the educational setting at home and in the classroom (Mallick and Kaur, 2016). Students' educational resilience is greatly aided by their access to technology and resources. The Centre for Health Education, Training, and Nutrition Awareness (CHETNA) is now running programs to raise awareness and teach life skills. It aids in the socialisation of youth, schools are ideal settings for introducing life skills education, such as resilience. It is the responsibility of the educator to help their pupils develop the mental toughness to persevere through difficult academic times.

4. Discussion:

A lot of recent academic work has focused on students' academic resilience and the strategies they use to triumph over adversity. Learners may develop resilience with the support of life skills. In order to support students' mental health and forestall their maladjustment, academic resilience is essential. A study conducted by Suja M K (2020) examined the relationship between life skills, academic self-concept, and academic achievement in children residing in institutional care. The results showed that as life skills increased, academic self-concept and academic performance also increased. Keeping a positive and supportive attitude is the responsibility of school, instructors, and counsellors in order to assist children develop resilience. The effect of life skills training on resilience in young women from economically deprived groups was investigated by Patki, Archana (2022). In terms of resilience, the group of individuals who have received life skills training will outperform the group that has not. Additionally, it may be inferred that learners might cultivate academic resilience via the acquisition of life skills. Students' academic resilience may be enhanced by the incorporation of life skill education into the school curriculum.

5. Suggestions:

In order to enhance its effectiveness, school and institutions should integrate life skills programs and training into regular curriculum. Teacher needs to be trained in experiential and participatory methods like storytelling and role plays, which encourage learners to reflect on real life challenges. Initiatives such as Samagra Shiksha (2018) and Skill India Mission can be expanded to include resilience building strategies.

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