

# Life Skills For Achieving Sustainable Education

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**Abstract:**

The development of a nation's educational system is the essential cornerstone upon which to construct the entire expansion of the nation. Education is the means via which a nation's populace can become global citizens. It is a well-known fact that education plays an important part in ensuring sustainability in a variety of domains, including the social, emotional, and economic spheres. The concept of quality is a subjective characteristic that cannot be directly quantified in any way. There are a number of national organizations that are tasked with determining the rankings of educational institutions and measuring the overall standard of the country's educational system. The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog has made an effort to provide a ranking to the states and union territories based on their performance in relation to a set of goals that are concerned with the standard of education. The need of a decent education was stressed in SDG 4. The National Curriculum Framework (2005) places a strong emphasis on the constructivist method of instruction, which helps learners improve their capacities for creative thinking and problem-solving. Life skills, also known as thinking skills, cognitive skills, and social skills, are the kinds of abilities that, when acquired by pupils, lead to the development of desirable qualities in them. The education of essential life skills contributes to the improvement of the educational system's long-term viability. The researcher has put a spotlight in this work on the various challenges that need to be addressed in order to sustain quality education with the appropriate implementation of life skills in the academic institutions of our country, both in the primary and secondary levels of education.

**Key word:** Life skills, Sustainability, Constructivist, Cognitive, Global citizen

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is crucial on a personal level as well as on a societal level. The most important thing that education can do for a person is to make their life more cultured, advanced, and civilised. Education was considered to be a person's "third eye" by the early philosophers and thinkers of our nation. The English word "education" originates from the Latin word "educare," which can be translated as "to bring up," "to nourish," or "to train." It indicates that education is enabling us to nurture the potential that lies within us. The purpose of education is to foster growth in all aspects of a child's personality, including their aesthetic, social, political, moral, and emotional development. As a result, education should be viewed as the central tenet upon which the young brains of a nation can be moulded into more international perspectives. The importance of a good education cannot be overstated when it comes to the holistic growth of a child's personality. An individual's subjective impression of the characteristics, usefulness,

value, and other aspects of an educational institution that are important to stakeholders, in particular students and their parents is what we mean when we talk about quality (Gowda & Madegowda 2021). The idea of educational quality is nebulous and vague, despite the fact that it is regularly discussed but never defined. An education of high quality is one that equips all students with the skills they need to become economically productive, create sustainable livelihoods, contribute to peaceful and democratic societies, and improve their own personal well-being (Badjatya, 2016). A high-quality classroom setting is one of the most important factors in ensuring continued educational excellence. The physical surroundings of a quality learning environment might range from relatively up-to-date and well-equipped facilities to get-togethers held outside in the fresh air. A successful education cannot be reduced to a formula that can be applied universally to all circumstances. Any modification of an existing educational system must first take into account the requirements and obstacles presented by the target nation. The educational programme ought to place more of an emphasis on the broad knowledge field, complete with contextualized problems to research. In addition to this, the curriculum should make allowances for individual variances, subject matter should be tightly coordinated and integrated selectively, and the curriculum should place an emphasis on results, standards, and goals for student learning.

### **Quality education and SDGs**

Education of a high standard is often regarded as the essential building block for the long-term development of any nation. A good education is the driving force that enables individuals to be self-sufficient and that has the potential to bring about economic growth by fostering the development of a variety of skills that are critical to the enhancement of people's lives. The objective of the sustainable development goal for 2015 is to ensure that all young people, both male and female, complete their primary and secondary educations. Additionally, the goal seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to opportunities for quality technical and vocational education. According to the findings of a survey that was carried out by the UNDP, more than half of the world's youngsters do not have the bare minimum level of competency in reading and maths. Over the course of the last few decades, significant strides have been achieved in expanding access to education and elevating the overall rate of school enrolment, particularly among young women.

### **Concept of Quality Education in India**

A substantial amount of progress has been accomplished in India through the implementation of universal primary education, and there has been seen to be an improvement in the proportion of girls to boys who are enrolled in elementary school. At the national level, the net enrollment ratio in primary education for boys and girls was 100%, while the youth literacy rate was 94% for males and 92% for females. The gender gap in literacy rates was present. Both the new National Education Policy and Sustainable Development Goal 4 seek to ensure that all children receive an education of sufficient quality throughout their lives. The primary objective of the government's Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme is to ensure that all Indians have access to a high-quality education; the program's targets for the year 2030 range from improving access to higher education to expanding the number of institutions that provide teacher education.

**Following are the targets related to the attainment of quality education.**

- 1) It is ensured that all boys and girls must get free and compulsory quality education by 2030 with relevant effective learning outcomes.
- 2) All girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education by 2030
- 3.) There must be equal access for all men and women to get affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education by 2030.
- 4) There is a target to eliminate gender disparities in education and equal access must be provided to people with disabilities by 2030.
- 5.) It is ensured that all youth should achieve literacy and numeracy.
- 6) It is ensured that learners must acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development through a sustainable lifestyle, human rights promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence by 2030.
- 7) There should be the promotion of cultural diversity and the concept of global citizenship by 2030.
- 8) There must be a sustainable increase in the supply of qualified teachers through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries.

### **LIFE SKILLS AND QUALITY EDUCATION**

The necessity for life skills that are relevant to life was raised to the attention of the international community at large during the Jomtien world conference in 1990. Life skills enable one to use knowledge in an appropriate manner, which in turn helps one develop the ability to deal with the difficulties that life throws at them. Life skills can be summed up as those abilities that assist in fostering a sense of well-being and competence in young people as they confront the challenges and responsibilities of adulthood. It is a personal and social talent that enables one to function more securely with themselves and other people, and it is believed to be such a skill. The psychological and social components of life skills are equally important. When we speak of psychological skills, we are referring to mental functions and processes, however when we speak of social skills, we are referring to the increase of a person's interacting abilities with their surroundings and culture. The first step in the process of developing life skills is identifying and encouraging the specific skills that need to be developed, followed by fostering skill maintenance and generalisation, skill acquisition, and performance promotion. (WHO 2005).

The World health organization had categorized ten life skills which are -1) self-awareness 2) Critical thinking 3) Creative thinking 4) problem solving 5) decision making 6) Empathy 7) interpersonal relationships 8) coping with stress 9) coping with emotions 10) Effective communication. The Education for All (2000) included life skills among the essential learning tool for survival, capacity development, and

quality of life. It also documented that all young people and adults have the “human right to benefit from an education that includes learning to know, to do, to live together.” recognizing the importance of living together as much as acquiring knowledge from an academic environment.

**Quality education as mentioned in the SDGs is a major problem in our country.** India has struggled with a variety of issues in relation to preserving the level of education it provides. There are several concerns, some of which include a shortage of money, a high dropout rate, a low teacher-student ratio, a dearth of practical expertise, and so on. The school system in our country is not even close to incorporating education based on skills. After receiving their degrees, young people in India have a difficult time finding work, whether it be in the public or private sector. Having life skills would be a glimmer of optimism in the midst of these difficult challenges. If we are successful in implementing the core life skills education in the primary levels to the higher education levels and even in the vocational courses, it would help the youth to develop the abilities of problem-solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, and decision-making, which in turn helps them to become a global citizen.

**There are certain steps taken by our Govt. to deliver life skills education as a part of maintaining quality education.**

(i) **Life skills and employment:** Life skills are taught as part of training programmes that are able to build the employability skills of secondary school pupils. The skills taught in these programmes include things like taking responsibility, being adaptable, being entrepreneurial, having effective communication, making decisions, being a leader, and working together effectively. The education of the children is intended to directly translate into a source of income, and the goal is to provide them with the technical knowledge as well as the soft skills that are necessary for success in the job. IGNIS Careers (which teaches English), Medha (which teaches soft skills relevant to the workplace), and Lend A Hand are some examples of such programmes in India (vocational education).

(ii) **Life skills and value education:** The current strategy in India, for the most part, tries to concentrate on inculcating such skills through the medium of education that is centred on values. The Don Bosco school network in India is responsible for incorporating this kind of syllabus into the education they provide for students. (iii) **Education for early childhood:** Early childhood interventions, also known as early childhood education, are designed to build strong foundations for children during the most crucial development phase of their lives, which takes place between the ages of three and six. These types of interventions specifically target a wide variety of cognitive, linguistic, emotional, and social abilities. These skills include things like communication, self-regulation, and the ability to resolve conflicts. Sesame Workshop India and Bodh are two examples of such organisations.

(iv) **The development of life skills and the protection of children's rights** There are a number of programmes and initiatives in India that are geared toward the protection of children's rights and the promotion of their own autonomy. By focusing on bigger issues like gender inequality, violence, and health, for example, these types of organisations are able to address more specific mentalities and skills,

such as self-awareness, leadership, and the ability to influence others. In India, some examples of these kind of programmes include Educate Girls, Sanlaap, Ibtada, and Shaishav.

**(V) Higher order thinking skills:** Many different types of life skills programmes are attempting to teach 21st-century abilities. Inquiry-based learning is supported by these types of programmes, which foster critical thinking and creative problem-solving abilities. This change away from memorization-based learning has led to an increase in the number of advocates advocating for it. Creya and THOTS Labs are two examples of such companies in India.

Therefore, it is rather obvious that the acquisition of life skills can be utilised as a tool for the purpose of boosting the long-term quality of education in a country. To accomplish the aims of quality education and, consequently, sustainable development, it is advised that life skills be incorporated into the curriculum.

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