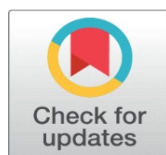
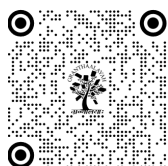


EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS FOR FUTURE SUCCESS THROUGH LIFE SKILLS AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

In the rapidly changing global environment of today, education has expanded beyond its historical purview of teaching fundamental academic disciplines. It has developed into a dynamic platform that needs to give people a broad range of skills, including both life and career training, in order to prepare them for success in an uncertain future. This paradigm change is particularly important in a nation like India, where young make up the majority of the population. Comprehensive training programs that cover both personal development and practical skills are desperately needed in order to take advantage of this demographic advantage and close the skill gap. This article examines the critical importance of vocational training and life skills in India and how they can support the country's overall development and prosperity. It also explains how important it is for training programs and educational institutions to recognize and give priority to the integration of life skills in order to ensure that students are fully equipped for success in the fast-paced world of today.

Keywords: Empowering, Life skills, Vocational Training

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1. INTRODUCTION

Due to complexities of society and the evolving nature of employment, the education system must equip young people to tackle difficult problems and unpredictability in the present and the future (OECD, 2018). Furthermore, because competency needs are unknown, unclear and ever-changing, future workplaces will demand the ability to solve complicated challenges (Harties, 2018; Schwendimann et.al., 2018). Accordingly, the particular requirements of the profession and what are known as 21st century skills are crucial components of the technical vocational education and training (TVET) (Hamalainen et al., 2018). The term '21st century skills' is broad and ambiguous, and it is defined by several frameworks (Lamb et al., 2017). Consequently, a number of phrases are also often employed including soft skills, transferable skills, transversal skills, and key competencies. To thrive in today's environment, people appear to agree on

the necessity of competence and life skills including creativity, problem solving, critical thinking, self-directed learning, metacognition, teamwork, persistence and communication.

India is a country where a large proportion of its workforce is made up of young people, whose population is expanding. Unfortunately, a large number of people lack the abilities needed to find steady work and advance the economy of the country. The provision of vital competencies that are highly valued in the labor market via life skills and vocational training is crucial in closing this gap. A skill is the capacity to do an action as well as a result of practice and learning. The ability to learn is what enables somebody to perform a task more efficiently and effectively. Skills are aptitudes that make a task easier to do and finish. The aim of TVET is to produce a competent and semi-skilled workforce, whereby life and career are balanced with the necessary skills to get employment and survive in the face of 21st century problems. Concerns about skill gaps between employers' requirements and graduates' or job seekers' talents have been voiced repeatedly worldwide (Husain et al., 2014; Robinson, 2000; Zaharim et al., 2009). Institutions including the family, the preschool, the primary school, the elementary school, the high school, the upper secondary school, the college and the university are places where people study and develop skills. These organizations are essential in giving everyone access to a wide venue for learning and skills development. Every person has gained access to a variety of skills as a result of these interventions, including life skills, sports skills, leisure skills, literary skills, language skills, functional skills and vocational abilities. There are many talents in this actual world, but only a select number are primarily employed by people; these are the life skills. Among them are life skills, which are the aptitudes or talents that each person acquires by their own experience in order to deal with societal realities. In general, life skills are defined as a combination of behavior attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge that enable one to accomplish goals and know how to do tasks (Nair, 2010). In a society that is so knowledge-driven, skill development and vocational training are essential for providing people with the tools they need to advance and successfully contribute to economic growth (Economic Commission, 2012). NEP 2020 is a major step forward in the nation's efforts to create a knowledge society.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Syamsi, I. (2019) conducted a study on 'Preparation for Vocational Life-Skills Education Model Implementation for School Dropouts' and concluded that it is crucial to implement ongoing Life-Skills Education initiatives in order to enhance the business skills of adolescents who have left school. This can be achieved by actively managing and enhancing the qualifications of the tutors, as well as delivering vocational skills that align with their specific requirements. Additionally, it is essential to further examine the impact of educational interventions on pedagogical content knowledge in interdisciplinary areas.

Rui, Y (2021) conducted a study on 'Incorporating Life Skills Education in Vocational Training: Toward Empowerment-Based Skills Advancement for Young Women Migrant Workers in China' and the research findings show that life skills education can greatly benefit young women migrant workers. This type of education allows for hands-on learning and self-reflection, helping these workers better understand themselves and become agents of change. The study suggests that life skills education should be implemented to empower these workers on personal, interpersonal, and behavioral levels, ultimately promoting their overall growth. The implications of this research call for more services and research in this area, as well as the development of policies and programs aimed at helping young women migrants acquire life skills to navigate the challenges they face when moving from rural to urban areas.

Swank, M.J., Huber, P (2013) write an article on Employment Preparation and Life Skill Development Initiatives for High School Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities and concluded that this article introduces a highly encouraging program for effectively assisting students with ESE/EBD. Nevertheless, it is crucial to conduct further research in order to scrutinize the schemes proposed in this article and assess their potential in enabling students to transform into productive citizens.

Goel, P.V (2013) conducted a study on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) System/ In India For Sustainable Development and concluded that India has a large technical workforce, but it's not proportionate to its population. Emphasis on general education over vocational education has led to unemployment among educated individuals. Recognizing this, there's a growing focus on vocational education. There's also an imbalance with more engineers than diploma holders, leading to a need for more polytechnics and ITIs. Various ministries are promoting vocational courses, ensuring quality. The XIth Plan has allocated more funds for vocational education, with a focus on marginalized groups, including women, aiming to improve the lives of the Indian population.

Kalra, P.K., Daya, S (2019) conducted a study on Vocational Education and Skill Development in Higher Education: A Systems Approach and concluded that it is essential to ensure that interventions aimed at integrating skills and vocational training do not compromise the cultural and values-based aspects of a community or region. This chapter highlights the Dayalbagh Educational Institute's skilling model, which has been successfully practiced for over nine decades and extended to various regions of the country. This model seamlessly integrates skill development with conventional education, starting from the pre-nursery years.

Objective of the study

- 1) To study the importance of life skills and vocational training among individual.
- 2) To understand how life skills and vocational training complement each other.

Methodology of the study

Method of study: This study will be qualitative and descriptive in nature with the aim of bridging the gap between theoretical understanding and practical application in life skills and vocational education.

Source of data: The investigator chose to collect data from multiple sources. The researcher utilized a large amount of relevant literature to obtain the data and secondary data sources were used. Data sources included journal articles, newspaper articles, books, online portal articles, research articles, and other data sources.

3. IMPORTANCE OF LIFE SKILLS AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING AMONG INDIVIDUAL

Life skills are the abilities, knowledge, and competencies that individuals need to deal effectively with the challenges and demands of everyday life. They encompass a broad range of skills that go beyond academic or technical expertise, focusing on personal and social development. These skills are fundamental for personal growth, success in various life domains, and overall well-being. The World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF emphasize the importance of life skills in personal development and well-being. Life skills are a set of competencies that enable individuals to navigate the challenges and experiences of daily life effectively. These skills contribute to mental and social stability and can help individuals address a wide range of issues. **Communication Skills:** Effective communication is the cornerstone of successful relationships, both personal and professional. It encompasses skills such as active listening, clear expression, non-verbal communication, and conflict resolution. Developing these skills can improve interactions, reduce misunderstandings, and enhance collaboration.

Decision-Making and Problem-Solving Skills: Life is rife with decisions and challenges. Decision-making skills involve assessing options and making choices based on careful analysis and consideration of consequences. Problem-solving skills, on the other hand, help individuals approach issues methodically and find solutions.

Self-Reflection and Awareness Exercises: Self-reflection encourages individuals to examine their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Journaling, mindfulness, and meditation are effective techniques for increasing self-awareness and emotional intelligence.

Goal-Setting and Planning Strategies: Setting goals and creating action plans are essential for decision-making, time management, and achievement. Teaching individuals how to set SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals can guide them toward success.

Debates and Discussions: Engaging in debates and discussions encourages critical thinking, effective communication, and the exchange of ideas. These activities can enhance decision-making and communication skills.

Time Management Tools and Techniques: Tools such as calendars, to-do lists, and time management apps can help individuals organize their time efficiently. Workshops on time management strategies can provide valuable insights and skills.

Team-Building Activities: Team-building exercises promote collaboration, problem-solving, and communication skills. They are particularly effective in a group or organizational context.

Public Speaking and Presentation Workshops: Public speaking and presentation skills are crucial for effective communication. Workshops in this area can help individuals become confident and articulate speakers.

Stress Management and Emotional Intelligence Workshops: Teaching stress management techniques and emotional intelligence skills, such as recognizing and regulating emotions, can improve overall well-being.

Vocational training, often referred to as vocational education or career and technical education, is a specialized form of education that equips individuals with the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in specific trades or professions. Unlike traditional academic education, which focuses on a broad range of subjects and theoretical knowledge, vocational training is designed to prepare individuals for specific careers or jobs. Vocational training can be defined as a form of education that focuses on teaching practical skills and knowledge needed for specific trades, professions, or industries. It aims to prepare individuals for the workforce, equipping them with the tools to excel in their chosen career paths. Vocational training programs are typically hands-on and offer a more direct route to employment by concentrating on the practical aspects of a job.

Different Types of Vocational Training Programs

Vocational training programs come in various forms, each catering to different career paths and skill sets. Here are some of the most common types of vocational training programs:

Trade Schools and Apprenticeships : Trade schools, also known as vocational schools or technical colleges, are institutions that focus on providing education and training in specific trades or occupations. These programs are typically shorter in duration than traditional four-year degrees and emphasize hands-on learning. Apprenticeships, on the other hand, are a combination of on-the-job training and classroom instruction. Apprentices work alongside experienced professionals in their chosen field, gaining practical experience and knowledge while earning a wage.

Certification and Licensure Programs : Many vocations require professionals to obtain certifications or licenses to practice legally. Certification and licensure programs provide the necessary education and training to pass the required exams and meet the regulatory standards of a specific profession.

On-the-Job Training and Internships : On-the-job training (OJT) and internships are forms of vocational training that involve learning while working in a real job environment. OJT is commonly used in industries where hands-on experience is essential. Individuals receive training and supervision from experienced colleagues or mentors, gaining practical skills and knowledge on the job.

4. HOW LIFE SKILLS COMPLEMENT VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Life skills and vocational training are two essential components that can greatly complement each other, providing a well-rounded foundation for personal and professional development.

The complementarity between life skills and vocational training can be seen in various ways:

Holistic Development: Vocational training primarily focuses on providing specific technical skills and knowledge related to a particular trade or industry. While these skills are essential, they are only one aspect of a person's development. Life skills, on the other hand, address the broader spectrum of personal and interpersonal competencies. By integrating life skills into vocational training, individuals can undergo holistic development, becoming well-rounded professionals who are not only technically proficient but also adept at handling the various challenges and demands of the workplace and life in general.

Adaptability: Life skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, and adaptability are invaluable in the ever-changing work environment. Vocational training equips individuals with the specific skills required for a particular job, but it is the ability to adapt and find solutions in unforeseen situations that can set individuals apart. For instance, a nurse with vocational training may be well-versed in administering medication, but they also need problem-solving skills to handle a sudden change in a patient's condition.

Effective Communication: The importance of effective communication in the workplace cannot be overstated. Vocational training often teaches the technical aspects of a job, but it doesn't always emphasize the ability to communicate clearly, both verbally and in writing. Incorporating communication skills in vocational training ensures that professionals can convey their ideas, concerns, and instructions clearly and collaborate effectively with colleagues and clients.

Interpersonal Skills: Working in a professional setting typically involves collaboration and interaction with colleagues, supervisors, and customers. Interpersonal skills like empathy, active listening, and conflict resolution are crucial for maintaining positive relationships in the workplace. Vocational training programs that include these skills can produce professionals who not only excel in their tasks but also contribute to a harmonious and productive work environment.

Emotional Intelligence: Vocational training often focuses on technical competencies, but emotional intelligence (EQ) is equally vital. EQ involves understanding and managing one's emotions and those of others. It plays a significant role in teamwork, leadership, and conflict resolution. For example, a manager who possesses emotional intelligence can effectively handle employee disputes and provide support during challenging times.

Time Management and Organization: Time management and organizational skills are essential for productivity and efficiency in any profession. Vocational training may teach individuals the technical aspects of their jobs, but without effective time management, they may struggle to meet deadlines and manage their workloads efficiently. Introducing these life skills into vocational training can help individuals become more productive and less stressed.

Ethical Decision-Making: Ethics play a pivotal role in professional life. Individuals in various careers may face ethical dilemmas and tough decisions. Vocational training programs can include discussions and scenarios that help trainees develop ethical decision-making skills, enabling them to navigate moral challenges in their work.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, life skills and vocational training are interdependent. While vocational training imparts the technical skills and knowledge needed for a specific career, life skills provide the foundation for personal growth and adaptability. Together, they create a well-rounded individual capable of not only excelling in their chosen profession but also navigating the challenges and opportunities that life presents. This combination enhances the chances of both personal and professional success, making it imperative to consider and cultivate both aspects in one's education and training journey. To sum up, vocational training equips individuals with specific job-related skills, but the incorporation of life skills is pivotal for comprehensive personal and career development. The fusion of technical proficiency and life skills not only boosts one's chances of securing employment but also enhances problem-solving capabilities, communication, teamwork, leadership, and overall well-being. In an ever-changing professional landscape, the significance of life skills as a supplement to vocational training is bound to grow. Hence, it is imperative for educational institutions and training initiatives to acknowledge and prioritize the integration of life skills, ensuring that individuals are thoroughly prepared for success in today's dynamic world.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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