Life Skill Education as an Added Course in Teacher Education Programme based on Systems Approach

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Abstract
A skill is a learned ability to do something well. Individuals can learn that will help them to live a fruitful life. In other words, life skills are those competencies that assist people in functioning well in the environments in which they live; skills are learned in sequential steps related to the age and stage of development of the young person. Life skills are the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enables individuals to deal effectively with demands and challenges of everyday life (WHO, 1997). It further encompasses thinking skill, social skill, and negotiation skills. It also helps young people to develop and grow into well-behaved adults. Life skills enable individuals to translate knowledge, attitudes and values into critical abilities. These are the abilities that enable the individuals to behave in a healthy way. The introduction of the life skills education was to bring reformatory changes in the traditional educational system to realize the realities of modern social and economic changes. Life skills education allow the youth get along with other people, able to adjust with their environment and making responsible decision, which also incorporate to build up their values and communicate effectively. The main objective of life skills education is to able the learner to develop a concept of oneself as a person of worth and dignity. It should help one to understand oneself and lead to growth in personal responsibility. UNICEF promotes understanding of the life skills approach can be successful when the three components viz., the skills, content and the methods are put together and executed. This paper focuses on providing life skill education based on systems approach in Teacher Education Programme.

Key Words: Life Skills, Teacher Education Programme, Systems Approach, Effective Communication, Identifying Instructional Goals, Intellectual Skills, Performance Objectives, Instructional Strategy
1 Introduction

20th Century is an age of technology and tremendous competition. In 21st century each individual must be aware of and must be ready for taking benefits of future opportunities using his knowledge, skills and attitude and able to adjust himself to various situations. National curriculum frame work 2005, while discussing the objectives of education mentioned that every person should have ability of thinking and making ethical decision independently or in a group. It is essential to sensitize students regarding their emotions, then only they can survive in the world with satisfaction. To understand others, cooperation, social responsibility and good interpersonal relationship are essential for both teacher and students. This can be achieved by teaching life skills in schools and for that teachers must be competent accordingly.

1.1 Meaning of a Skill

A skill is a learned ability to do something well. Individuals can learn that will help them to live a fruitful life. In other words, life skills are those competencies that assist people in functioning well in the environments in which they live, skills are learned in sequential steps related to the age and stage of development of the young person.

1.2 Life Skills

Life skills are the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enables individuals to deal effectively with demands and challenges of everyday life (WHO, 1997). It further encompasses thinking skill, social skill, and negotiation skills. It also helps young people to develop and grow into well behaved adults. Life skills enable individuals to translate knowledge, attitudes and values into critical abilities. These are the abilities that enable the individuals to behave in a healthy way. The introduction of the life skills education was to bring reformatory changes in the traditional educational system to realize the realities of modern social and economic changes. Life skills education allow the youth get along with other people, able to adjust with their environment and making responsible decision, which also incorporate to build up their values and communicate effectively. The main objective of life skills education is to able the learner to develop a concept of oneself as a person of worth and dignity. It should help one to understand oneself and lead to growth in personal responsibility. UNICEF promotes understanding of the life skills approach can be successful when the three components viz., the skills, content and the methods are put together and executed.

1.3 Need and Importance

Global and societal changes have influenced the lives of young and these changes are likely to affect them in the future as well. Today, young adolescents lack life skills to deal with the increasing demands and pressures. It is resulting into number of problems such as fear of failure, suicides, aggressiveness, inferiority or superiority complexes, loneliness, criminal attitude entirieties etc. Many times students become victims of ragging in colleges. To avoid consequences of factors it is important to impart life skills in school education for that, teachers must have knowledge of giving life skills to their students. Hence, life skills education should be a part of school education and teacher education.
Students at different levels demand urgent efforts for life skill development among them. Hence the teachers need to develop skills to realize the objective of skills building among secondary school students is yet to receive adequate attention of the teacher preparation process. The teacher needs to be equipped with core life skills like communication and interpersonal skills, decision making and critical thinking skills, coping and self-management skills. As teacher educators, there is need to provide some opportunities to pre service teachers where they can share their experiences in a node that suits their time and availability. It is important to produce capable professionally developed teachers who can understand problems and needs of students and respond accordingly. In a classroom setup, it is difficult for the teacher educators to equip pre service teachers with life skills. Teacher education programmes are highly structured and time bound. There is a need to have a platform where the pre service teachers as well as teacher educators can come together and share their experiences in a mode that suits their time and availability.

1.4 Role of Teacher Educator

Teachers can be made professionally competent by teaching them life skills through teacher education programme. Hence pre service teacher education should plan to include life skills in the syllabus itself. This will enable the teachers to think independently, to upgrade themselves to respond according to student’s needs. The role of the teacher in life skills education is to facilitate the participatory learning of the group members rather than conduct lecturers in a didactic style. To fulfill these expectations, teachers must be provided professional knowledge, skills and education of life skills too. It is a major lacuna in existing teacher education programme where life skills are not taught to would-be teachers. For its application, there is a need to provide additional course on life skills as an extended programme in colleges of education (B.Ed. colleges). This paper discusses the development of life skills education through system approach.

2 Life Skill Education

2.1 Systems Approach

The model presented here is based not only on theory and research but also on considerable amount of practical experience in its application. The Dick and Carey model is only a representation of components in the discipline in instructional design. The purpose of the model is to help to learn, understand, analyze and improve the practice of the discipline. The model includes ten interconnected boxes. The boxes represent sets of theories, procedures and techniques employed by the instructional designers to design, develop, evaluate and revise instruction.
2.2 Why use the Systems Approach?


1. The focus, at the outset, on what learners is to know or able to do when the instruction is concluded.
2. The careful linkage between each component, especially the relationship between the instructional strategy and the desired learning outcomes.
3. Instruction is specifically targeted on the skills and knowledge to be taught and supplies the appropriate conditions for the learning of these outcomes.
4. It is an empirical and replicable process.
5. Instruction is designed not for one delivery, but for the use on as many occasions as possible with as many learners as possible.
6. It can be used to develop all types of instructor led and interactive group activities.
7. The learner is evaluated fairly with instruments that measure the skills and knowledge described in the objectives.

The following process causes the designer to focus on the needs and skills of the learners and results in the creation of effective instruction. The model and procedures are equally applicable in both school and in school settings. The steps of the model are described in sequence.

2.3 Systems Approach Model

USES OF SYSTEM APPROACH....

- The focus, at the outset, on what learners are to know or able to do when the instruction is concluded.
- The careful linkage between each component, especially the relationship between the instructional strategy and the desired learning outcomes.
- Instruction is specially targeted on the skills and knowledge to be taught and supplies the appropriate conditions for the learning of these outcomes.
- It is an empirical and replicable process

contd........
The model is based not only on theory and research but also on considerable amount of practical experience in its application. The studies conducted by Kniek and Etal (1950), B.F. Skinner (1954), Gagne (1965), Popham (1971) Wittrock (1974), Winn (1977), Asubel (1980), Lave & Wenger (1991), Berger and Khan (1996), Gagne and Medskar, Rogers (1996), Jonarsen (1999), Yong Yoc (2002), Dick and Carey (2009) etal…… Provided a strong support for the approach who have used the process and have documented their success with learners because of the following uses:

CHART NO. 1

STEP 1; Identifying Instructional Goals

- PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS
  - TO IDENTIFY THE PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEM
    - Like newspapers, Magazines, Survey, Analysis, Own experience, Observations, Interviews etc...

- NEED ASSESSMENT
  - a) DESIRED STATUS: Expected level of teacher education programme
  - b) ACTUAL STATUS: Existing level of performance of the teacher education programme
  - c) GAP: Identifying the gap between desired status and actual status
    - This leads to
      1) Identifying the goals;
      2) Selection of content to achieve the goal

CHART NO. 2
Step-I: Identification Instructional Goals:

The I Step in the model is to determine what it is that we want would be teachers to do when they have completed the instruction. The instructional goal may be derived from a list of goals from a performance analysis, from a needs assessment, from practical experience with learning difficulties of students, from the analysis of student teachers who require new instruction.

Step II (A): Conduct Instructional Analysis

After identifying the instructional goal, it is very necessary to determine step by step what student teachers are doing when they perform that goal. The final Step in the instructional analysis process is to determine what skills, knowledge and attitudes are known to teachers’ entry behaviors, are required of student teachers to be able to begin the instruction.

3 Analyse Learners and Contexts

3.1 Conducting Goal Analysis

a) The major steps that learner must perform to demonstrate how they are going to achieve each goals.
b) The content required to achieve each goal.
c) Performance objectives.
d) Criterion referenced (test achievement test)
e) Instructional strategies.
f) Instructional materials.

3.2 Conducting Goal and Instructional Analysis

CHART NO. 3

Conduct performance analysis
Can the problems be solved by instruction yes
IdenIdentify the gap in the lack of skill, critical thinking, effective learning, decision making etc..
Goal 1; critically analyse the information.
Goal 2: participates in the activities
Goal 3: chooses to take decisions after analysing the situation

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3.2.1 Content

The content for Life Skill Education is drawn based on the Goal and Instructional Analysis. Hence the content is as follows.

1. **Decision Making**: To deal constructively with decisions about our lives or choosing amongst several alternatives.

2. **Critical Thinking**: Ability to analyze information and experiences in an objective manner. It can help us recognize and assess the factors that influence attitudes and behavior such as media and peer pressure influence.

3. **Effective Communication**: The ability to express, both verbally and non-verbally, in ways that are culturally acceptable.

4. **Accepting Differences**: To recognize and welcome factors that separate or distinguish one person from another.

5. **Leadership**: To assist a group in meeting its goals by showing or directing among the way; using personal influence to guide a group in reaching its goal.

6. **Self-Responsibility**: Taking care of oneself; being accountable for one’s behaviour and obligations; choosing for oneself between right and wrong.

**Goal 1**: For example, Student teachers draws inference that taking relevant decisions depends on analysis of facts presented and situational of the events occurred.

**Goal 2**: Student teacher participates in the group activities.

**Goal 3**: Chooses to take decisions after analyzing the facts and situations of the events occurred.

**STEP 3(A): Conducting Instructional Analysis**

Conducting instructional analysis helps the curriculum designer to determine in

1. Organising the content sequentially. Number of units that are to be included.
2. Required hours of teaching periods and practicals.
3. In analysing the tasks to be performed based on instructional goals. [task analysis].
4. Analysis of the task is based on Robert Gagne hierarchy of learning – conditions for learning

- **Content**;
  Verbal information (v) knowledge (entry behaviour)
  - **Concepts**: Intellectual skill (IS)-understanding, Subordinate skill, -cognitive strategy. (process of thinking)
  - Application and attitude; -Psychomotor domain

Example; **Entry Behaviour**;

- Students/teachers will be able to recalls the facts related to situations.
- Students/teachers will be able to recognizes the facts related to situations.

**Verbal Information**;

- Students/teachers will be able to lists out the facts related to situations.
- Students/teachers lists out the situations of the events occurred
3.2.2 Intellectual Skills:
- Students/teachers establishes relationship between the facts and events.
- Students/teachers select relevant information with that of the events.
- Students/teachers sequences the information with that of the events.
- Students/teachers argues with evidence.
- Students/teachers generalizes the information.
- Students/teachers draws interference.

3.2.3 Subordinate Skills:
- Students/teachers list out the facts and situation of the events occurred.
- Students/teachers identifies the relevant and irrelevant information based on evidence.
- Students/teachers selects the relevant and irrelevant information based on evidence.
- Students/teachers compares based on relevant and irrelevant information based on evidence.

Step-3 (B): Analyse learner and Their Contexts:
It is important to have fair knowledge about the target learners characteristics;

3.3 Learner’s Characteristic’s
I. This learner’s analysis will facilitate,
   a) Prior knowledge of the subject.
   b) Motivational information.
   C) Attitude towards the subject/content.
   d) Attitude towards activities.
   e) Developing materials.
   f) List of materials to be presented.
   g) General learning preferences.
II. Learner analysis with respect to performance context:
Performance or environment context will facilitate the design to plan as per the requirement of institution.
   a) Visiting college of education where the target population are housed.
   b) Discussion with the head of the institution about the course.
   c) Surveying the basic facilities, resources, AV equipment/needed for the project to put into test.
   d) Social aspects-schools for practice.
   e) Cost of the course to be worked out.
   f) Duration of the course.

Step III: Write Performance Objectives:
Based on the instructional analysis and the statement of entry behaviors, specific statements of what the student teachers will be able to do when they complete the Instructions have to be stated. These statements which are described from the skills identified in the instructional analysis will identify the skills to be learned, the conditions under which the skills must be performed, and the criteria for successful performance. Performance objectives are written keeping the following points in view:
1. What should the learner be able to do?
Performance objective: States what a learner is supposed to do?
Example: Student teacher is able to list the facts related to situation of the occurrence of the events to analyse the information.

2. Under what condition the learners are able to do?
Condition: Describes under which the performance is to occur.
Example: Given printout material, the student teacher is able to identify the facts and the situation of the occurrence of the events for discussion.

3. Criteria: Describes the acceptable performance, that is it says, how well someone would have to be considered competent.
Example: After group discussion the student teacher is able to establish relation between facts related to the situations of occurrence of the events.

Step IV: Develop Assessment Instruction

While developing assessment instructions tools major emphasis is given to the kind of skills described in the objectives to what the assessment requires, hence the simple tool is develop Criterion reference test/achievement test for each unit of the course. Based on the objectives stated, instruments that are parallel to and measure the student teacher/teachers ability to perform what we have described in the objectives, have to be developed. Major emphasis is placed on relating the kind of skills described in the objectives to what the assessment requires.

Step V: Develop Instructional Strategy

Based on the information from the four preceding steps, a strategy that would be used in the instruction to achieve the terminal objectives identified. The strategy will emphasize components to foster student teacher/teachers learning including pre instructional activities, presentation of content, student-teacher/teachers participation, assessment and follow up activities. The strategy is based on current theories of learning and results of learning research, the characteristics of the media that would be used to deliver the instruction, content to be taught and the characteristics of the student teacher/teachers who participate in the instruction. These features are used to develop/select materials and plan for interactive classroom instructions, mediated instruction, distance learning using a technology such as the World Wide Web or other means of packaging and delivering instruction. While developing instructional strategy following points are kept in view

a) Instructional goals identified. b) Instructional goal analysis. c) Analysis of learner characteristics, performance context and learning context. d) Performance objectives. e) Assessment tools/achievement tests. This step in the model by Dick & Carrey conditions of learning and nine steps of events instructional [episode].

The Strategies may be developed the Addon Course on “Life Skill Education”

1. Group discussion and presentation.
2. Projects.
3. Concept attainment model.
4. Value analysis model.
5. Games.
6. Problem solving situations.
7. Interactive sessions.

**Step VI: Develop and Select Instructional Materials:**

In this step, the instructional strategy to produce the instruction will be identified. This typically includes guidance for the student teacher/teachers, instructional materials, and assessment. (When the term instructional materials is used it includes all forms of instruction such as teacher educators student-teacher/teachers modules, OHP, videotapes, computer based multimedia formats, web pages for distance learning, pictures, story boards etc.) The decision to develop original materials depends on the types of learning outcomes, the availability of existing relevant materials, and developmental sources available. While developing instructional materials, following points must be considered. They are,

1. Instructional goal
2. Instructional analysis.(includes the content of the course)
3. Performance objectives.
4. Sample test items.
5. Characteristics of target learners.
7. Instructional strategy; that includes presentation for the following.

**Instructional Instructions:**

1. Cluster and sequence of objectives. 2. Pre-instructional activities. 3. Assessment to be used. 4. Context, presentation and examples. 5. Learners participation.(practice and feedback) 6. Strategies for memory and transfer skill. 7. Activities assigned to individual lessons. 8. Student groupings and media selections. 9. Delivery system.

Based on the above points the resources are suggested for the course;

a) Story boards; b) Pictures, Charts, and Posters. C) Current Issues from the newspapers, work sheets, magazines. d) Creating situations, Questionnaires, assessment sheets etc.

**Step VII: Design and Conduct Formative Evaluation of Instruction**

This step suggests the draft of every instruction must be subjected to the series of evaluation like;

1. Evaluation by subject experts, programme experts, course experts, in the field.
2. Face to Face evaluation with the learners for evaluation the instructional materials.
4. Field Trial evaluation – To test the feasibility, use and effectiveness of the model.

After completing the draft of the instruction, a series of evaluation are conducted to collect data that are used to identify how to improve the instruction. The three types of formative valuation are referred as one-to-one evaluation, small group evaluation and field trial evaluation provides the teacher educators with a different type of information that can be used to improve the instruction. Similar techniques can be applied to the formative evaluation of the materials used for classroom instruction.

**Step VIII: Revision of Instruction**

The final step in the design and the development process is revising the instruction. Data from the formative evaluation are summarized and interpreted to identify difficulties experienced by student
teacher/teachers in achieving the objectives and relate these difficulties to specific deficiencies in the instruction. The dotted line in the figure labeled ‘Revise Instruction’, indicates that the data from a formative evaluation are not simply used to re-examine the validity of the instructional analysis and the assumptions about the entry behavior and characteristics of student teacher/teachers. It may be necessary to re-examine statements of performance objectives and test items in the light of collected data. The instructional strategy is also reviewed and finally all of these consideration are incorporated into revision of the instruction to make it more effective instructional tool.

Revision of instruction is done to 1. Examine the data related to entry behaviour and to draw the implication. 2. Review pre-test and post-test based on performance and objective performance and draw influence on the same. 3. Check the objectives, test items, and intellectual strategy prior to making direct changes in instructional material. 4. Check procedures and implementation direction as well as equipment required for instruction. 5. These data synthesis and analysis activities during one to one, small group and field trial formative evaluation. 6. These suggestions offered by the experts during these stages of evaluation was incorporated and was used for the final use of the materials.

**Step IX: Design and Conduct Summative Evaluation**

Even though summative evaluation is the culminating evaluation of the effectiveness of instruction, it generally is not a part of the design process, but has a relative value/worth of the instruction and occurs only after the instruction has been formatively evaluated and sufficiently revised to meet the standards of the teacher educators. Since the summative evaluation usually does not involve educator’s instruction, but instead involves and independent evaluator. This component is not considered as an integral part of the instructional design process.

This model has two main phases;

1. Expert Judgement; to determine whether currently used instruction defines instructional needs.

2. Field trial phase; to document the effectiveness of promoting, instruction with target group in the intended setting.

**4 Conclusion**

This conclusion is drawn out of the authors’ personal experience who has used systems approach to promote civic education. Hence, if system approach is applied to promote life skills education, the following may be the expected educational implications.

1. It may have wide applications on the present system of education. 2. It develops awareness of real problems in the personnel life. 3. It helps in identifying the specific goals to promote life skills. 4. It helps in designing educational programmes to build better relationship between the individual, & the group, teacher and student school and the community, school and family/parents. 5. It helps to plan maximum utilizations of community resources. 6. Modules may be prepared as training packages for in-service teachers, NGO, distance educators. 7. This models caters to both pre-service and in-service
teachers. 8. This model can be used in developing a course in Distance education. Self-learning through computers assisted instruction, on-line life skills education programme.

5 Bibliography