

CHAPTER I

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is considered as the crucial period of maturation and growth that denotes the change from childhood to adulthood characterized by physiological changes and psychosocial maturation. During this time adolescents face considerable stress and strain from academic demands, the expectations of parents and teachers and the pressure of making future decisions (Radhi, 2002). Adolescents' cognitive development leads to a more analytical thought process but the search for self-identity and newfound independence can often lead to feelings of anxiety and uncertainty. As adolescents navigate this confusing and transitional phase, they require support and guidance to manage these challenges effectively (Chakara, 2016). These years have been genuinely imaginative, optimistic, swaying and exploratory. (Agarwal et al., 2020). During adolescence individuals begin to form new relationships with peers, teachers and mentors outside of their immediate family (Singh & Lal, 2020). However, these are additionally the years of trial and error, yielding to unfavourable peer pressure and making rash decisions about important matters. Adolescents typically look to their friends, teachers, parents and guardians for assistance with a variety of everyday problems (Kauts & Saini, 2022). Adolescents deal with a wide range of problems on a daily basis including schoolwork, peer pressure, anxiety, low self-esteem and boredom. Today's education cannot equip students to overcome feelings of frustration, anxiety, and depression (Parmar, 2022).

Early adolescence starts from the age of 10 to 13 years. At this stage children typically begin to experience a faster rate of growth. At this stage there is often a tendency to view things as either right or wrong, great or terrible with little room for nuance in between. They might begin to seek out ways to establish independence from their family. Adolescents' ability to manage any problem is determined by a variety of elements such as their personality, the psychological support they receive from their surroundings including their parents, teachers, peers and their life skills.

As per WHO (1999) the goal of life skills education is to support the growth of psychosocial abilities needed to handle the rigors and difficulties of daily living. Within scenarios in which young people and teenagers need to be strengthened in order to

safeguard their liberties, it involves applying life skills in a risk-averse manner. Jeena (2013) stated that Life skills are the abilities one needs to effectively deal with the difficulties that one faces every day, whether at job, in school or in one's personal life. With the aid of life skills adolescents can recognize their abilities and weakness, identify possibilities and be equipped to deal with any potential risks. Giving today's youth a fresh set of resources and techniques to handle life's demands is desperately needed (Grover, 2018). Merely imparting knowledge and information is not enough. Susmitha (2019) stated that there is a need to construct practical skills among the children which can enable them to handle conflicts and situations of the life. It has become necessary to facilitate the children with the necessary skills for preparing them to encounter the challenges of life. Those who have honed their life skills are more likely to be proactive and catalysts for change making sensible choices which promote their own as well as other people's interests. They possess the capacity to manage stress, settle disputes and acquire the ability to negotiate for their own and others' interests.

Life skills are transferable abilities that are applicable to a wide range of experiences in one's lifetime. To ensure that life skills lessons have an optimal impact they ought to be imparted precisely. Life skills education facilitates students become more confident in their ability to communicate and work cooperatively with others. It provides them resources that are essential for their growth, helps them think through and resolve problems in new ways and teaches them how to interact with people from fresh acquaintances and understand the consequences of their actions.

Early childhood is a period when children's minds start to shape how they deal with knowledge. At this juncture, it's critical to provide them with knowledge as well as to help them construct action-based thinking and analysis skills so they can think creatively and adapt to changing circumstances in order to succeed in the real world. This is where having life skills is really important (Santhosh, 2022). Integrating life skills into the classroom helps learners build confidence in communication, develop cooperative and collaborative skills and provides essential tools for personal growth. It encourages new ways of thinking and problem-solving, teaches methods for socializing and making new friends and helps students recognize the impact of their actions and behaviours. (CBSE, 2024). The integration of life skills in the classroom prepares students for both academic success and personal growth, equipping them with the competencies needed for real-world challenges. "Life Skills Education would enable

adolescents to clear their issues and know their rights; build their self-esteem and self-confidence; and develop the ability to take responsibility for self, relationships and society around them” (Dinesh & Belinda, 2014). Chetri (2020) states that life skill is considered as a psycho-social and interpersonal skills, which is needed by an individual to lead a meaning full and healthy life.

1.1 DEFINING LIFE SKILLS

The world is changing with this change the educational needs of today’s children is changing. A healthy classroom, a good teacher, an interactive session, skill-based learning are the educational needs of the students. The World Health Organisation (1993) has described Life skills as “the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life” (WHO, 1996, p. 3.). This viewpoint holds that life skills are crucial abilities that improve young people's mental health and competence in navigating life's obstacles. Life skills education is an activity-based, child-centered approach to help kids learn and practice these abilities. The idea that youth should be given more freedom to accept greater responsibility for their actions is the foundation of life skills education. According to Singh (2003) “Life skills in a general way mean a mix of knowledge, behaviour, attitudes and values and designate the possession of some skill and know-how to do something, or reach an aim”. United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) has defined life skills as “A behaviour change or behaviour development approach designed to address a balance of three areas: Knowledge, Attitudes, and Skills” (UGC, 2023, p. 7.). Life skills are the abilities we need to handle everyday problems and live happy and successful lives. They help us reach our full potential as people.

Life skills are developed through the use of technique that are comprehensive and precise to a sole. Life skills provide hands-on experience in solving and analysing any problem through an in-depth understanding of certain rules and conditions. Life skills provide students with various components that will help them in thought process, making correct decisions, developing interpersonal skills in difficult situations. It also refers as the ability of an individual to organize and manage his daily activities in an appropriate way, help the individual to take the accountability of his action, build interpersonal and intra personal relations, use thought process, analyse the best options

and solve problem and make rational decision. Therefore, Life skills can be termed as abilities of an individual to deal with the necessities and difficulties of life.

Life skills have become an important aspect in an individual's physical and mental wellbeing as well as it has become psychological and social requirements of an individual. As per WHO (1999) document "Partners in life skills education -conclusions from a united nations inter-agency meeting" life skills are used in various areas such as prevention of HIV/AIDS, adolescent pregnancy, prevention of child abuse, substance abuse and violence, child care and protection, quality of life, the promotion of peace, basic education, gender equality, democracy, good citizenship, quality and efficiency of the education system.

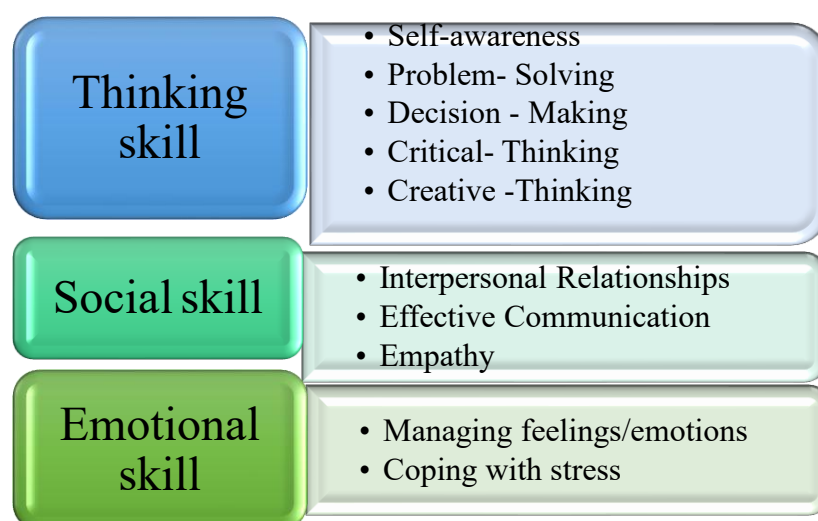
1.1.1 EVOLUTION OF LIFE SKILLS

Education in life skills had a long track record of supporting the development of children's and adolescent's mental health. It is widely accepted that life skills-based education can help with a variety of issues. Individuals need to attain life skills often referred to as survival skills to meet their distinct or specific requirements. These aptitudes empower individuals to handle diverse life circumstances effectively. These abilities empower an individual to navigate diverse life situations appropriately. Life skills serve as foundations for various attributes such as acceptance, social competence and self-esteem. These traits enhance an individual's capacity to take action and instigate change, distinguishing them significantly from perceptual or physical motor skills. The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (1986) observed Life Skills in context of making firm choices. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) linked Life Skills to education by stating that education should be directed towards the development of the child's fullest potential" (as cited in CBSE, 2010 p.5). The Jomtien Declaration on Education for All (1990) has considered life skill as basic learning content for survival to develop expertise, to upgrade the standard of living and to involve in advancement. The United Nations Inter-Agency Meeting held at WHO, Geneva in 1999 recognized the importance of life skills education in promoting healthy child and adolescent development, coping with disability, preparing youth for changing circumstances in society, preventing some major causes of child and adolescent death and disease, and socializing the child. The Dakar framework for action (2000) in its third goal assure that the young people's and adults learning needs would be met

through fair approach to life skills and sixth goal stated upgrading features of education and assure the quality so that significant educational outcomes are attained in life skills. Nowadays, life skills-based education is acknowledged as an approach to address a range of challenges related to the development of children and youth and thematic responses, such as those stated in UNGASS on HIV/AIDS (2001), UNGASS on Children (2002), World Youth Report (2003), World Program of Human Rights Education (2004), UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (2005), UN Secretary General's Study on Violence Against Children (2006), 51 Commission on the Status of Women (2007) and the World Development Report (2007) (as cited in CBSE, 2010, p. 6).

Being the highest authority, the Central Board of Secondary Education has taken the lead in teaching life skills to students enrolled in school. CBSE (2010) has categories life skills into three broad categories.

Figure 1.1 Categories of Life skills



Sources: Teachers' manual on Life Skills Classes IX-X, CBSE (2010)

WHO (1996) stated that the creation of school curricula has made it easier for students to acquire life skills. The study of multiple interventions grounded in this approach has pinpointed crucial domains of life skills imparted to enhance the health and overall welfare of adolescents. For the present study life skills as stated by WHO (1996) has been adopted. Which are explained below:

- ❖ **Decision making:** Making decisions about our lives enables us to approach in a positive way. If youth actively decide what to do regarding their health by weighing

their options and considering the potential effects of their choices, this could have negative health effects. This ability is essential for children because they support problem-solving, ethical decision-making and experience-based learning. When children learn to make decisions, they become more capable of handling life's obstacles, gain self-assurance and become more independent. It helps children deal with peer pressure, academic decisions and social circumstances while building the foundation for responsible behaviour. These abilities ultimately create the way for a more fruitful and satisfying academic career by equipping them for the demands of decision-making they will encounter throughout their life.

- ❖ Problem solving is the ability to solve difficulties in a positive way. If major issues are not handled, they can lead to psychological distress and physical strain as well. Problem-solving abilities are vital for students because they promote resilience, creativity and critical thinking. These abilities enable students to successfully complete assignments, comprehend difficult ideas and solve difficulties in the real world. In addition to improving academic achievement, problem-solving skills help students overcome obstacles in the future and help them thrive in a variety of spheres of life. It develops an inquisitive and resourceful mindset that promotes achievement and lifelong learning.
- ❖ Creative thinking aids in problem solving as well as in decision making by allowing us to consider all the options and potential outcomes of our choice. Creative thinking can assist us in responding adaptably and flexibly to the events that arise in our daily lives even in the absence of a problem or choice that has to be taken. It allows us to see beyond our immediate experience. For students, creative thinking is essential since it fosters originality, creativity and flexibility. It helps individuals to tackle problems from several angles which encourages the creation of original solutions. It also fosters an enthusiasm for learning and encourages a lifetime quest for knowledge. The cultivation of creative thinking in students ultimately results in improved academic achievement as well as preparedness for success in a world that is changing quickly.
- ❖ Critical thinking is the capacity to evaluate data and experiences rationally. By assisting us in identifying and evaluating the elements—such as values, peer pressure and the media—that shape our attitudes and behaviours, critical thinking can improve our health. Students need to develop critical thinking abilities because they enable them to successfully examine, assess and synthesize information.

Beyond simple recollection these abilities help students comprehend difficult ideas, make wise decisions and approach issues methodically. In addition to promote intellectual independence critical thinking develops logical reasoning, argument assessment skills and the ability to recognize biases.

- ❖ Effective communication means being able to express ourselves using words and actions that fit with our culture and the situation we are in. It's about making sure others understand us well. This includes the freedom to voice one's desires, worries and opinions. Additionally, it could entail having the ability to seek guidance and assistance when needed. Our ability to relate to others positively depends on our interpersonal relationship skills. These relationships can have a significant impact on our social and mental health. Maintaining positive relationships with family members is crucial as they serve a significant source of social support. It could also imply being able to break up with someone in a positive way.
- ❖ Interpersonal relationship skills enable us to engage positively with those around us, fostering meaningful connections that enhance our mental and social well-being. These skills help us form and maintain friendships, which are vital for emotional support and cultivate healthy family relationships, providing a crucial source of social stability. Additionally, they equip us with the ability to end relationships constructively when necessary, ensuring that such transitions are handled with care and respect.
- ❖ Self-awareness is the ability to recognize our own qualities as well as our flaws, desires, and dislikes. We can identify times when we feel pressured or stressed out by cultivating self-awareness. Along with being a requirement for growing empathy for others it is frequently necessary for good interpersonal interactions and communication. Understanding another person's perspective on life, even in unfamiliar circumstances, is the essence of empathy. This reflective ability is essential for academic achievement since it makes learning and self-improvement more proactive. Additionally, it fosters resilience since children are able to overcome obstacles by knowing exactly what they are capable of. Self-aware students are better able to reach their full potential which promotes holistic development and long-term wellbeing. Self-awareness fosters a holistic growth that extends beyond typical academic achievements by providing students with the tools to handle the difficulties of both academic and personal life. It is a crucial ability

that equips pupils to learn continuously throughout their lives and to become flexible citizens in a world that is always changing.

- ❖ Empathy plays a crucial role in fostering comprehension and acceptance of individuals who differ significantly from us. Improved social relations can result from this deeper knowledge particularly in situations where there is ethnic or cultural variety. Furthermore, empathy acts as a stimulant for nurturing behaviours that support giving to and helping those in need. It becomes especially crucial in promoting tolerance as demonstrated by cases involving people with mental illnesses. Since these people may frequently experience stigma and exclusion from society, empathy is essential in bridging the gap and promoting a more sympathetic and helpful attitude from the very groups that these people depend on for support. Empathetic students work more cooperatively in the classroom get along better with their teachers and show greater interest in learning.
- ❖ Coping with emotions is understanding our emotions in ourselves and others, comprehending the impact of those emotions on our behaviour and being able to manage them are all part of coping with feelings. Strong emotions, such as grief or rage can be harmful to our health if we don't manage them appropriately. Coping with emotions allows us to:
 - assist in addressing troubling occurrences and challenging circumstances and arriving at logical solutions
 - enable us to recognize and manage our emotions more effectively
 - permit us to be in charge of our emotions and sensations rather than allowing them to rule on us.
 - Respond to risky situations in a safe and suitable manner.
 - boosting your self-esteem might make you feel secure and independent.
 - reinforce and enhance your interpersonal bonds.
 - improve your effectiveness in specific spheres of your life, such as employment and education
- ❖ Coping with stress means to understand the causes of stress, the effects they have on us and the steps we can take to reduce it. It's about acting to reduce stress and improve our mood. This could entail changing our physical surroundings or way of life in order to lessen the causes of stress. Additionally, it may involve learning relaxation techniques to prevent health issues from arising from tensions brought

on by inevitable stress. Exam pressure, homework, extracurricular activities and other educational requirements can all be quite stressful. For mental health to be unharmed, stress management must be done well in order to avoid problems like anxiety and depression. Coping techniques help students deal with academic challenges more effectively which enhances the learning process. Teaching students coping mechanisms for stress gives them skills that they can use throughout their lives, preparing them for the demands of the workplace. Essentially, stress management is about providing the foundation for long-term mental health and success in a variety of realms of life.

Life skills are most effective when used together. Managing and coping with specific situations often requires multiple life skills. Additionally, a single skill can be useful in various contexts. Mastering the right combination of life skills at any given time is an art.

UNICEF India (2019) in its one of the reports on comprehensive life skills framework stated that “there is an increasingly stronger focus on developing comprehensive life skills in children and young people in India so that they are empowered and are responsible citizens of society. In addition to academic, vocational and technical skills the focus is now on building those skills or competencies that are needed to meet the demands of the increasingly vulnerable situations of our diverse societies.” Realising the need and importance of life skills many organisations in India have been working for developing life skills in India. National Education Policy 2020 have laid great emphasis on life skills, and therefore, it has become evident that schools must inculcate life skills in their curriculum.

1.1.2 LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION INITIATIVES IN INDIA

An important part of any nation's overall development is its educational system. In terms of the nation's economic development its people particularly its adolescents and young people are its most valuable future resources. As a result, the educational system needs to be brimming with attributes that support people's healthy development and liberal worldview. Education in Life Skills makes a major effort to address every negative trait that is common among adolescents. In India various initiatives have been taken for the upliftment of life skills.

Bharat & Kishore (2001) has developed life skills education model for India. The National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCERT, 2005) has identified the significance of linking education with life skills, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has introduced life skills an essential part in the curriculum through Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation from classes 6 to 10 and has issued teacher's manual on Life Skills. An International Workshop on Life Skill Education Concerning Youth Development was held in 2006 by the Department of Adult and Continuing Education in cooperation with the University of Madras and the University Grants Commission. UNICEF (2007) in collaboration with Rajya Shiksha Kendra carried out life skills education project in Madhya Pradesh. Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development is running two years M.A in Life Skills since 2008.

Akshya Patra along with the initiative of Edumedia started Akshya Life Skills in 2012 with the vision of empowering youngster to use their potential for becoming a mature human being. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (2017) intend to implement standardize primary education and life skills. University Grants Commission (2019) has introduced Curriculum and Guidelines for Life Skills (Jeevan Kaushal) 2.0 for higher education students. National Education Policy (2020) has also laid stress on Life skills for the advancement of an individual in becoming a better humane. The National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro- Science (NIMHANS) undertook an Orientation Workshop on "Promotion of mental health and psychological wellbeing of adolescents using life skills approach" on 13th September 2022. CBSE is conducting capacity building program to empower teachers and principals with necessary life skills to full fill the demands of the today's learner.

It has been decided by the Indian government that all secondary and higher secondary schools will use the Adolescents Education Programme (AEP). The objective of AEP is (i) developing value-enhanced life skills through co-curricular activities (CCA), (ii) to correctly educate students on the maturation process, HIV/AIDS, and substance abuse, (ii) to promote a positive attitude and conscientious conduct toward the maturation process, HIV/AIDS, and substance abuse, (iv) to provide them the tools to deal with discrimination and gender stereotypes. Under this program secondary school teachers are entitled to implement life skill-based education in the school. The Adolescence Education Programme (AEP) is coordinated at the national level by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Ministry of Human Resource

Development (MHRD), and the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). The World Health Organization's South East Asia Region Office (WHO-SEARO), located in New Delhi, provided financing for the project, "Health Promotion using Life Skills Approach for Adolescents in Secondary Schools." The project's design used health as a means to an end, utilizing life skills. The project's objectives were to create a life skills model for adolescents in secondary schools that promotes their physical, emotional, and social health, with teachers acting as facilitators, and to create modules of resources for the teachers.

Recognizing the significance of life skills numerous initiatives have been launched in Gujarat to promote its development.

1.1.3 LIFE SKILLS INITIATIVES IN GUJARAT

The Health Education and Life Skills Program (HELP), formerly known as the Adolescent Education Program, is being implemented with assistance from GCERT. It began in 2008 with 2500 schools spread across 4 districts, and in 2013–14, it covered 6365 schools spread across 18 districts. The program covers a number of topics, including balanced diet, mental health, drug abuse, infectious and non-infectious diseases and prevention, human body and health, reproductive health, and child protection. Gujarat Council of Educational Research and Training has introduced Bal mela and Life skills as one its extension activity. This program aims to enhance children's hidden abilities. The GCERT organizes these kinds of Bal mela and Life Skills Mela in all Gujarat State government elementary schools to improve the schools' reputation and stabilise their quality. Between December 2009 and March 2010, 150 experts received training at DIET Vadodara during four stages of the "Life skill through drama" program.

Education about life skills is thus a curriculum with added value. It seeks to provide students the tools they need to make wise decisions that enhance the quality of their lives. Therefore, life skills have various benefits which is explained below.

1.1.4 BENEFITS OF LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION

Students' entire growth is greatly aided by life skills which equip them for success in the classroom and in real-world scenarios. The following are some major advantages of life skills for students:

- Solving problems: Critical thinking and problem-solving skills are strengthened by life skills. Students gain knowledge of situation analysis, problem identification and effective problem-solving techniques.
- Decision making: Life skills assist students in making well-informed decisions by weighing multiple possibilities, assessing potential outcomes and comprehending how their decisions will affect both others and oneself.
- Communication: A vital life skill is the ability to communicate effectively. Strong communication skills are crucial for students to succeed academically and in their future professional efforts because they allow them to listen intently, communicate properly, and work well with others.
- Time management: As students manage a variety of responsibilities, they must learn how to manage their time effectively. Their ability to prioritize, create objectives and manage their time well is facilitated by life skills, which also help students become more productive and responsible.
- Adaptability: Students learn how to be flexible in a variety of circumstances through life skills. Being adaptable is crucial in both academic and practical situations, as they face unexpected difficulties and undergo life changes.
- Resilience: Having resilience is essential to overcome obstacles and disappointments. Students with life skills are more able to overcome setbacks, draw lessons from mistakes and remain optimistic in the face of difficulty.
- Emotional intelligence: Life skills help in the formation of emotional intelligence by assisting students in properly understanding and controlling their feelings. This ability is essential for developing empathy, self-awareness, and healthy relationships.
- Interpersonal skills: Through the development of efficient communication, collaboration, and negotiation abilities, life skills assist students in creating successful interpersonal relationships. Success in social and professional contexts requires certain abilities.
- Leadership: Life skills facilitate the development of traits such as initiative, accountability and responsibility. With the help of these abilities' students can prepare themselves for leadership roles and contribute positively to their communities.

Srikala & Kishore (2010) disclosed that after receiving life skills training students have improved their self-esteem, coping strategy, able to adjust better and were able to deal with the developmental changes. Teaching life skills in the classroom gives children the tools they need to solve problems creatively, create links, find the correct resources for their growth and learn accountability. It also helps students become more confident communicators and team players. Studies indicate an association between life skills and improved classroom behaviour, higher attendance rates and academic success such as those of Maryam et al. (2011), Godi (2017) and Eisha (2021). Santhosh (2022) mentioned that life skills should be instilled in children from a young age and schools are the best places to do this. Students can be prepared for success by learning early how to make wise decisions, deal with peer pressure and manage their environment. The importance of life skills education in the school curriculum is shown by the link between learning and life skills.

1.1.5 NEED OF LIFE SKILLS FOR STUDENTS

Life skills are crucial because they provide youth with more freedom to enhance their quality of life. Young people who possess life skills are better able to comprehend others and themselves, which helps them make wiser decisions and adapt to the always changing environment they live in.

Numerous studies have been conducted to highlight the importance and beneficial effects of life skills education in helping students develop their social, emotional and cognitive abilities as well as their ability to deal with psychosocial problems and concerns. Roodbari et al., (2013) stated that there is a positive impact of life skills training on social development, emotional stability and social adjustment. Parvathy & Pillai (2015) stated that life skill education has a great impact on the students to gain understanding of the physical development. Surma (2016) claimed that students were able to improve their personality through life skill counselling. Life skills education is an interactive approach to education that aims to develop interpersonal skills and shape attitudes in addition to imparting facts. Enhancing young people's ability to take responsibility for making healthy choices, avoiding risky actions and resisting adverse influences are crucial goals of the life skills approach. In addition to laying the groundwork for future success in their school and community, the knowledge, attitudes, and abilities that young children learn in the areas of academics, careers, and

personal/social development also prepare them to be productive members of society. The following list demonstrates why children need to be taught life skills:

1. To enable the students to make a rational judgement.
2. To appreciate the significance of real-world experience.
3. To meet the demands and goals of the young people.
4. To give and foster a vibrant sense of self and high self-worth
5. To develop and enhance communication abilities
6. To manage interpersonal issues and to have better interactions with family and other people
7. To Develop and maintain excellent decision-making skills
8. To develop into an enthusiastic and balanced person
9. To address the issue of lack of discipline.
10. To create responsible citizens for the nation.
11. The ability to distinguish between what is positive and negative, ethical and unethical, wanted and unwanted.
12. To gain flexibility, which will allow them to survive and proceed in changing situations.
13. To equip students to handle stress and challenges that arises in life.

By fostering a vibrant sense of self-worth, enhancing communication and decision-making skills and promoting ethical discernment schools help students manage interpersonal issues, maintain discipline and develop into balanced, enthusiastic individuals. Schools play a pivotal role in enhancing life skills, serving as the foundational platforms where young individuals not only acquire academic knowledge but also develop essential social, emotional and cognitive abilities. Moreover, by promoting decision-making skills, emotional stability and social adjustment schools help cultivate responsible and enthusiastic individuals who can handle stress and challenges ultimately contributing to the development of productive, disciplined and adaptable citizens.

Life skills are crucial for ensuring students' future success in all areas of life. Schools play a key role in establishing a strong foundation for instilling and refining these abilities in students. A school is a place where children are nurtured not only academically but also in developing life skills and fostering positive psychology

simultaneously. Therefore, school play an important role in developing life skills in students.

1.1.6 ROLE OF SCHOOL IN DEVELOPING LIFE SKILLS

Support for life skills education is needed from principals, teachers, and school education administrators. It is evident that schools continue to be an essential social institution for educating children and prepare them for adulthood. According to WHO (1997) “The school is an appropriate place for the introduction of life skills education because of:

- the role of schools in the socialization of young people;
- access to children and adolescents on a large scale
- economic efficiencies (uses existing infrastructure);
- experienced teachers already in place;
- high credibility with parents and community members;
- possibilities for short- and long-term evaluation.”

According to WHO (2020) “The school provides an environment for formal education; skills building and also plays a role in dealing with issues such as relationship building and conflict resolution”. The school atmosphere and other crucial elements that contribute to the school's sustainability, such as teachers and students' attitudes toward a variety of extracurricular and curricular activities, appear to have a significant impact on how effective life skills are. The adolescence years is a critical time for instilling healthy behaviours and life skills in the next generation of youth. Adolescents are now able to relate to their classmates, comprehend conceptually and comprehend new happenings and paths. Meanwhile, a powerful and sudden surge of diverse emotions and sensations that tends to leave adolescents bewildered at times and even confused rather frequently. In such an atmosphere, the school environment is crucial in giving students the chance to better understand who they are, receive guidance from teachers to engage in a variety of activities and comprehend the dynamics of life skills. Teaching life skills and wellness techniques in schools promotes children's and young people's mental health both now and in later years. The environment in school in which the child live is also of great importance. A school environment includes physical, social and emotional component. All these components add in the development of the child's skills.

Teachers, principals and school administrators play pivotal roles in creating an environment conducive to the acquisition and application of these skills. The school setting offers a unique opportunity to reach a large number of children efficiently and effectively, leveraging existing infrastructure and experienced educators. Furthermore, teaching life skills not only benefits students' immediate well-being but also lays a foundation for their long-term mental health and success in adulthood.

As the school plays a conducive role in shaping the students and developing life skills in the students, the role of the teacher cannot be left out. The role of the teacher is also as important as the school. Teachers have a crucial and diversified role in helping students develop life skills. In addition to teaching academic knowledge, teachers are important in helping students develop critical life skills that advance their overall development. An ideal teacher with a positive attitude of acceptance for the students has a significant effect on developing life skills among them (Amandeep, 2018). Therefore, the role of teacher is very important in preparing the students in both academic and real-life situations.

1.1.7 ROLE OF TEACHER IN DEVELOPING LIFE SKILLS

The success of education is mostly dependent on teachers because of their expertise and abilities, which facilitate quality instruction as well as the good growth of youth in both formal and informal contexts worldwide.

According to WHO (2020) manual on: Life Skills educations in school the following are the roles of the teachers to develop life skills among students:

1. Motivating youth to collaborate constructively.
2. Establishing a trustworthy environment in which youth feel free to express their thoughts and emotions.
3. Encouraging every child to believe that they are improving.
4. Serving as a mentor rather than controlling the students.
5. Handling delicate matters.
6. Respecting each student's right to self-governance individually.
7. Having conversations with youth as equals rather than "at" them as superiors.
8. Promoting civility among youth.
9. Serving as a good behaviour role model.
10. Carrying on attitudes and behaviours in both personal and professional contexts.

11. Gaining acceptance as a reliable and well-respected person.
12. Educating using strategies that support youth self-expression.
13. Regularly creating and utilizing methods for monitoring and assessment.
14. Provide leadership, institutional support, and resource access.

It is clear that teachers play a crucial role in fostering a positive environment that encourages collaboration among students, emphasizing the value of teamwork and mutual support. Creating a trusting atmosphere is essential for open communication. Teachers should work to build trust so that students feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings. Teachers have to use various strategies for teaching the content as well as for fostering skills among the students. Students learn life skills most effectively when they are given the chance to actively watch and practice them. It's not always the case that young people can acquire skills by reading about them, listening to teachers explain them, or attending lectures on them. It's essential to learn by doing. In the classroom, teachers must adopt strategies that allow students to watch skills being exercised and then apply them on their own. Various strategies have been suggested by various organisations, which is given below.

1.1.8 STRATEGIES TO DEVELOP LIFE SKILLS

Adolescents can actively participate in a variety of imaginative learning activities that will help them develop an optimistic mindset and the life skills they need to assimilate. Such educational opportunities should be provided to them so they can make wise judgments in life and live moral lives by appreciating the advantages and disadvantages of the choices they make and the circumstances in which they find themselves. The environment should be protected, good relationships should be fostered, conversations about issues like sanitation and hygiene, effective listening and communication and planning for a positive and healthy future should all be encouraged. WHO (1999) stated that learning life skills cannot be improved by information or conversation alone. Experiential learning—that is, real-world application and skill reinforcement for every student in a nurturing learning environment—must be incorporated into the active learning process. It suggested -group work, discussion, debate, story-telling, peer-supported learning and practical community development projects as a means to teach life skills. (NCF, 2005) states that learning in the company of others is a process of interacting with each other and also through the learning task at hand. Children while

working in the group not only raise their understanding but also support the learning of their peers. CBSE (2010) has suggested class discussions, brainstorming, demonstration and guided practice, role play, small groups, educational games, and simulations, case studies, story-telling, debates, practising life skills specific to a particular context with others, audio and visual activities, e.g., arts, music, theatre, dance, decision mapping or problem trees as strategies to develop life skills among students.

Interaction between participants is essential for the success of skills-based education. To make it productive it requires groups. No skill can be attained merely by reading book or taking up any course. To make this strategy effective life skills along with content method have to be put together. It can be inferred from this that specific techniques and resources can be used to acquire Life Skills. Such working in group is known as cooperative learning. The literature has indicated that cooperative learning stands out to be very widely used strategy, because of its theoretical base and an array of techniques. In cooperative learning students learn along with their peer in the form of small groups. In the recent years Cooperative Learning has become most researched teaching models. Dotson (2001) pointed out that cooperative learning has been found to be a successful teaching strategy at all levels, from pre-school to post-secondary.

Cooperative learning involves students working together in groups composed of individuals with varying ability levels. In this approach, the focus is on the group's overall success rather than the individual achievements of its members. Cooperative learning is not the creation of a single individual; rather, it is the result of the development of educational, sociological and psychological theories contributed by numerous scholars. Below mention origin explains the contributions of various scholars towards cooperative learning.

1.2.0 ORIGIN OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Till 1960 cooperative learning was not given due recognition, it was from the year 1961 various educationist started working on cooperative learning. Researchers and educational psychologists from the early to mid-20th century, including Kurt Lewin, Morton Deutsch, and John Dewey, are recognized in contributing to establish cooperative learning. However, throughout the second part of the 20th century, educators like Elizabeth Cohen, Robert Slavin, and David and Roger Johnson

contributed to the development and popularization of today's concept of cooperative learning. (Davidson, 2021). Cooperative learning than started in the mid-1980s (Jacobs, 2008).

John Dewey was a prominent American educational reformer, psychologist, and philosopher who was one of the first to advocate for cooperative learning. In his theories of progressive education, Dewey placed a strong emphasis on the value of student participation and active learning.

Another pioneer in the field of cooperative learning is the German-American psychologist Kurt Lewin. He stressed on the significance of social interactions and group dynamics for behaviour and learning. Cooperative learning has changed over time through the contributions of numerous scholars and educators who understood the importance of collaborative learning experiences in fostering students' academic performance and social growth.

Cooperative learning is one of the examples of constructivism. Constructivism has its roots in sociology, psychology, philosophy and education. Learning theories by Jean Piaget, Vygotsky, Gagne and Dewy are deeply rooted in constructivism. Jean Piaget is considered as the founder of constructivism. Constructivism can be understood in a variety of ways such as Jean Piaget's cognitive constructivism, Lev Vygotsky's Social Constructivism, Von Glasersfeld's radical constructivism.

Constructivism is a theory of learning that suggests that through experiencing and reflecting over their experiences, students actively create their own knowledge and understanding of the world. Instead of viewing students as passive recipients of information it highlights their role as active participants in the learning process. Each person's learning process is unique according to their experiences, which can also be influenced by their sociocultural background and past experiences. Constructivism is a teaching and learning approach that is grounded in fundamental principles and emphasizes the critical role that students play in forming their understanding of the world. These principles highlight how students actively participate in creating their own knowledge and understanding. Here are some of the fundamental principles of constructivism:

- Active Engagement: Students take an active role in their learning.

- Previous information: When entering a learning environment, students carry their past experiences, beliefs, and information with them.
- Meaning-Making: By actively drawing meaning from their experiences, students build their comprehension of concepts and ideas.
- Multiple Perspective: Students are encouraged to take into account a variety of perspectives.
- Scaffolding: To assist students in expanding on their prior knowledge and abilities, teachers offer scaffolding and support.
- Knowledge Construction: Through interactions with people and the environment, students actively develop their own knowledge rather than it being passively transmitted from teacher.

The goal of a traditional teaching strategy is to impart knowledge to students. Constructivism argues that knowledge cannot be directly imparted to students, in contrast to the traditional teaching methodology that emphasizes information delivery. Constructivism differs from traditional way of teaching. Below table compare the difference between constructivism and traditional classroom:

| TRADITIONAL CLASSROOM | CONSTRUCTIVIST CLASSROOM |
|--|--|
| Lessons start with the components of the whole, stresses essential skills. | The curriculum places a strong emphasis on significant concepts, starting with the whole and working down to the pieces. |
| The strict implementation of a set curriculum is highly regarded | It is important to pursue students' interests and queries. |
| Textbooks and workbooks are the main types of materials. | Materials comprise both manipulatives and main sources of information. |
| Students receive information from their teachers. Knowledge is imparted to students. | Teachers converse with pupils, assisting them in creating their own knowledge. |
| Repetition is the foundation of learning. | Learning is collaborative and builds on prior knowledge for the learner. |
| The principal authoritative figure who transfers knowledge to pupils is the teacher. | The function of the teacher is to assist students' learning process as a guide or facilitator. |

| | |
|---|--|
| Correct responses on tests serve as assessment tools. | In addition to tests, assessments also comprise student projects, observations, and opinions. A process is just as significant as a product. |
| Most of the time, students work alone. | Most of the time, students work in groups. |
| People consider knowledge to be immobile. | It is believed that knowledge is dynamic and constantly evolving based on our experiences. |

There are various examples of constructivist classroom activities such as Reciprocal teaching/learning, Inquire Based Learning (IBL), Problem Based Learning (PBL), Cooperative learning. Researcher has adopted Cooperative learning as one of the examples.

1.2.1 DEFINING COOPERATIVE LEARNING

NCF (2005) focuses on group work, and suggest that mixed age groups of children should be considered for projects to do together. Children who interact with other children who are different from them can learn a lot from them. When they are in groups with children from different backgrounds, they can learn how to comprehend key social ideals and how to collaborate as a team. With the accompany of other the children can participate in larger task, where the children find it difficult to do it alone. The learning that takes place in mixed groups is known as cooperative learning. Cooperative learning has been defined by various experts, some of them are given below:

Slavin (1987) defines cooperative learning as sets of instructions given to students to work together to achieve academic content. Cohen (1992) states that in “cooperative learning a small group of students work together to complete their assigned task.” Johnson and Johnson (1994) states that in Cooperative learning small group of students work together on the instructions provided to enhance their as well as others learning. According to Jolliffe (2007) “Cooperative learning requires pupils to work together in small groups to support each other to improve their own learning and that of others”.

Therefore, from the above discussion it can stated that in cooperative learning students work in small groups to achieve a common goal. Thus, the idea of cooperative learning

is very simple. Students are divided into small groups after receiving instructions from their teacher. All the members of the group then work together on the given assignment until all the members have clearly understood and finished it. Students should gain an understanding of how to take responsibility for their actions, collaborate effectively in teams and share accountability for the group's results. A variety of particular techniques are used in cooperative learning to encourage cooperation in learning through teamwork. The structure of cooperative projects forces students to collaborate with one another in order to finish the assignment.

Cooperative learning is effective for a number of reasons. Cognitive psychologists and effective teachers have long recognized that students learn better when they are actively involved in the learning process rather than passively observing and listening to lectures. Cooperative learning is an active method by definition. Beyond that, there are numerous ways in which cooperation improves learning. When working alone weak students are more likely to give up whenever they run into difficulties; when working in groups however, they persevere. When assigned to explain and clarify material to weaker students, strong students frequently identify gaps in their own expertise and fill them in.

Students tend to be more productive, accept and support their classmates have more self-esteem and are more autonomous and independent when they collaborate with one another more. Collaborating with colleagues is an essential skill. It is essential to the children's healthy growth and capacity for autonomous learning. Cooperative learning is comprised of five key elements. Cooperative learning is actually distinguished from other types of group learning by these five components. A cooperative learning group is created when all of these components are present in an educational setting. Johnson & Jhonson (2018) has proposed five basic elements of cooperative learning. The five basic elements of cooperative learning are mentioned below.

1.2.2 ELEMENTS OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING

1. Positive Interdependence

Cooperative activities are centered on positive interdependence. Students need to understand two things: (a) they are interconnected with their group members and cannot thrive without them, and vice versa; and (b) both their group members' and their own efforts contribute to the success of the group. For a lesson to be cooperative, it must be

designed to foster positive interdependence among students. Every lesson needs to have positive goal interdependence, but there are other ways to organize positive interdependence as well such as mutual rewards, shared resources, complementary roles, a shared identity and others.

2. Individual and Group Accountability

Each member of the group is responsible for contributing the appropriate amount to the group's task. Every student is accountable for their own work when their assignments are graded and the results are shared to the class as a whole as well as to each student alone. Individual accountability entails doing one's fair part of the assignment as well as helping the other group members. Developing the personal strength of each group member is one of the goals of cooperative learning. Significant group-to-individual transmission occurs. Students acquire knowledge collaboratively, leading to improved individual performance. One way to arrange individual accountability is to: (a) watch students collaborate and record each person's efforts; (b) have each student share what they have learned with a classmate; (c) assigning each student a unique test.

3. Interpersonal and Small Group Skills

Interpersonal and small group abilities are necessary to contribute to the success of a cooperative effort. In cooperative learning groups, students are encouraged to use their social skills efficiently. The objective and precision of teaching leadership, trust-building, communication, decision-making and conflict-management abilities must match that of academic subjects.

4. Face-to-Face Promotive Interaction

By supporting, encouraging, praising and helping one another in their learning endeavours, students help each other succeed. By doing this, one engages in cognitive processes like debating the nature of the topics being taught, verbally instructing others on problem-solving techniques, imparting knowledge to peers, critiquing each other's logic and conclusions and bridging current and previous learning. In addition, constructive contact involves social processes like encouraging and supporting learning endeavours, uniting in group celebrations of accomplishments and providing an example of how to use social skills appropriately.

5. Group Processing

Group processing is the process of evaluating how well members of the group use the process to optimize their own and each other's learning in order to find areas for process improvement. In a group, everyone needs to (a) notice which actions help or harm the group, (b) make sure they get along well and work together, (c) decide which actions to change or keep, and (d) praise each other for doing well.

Thus, these elements of cooperative learning encourage students to work together, support each other's learning and take responsibility for their own and their peers' academic success. The success of cooperative learning is largely based on its theoretical foundation. Cooperative learning is underpinned by three major theories these are explained below.

1.2.3 THEORIES OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Cooperative learning is based on a number of ideas, which serve as frameworks for comprehending its efficacy and directing its use. Several important theories include:

1. Social Interdependency Theory:

It was developed by Morton Deutsch in the 1940s, positive and negative social interdependence were the two forms he postulated. There are two different kinds of interdependence: competitive (negative) and cooperative (positive), and individualistic efforts do not result in social interdependence. Group members who actively assist and motivate one another to accomplish shared objectives are said to be cooperating. Competition arises when members of a group operate in a way that makes it more difficult for one another to accomplish their objectives, which causes friction and inefficiency. No interaction occurs when people work alone and don't communicate with each other; just concentrating on their own duties and objectives.

Cooperative learning is based on the social interdependence theory, which emphasizes that working together interdependently yields greater results than working alone. This approach is consistent with the principles of cooperative learning, which emphasize the development of knowledge and skills through group members' active participation, cooperation and mutual support. In a cooperative learning environment, learners depend on each other to accomplish common objectives, encouraging greater comprehension and topic mastery via group work and communication. Social

interdependence produces more meaningful and successful learning experiences by improving communication, fostering a sense of responsibility and establishing trust.

2. Cognitive development theory

Cognitive development theory was emphasized by a Swiss biologist, philosopher, and psychologist Jean Piaget in 1936. According to Piaget's developmental theory, students actively participate in their own learning and cognitive growth. Piaget believed that learning is a self-driven process in which individuals actively engage with their experiences and surroundings to create and reconstruct knowledge. According to Piaget, learning progresses through the interaction of assimilation and accommodation. Assimilation involves fitting new experiences into preexisting conceptions. Accommodation involves fitting existing concepts into new experiences. In Piaget's framework, learning involves a dynamic process where learners integrate new knowledge with their existing cognitive structures. When learners encounter new information, they initially try to assimilate it into their existing knowledge. If the new information aligns with what they already know, equilibrium is maintained. However, if there is a conflict, learners must adjust their existing knowledge to accommodate the new information, creating a new equilibrium. In cooperative learning setting, students work together, engage in discussion and solve problem cooperatively. This environment fosters a continuous cycle of knowledge construction and reconstruction, facilitating cognitive growth as students build on each other's ideas and experiences.

3. Social-cognitive theory

Albert Bandura formulated the Social Cognitive Theory on the premise that learning is shaped by a combination of cognitive processes, behavioural observations and environmental influences. This theory is built upon social learning theory by incorporating the impact of cognitive processes, such as perceptions, decision-making, and motivation, on an individual's behaviour and the environment that shapes their actions. Social cognitive theory proposes that individuals don't passively absorb knowledge from their surroundings; instead, they actively shape their learning by interpreting the consequences of their actions. These interpretations, in turn, influence both their personal factors and their environments, thereby informing and potentially altering their future behaviour. Cooperative learning emphasizes the active role of individuals in shaping their learning experiences within social contexts. In cooperative

learning settings, students work together in groups, actively engaging in shared tasks and collaborative problem-solving. This active participation allows them to observe and learn from their peers, shaping their understanding and behaviours through social interactions.

When students put in effort to do a task successfully, concentrate on the task, show curiosity about the task and its material, persevere in finishing the task, and apply higher-level cognitive techniques in the process, they are engaging in a learning activity. When it comes to behaviour, cognitive function and emotional engagement, students who participate in cooperative learning activities tend to be more on-task than those who participate in competitive or individualistic learning activities. Cooperative learning works better when different techniques are applied in teaching learning. Various cooperative learning techniques have been proposed by many scholars. Cooperative learning stands out for its diverse array of specific methods and procedures designed to cultivate collaboration among students in their learning endeavours. These methods are structured to necessitate collective effort for successful completion of tasks. There are numerous cooperative learning methods given by various scholars, some of them have been described below.

| | |
|--|---|
| 1) Formulate-listen-share-create | 32) Group Investigation |
| 2) Rally Coach | 33) Constructive Controversy |
| 3) Teams Games Tournaments (TGT) | 34) Students Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD) |
| 4) Team Assisted Individualization (TAI) | 35) Note Taking Pairs |
| 5) Numbered Heads Together | 36) Jigsaw II |
| 6) Co-op Co-op | 37) Analytics Team |
| 7) Learning together | 38) Three Step Interview |
| 8) Reciprocal Teaching | 39) Quiz Quiz Trade |
| 9) Think-Pair-Share | 40) Question and Answer Pairs |
| 10) Four corners | 41) Paired Check |
| 11) Problem based learning | 42) Forward Snowball |
| 12) Round Table | 43) Choose your own Adventure |
| 13) Jigsaw I | 44) Inner/Outer Circle |

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 14) Reverse Jigsaw | 45) Team Scavenger Hunt |
| 15) Talking Chips | 46) Escape Room Activities |
| 16) Send- A- Problem | 47) Forced Debate |
| 17) Structured Problem Solving | 48) Team Expectations |
| 18) Fishbowl Debate | 49) Graffiti |
| 19) Case Study | 50) Focused Listing |
| 20) Team Based Learning | 51) Ice Breaker |
| 21) Group Problem Solving | 52) Group Grid |
| 22) Three Stay One Stray | 53) Search-Pair-Share |
| 23) Dyadic Essays | 54) Pair Read |
| 24) Peer Editing | 55) One Minute Papers |
| 25) Write-Pair-Share | 56) Value Line |
| 26) Turn To Your Neighbour | 57) Uncommon Commonalities |
| 27) Think-Write-Pair-Compare | 58) Team Expectations |
| 28) Team Pair Solo | 59) Double Entry Journal |
| 29) Circle the Sage | 60) Sentence Completion |
| 30) Write Around | 61) Catch up |
| 31) Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) | 62) Group Processing |

The literature review has identified cooperative learning as a key student-centered methodology that fosters critical thinking, social competence, and academic success. Research indicates that methods such as the jigsaw technique, Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD) and Numbered Heads Together enhance learning outcomes, academic performance, social interaction skills, and classroom involvement. For this study, the researcher has selected these techniques along with other techniques from the aforementioned list. The selected cooperative learning techniques chosen for this study are detailed below.

1.2.4 COOPERATIVE LEARNING TECHNIQUES

1. Round Table

Round table was developed by Spencer Kagan. This method has three steps. First, the teacher poses a question which has several answers. Second, one student from the group writes only one answer and passes the paper counter clockwise to the next student. In the third step the teacher declares the winner group who have given greatest number of answers.

2. Note taking pairs

This technique helps the students to improve their individual notes. The size of group is limited to two. This method can be used during lectures or students reading an assignment. This technique involves four steps. In the first step teacher teaches the content, individual student will take notes of the major points from the content taught. In the second step students will form pairs of two student. In the third step Partner A will begin to summarize the main points from his notes. After Partner A finishes his summary, Partner B will offer necessary corrections and additional information. In the fourth step Partner B will summarize his next section of notes, Partner A will then offer necessary corrections and additional information. The partners continue their role till both of them had shared their summary, necessary corrections and additional information.

3. Write Around

In this technique students are formed in groups of 3-4. Teacher gives each group different topic which has several answers. All the members of the group share their ideas and will write their responses on the piece of paper. After a specific time is given to all the groups, teacher will tell the students to pass their paper to the next group. All the groups will read the response written by the previous group, group members will then elaborate further, or justify what is written. This process continues throughout the group.

4. Structured problem solving

This technique uses specific step wise problem-solving technique. The teacher gives problem to all the groups. Members of the group have to first identify the problem,

then they have to generate possible solutions, they have to then select the best mutually accepted solution. At the last the group have to make a report of their solution and have to give appropriate explanation of it.

5. Think Pair Share

Think Pair share was originally developed by Frank T. Layman in 1981. This method follows four steps. In the first step, the teacher raises one question and all the students listens it very carefully. Secondly, all the individual student are given stipulated time to think, brainstorm their thoughts and write their responses. Thirdly, students are paired with their peers, the ideas are discussed between the partners. Fourth, students share their ideas discussed with their partner in front of the whole class.

6. Turn to your neighbour

This technique is designed to get ample amount of participation from the students. In this technique students have to work in pairs. This technique can be used whenever teacher is giving lecture or when teacher poses any question. All the students have to develop their own answers. Partner A share his answer with partner B, Partner B listens carefully to the explanation given by Partner B. The roles than get switch. After listening to each other's answer, both the partners have to create a new answer, that is above their original thought. Finally, teacher calls out students and tell them to share their thoughts.

7. Students Team Achievement division

STAD was developed by Rober Slavin along with his associates. In this technique teacher present a lesson to the whole class. Students are then divided among groups. All the members of the group master the lesson and help their team mates to master the content. Students have to work together to raise the achievement of the group. Then finally individual students are tested by giving quizzes on the content, in which they may not help each other.

8. Numbered Heads Together

This technique was developed by Spencer Kagan (1992). In this technique group of three or five is made and each member of the group is assigned with a specific number. Then the teacher asks a broad question and allot specific time limit. All the students in

their group now will put their heads together and work on the assignment and will make sure that all the members have mastered the content. Finally, teacher calls out students from each group with specific number. Students with specific number then share their thoughts with the whole class.

9. Think, write, pair, compare

This technique is the variation of think-pair-share. The step write ensures that every student is ready to communicate with their partner and motivates them to actively participate by reflecting on their thoughts. In this technique teacher poses a problem or give a question to solve. Teacher will provide specific amount of time to think. Individual student will think of answer and will write it down. Students will form pairs within teams and will discuss their responses. All the pairs of the group will then compare their responses within their team.

10. Reciprocal teaching

Reciprocal teaching was developed by Palincsar, Brown and Klenk between 1984 and 1991. In this technique four students are assigned in 1 group. Each member is given a specific role. One student become summarizer, one becomes questioner, one becomes clarifier and another become a predictor. The predictor's job is to look at the title and pictures to guess what the group will learn or what will happen next in the text. They use clues to make educated guesses about what comes next in the reading. The role of questioner is to think of the question and ask question which will help the group to understand what has been read. The clarifier helps the group when things are confusing, like when they don't understand a word or when a sentence doesn't make sense. They explain things clearly to make it easier for everyone to understand. The summarizer then tells the group what they just read, but in simpler words. They also help everyone pick out the most important ideas from the text.

11. Quiz-Quiz Trade

Quiz-quiz trade was developed by Spencer Kagan. In this technique teacher will form group of 5 with six students in each group. Each student will receive flashcard. Question will be written on front of the flashcard and answers will be written on back side of the flashcard.

In this activity, students stand up and find a partner. One student asks a question to their partner. If the partner answers correctly, they get praised. If not, the first student helps them understand and provides the answer. Then they switch roles. After finishing, they find new partners and repeat the process. This continues until each student has answered all the questions. The aim is for students to learn from each other and remember the answers.

12. Group Problem solving

In contrast to previous conventional "group learning," Cooperative Group Problem-Solving gives recognition to both individual and team achievements and let group members take turns in the leadership positions. In this technique teacher will form group of 4. Teacher will present problem to students. Teacher will provide structure or guidance toward solving the problem. Students will discuss on the problem and will reach out at the final solution. Students will write their solution on the paper and will submit it to the teacher. Teacher will read out all the 4 groups solution in the class.

13. Three step interviews

Three step interview was developed by Kagan (1992). In this technique the teacher teaches a content to the whole class. Student A will then interview Student B in pairs, with Student A acting as the interviewer and Student B as the interviewee. The children took turns playing different roles after the initial interview was finished. Interview with student A by student B. Following each student's turn, pairs combine with additional pairs to form groups of four or six. Every team member shares what they took out from the interview. The student writes a summary report of the interview results once all the interviews are completed.

14. Three stay one stray

According to Kagan this technique follows certain steps.

- Students discuss a particular topic in groups of four.
- A member of the group will be chosen to be the guest after the discussion's outcome. Their group's host will be comprised of three other people.
- The guest will inform the other groups on the outcome of his group discussion.
- While interacting with other group members, the hosts remain in their group and get the outcomes of their discussions.

- The guest proceeds to other groups and does the same task after providing information to one group.
- The guest visits each group before going back to his own.
- It is the responsibility of each host to inform their friend who is the guest of the facts they have learned.
- Finally, teacher conclude the summary of discussion result given by all the groups.

15. Jigsaw II

Jigsaw was developed by Aronson. Jigsaw cooperative learning technique facilitate each student of home group to focus on a particular facet of a topic. In jigsaw cooperative learning technique, the teacher after teaching the content forms group of four or five. All the members of one group i.e., the home group will be assigned different topic to research. Students with similar topic will come together, these are known as expert group. Students in the expert group will then gather information on the assigned topic. Students work collaboratively and master the assigned topic. After mastering the content in the expert group, students then return to their home group. It becomes responsibility of each expert student to teach his content to other members of his group. It is the responsibility of other members also to learn the content from their expert member. After all the expert member have shared the information, teacher assess all the students by taking quiz.

16. Rally Coach

Rally coach was developed by Spencer Kagan. It is a structure that provides students with supplementary practice along with feedback. In rally coach pairs of students gets sets of questions or problems. Partner A solves the problem while partner B listens, examine, monitor and compliment partner A. Then the role gets switched. Now partner B solves the problem and partner A listens, examine, monitor and compliment partner B. Both the pairs continue the process until all the problems or questions gets solved.

17. Write, pair, share

Write, pair, share technique enable the students to construct their thinking in writing before interaction with their peers. In write, pair, share, the teacher teaches the content and instruct the students to think about the content that is taught and write few sentences

about it. First, every individual student writes his sentence. Then secondly students' pair with their peers. Finally pairs form into groups. All the members of the group then discuss the sentences among themselves and identify the largest commonly occurred ideas.

Learners are motivated to take charge of their education and study collaboratively in a cooperative learning environment. Cooperative learning foster safe nurture learning environment as the output is generated within the group as compared to the individual. Cooperative learning not only benefit students in academics but also promote social interaction, interpersonal skills. There are numerous advantages of cooperative learning, which are stated below.

1.2.5 ADVANTAGES OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Kagan (1999) has pointed out various advantages of cooperative learning. These are mentioned below: Promote advanced thinking skills, Boost self-esteem in students, Promote verbal communication skills, Promote social interaction skills, Promote problem solving skills, Encourages students to be responsible for learning and develop responsibility for each other, Encourage students to think critically and helps in clarifying ideas through debate and discussion, Enrich self-management skills and promote interpersonal relationships, Students are taught to criticize ideas, not people. Nurture students to look at the situation from others view of perspectives. Generate practical attitude towards subject matter, teachers, principals, peers, family members and other local bodies. Reduces classroom and test anxiety. Develops various skills. Boost higher academic achievement.

Students are encouraged to participate actively in cooperative learning. Collaborating on assignments and projects encourages them to actively engage with the content, which promotes a deeper understanding of the subject. Social skills including conflict resolution, cooperation and communication are developed through cooperative learning. Students gain knowledge on how to understand various viewpoints, work well with others and contribute positively to group discussions. They learn to respect the differences among their peers and become better team players as a result, which enhances the over group dynamic. Student motivation can be increased via group activities, which frequently make studying more interesting and pleasurable. When they see the material's relevance and receive peer support, students are more likely to be

motivated. Individual differences can be effectively addressed through cooperative learning. Diverse abilities among the students allow them to contribute to the group, and more skilled learners can support the less skilled ones, making the learning process more equitable. In cooperative learning environments, students frequently need to clearly communicate their ideas and opinions. Effective communication skills are developed as a result, and these are important in various areas of life. Therefore, looking into various advantages of cooperative learning it can be inferred that cooperative learning is an effective strategy in enhancing life skills among students.

Life skills and cooperative learning are closely interlinked as cooperative learning provides an ideal environment for the development and practice of various life skills. Through cooperative learning experiences, students not only acquire academic knowledge but also develop the practical skills necessary for success in various aspects of life, including relationships, careers, and personal development. Therefore, it is evident that life skills can be inculcated through cooperative learning.

1.2.6 INCULCATION OF LIFE SKILLS THROUGH COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Carol, Imel, & Kerka mentioned that “Cooperative learning, as an instructional methodology provides opportunities for students to develop skills in group interactions and in working with others that are needed in today's world.” (as cited in Abu & Flowers, 1997). In cooperative learning students learn to work together, that enable them to acquire important life skills, which are important for their development. For example, when students are working in groups, they need to organized their thoughts to explain them to their teammates, for this they will be engaged in thinking process, they will think creatively and critically and will solve problems and will take appropriated decision. Students strengthen their own learning when they explain to others this is how they are able to raise effective communication, interpersonal skills and empathy. When students motivate each other to learn they are able to know about themselves their strength and weakness and how to overcome such situations, in this way self-awareness can be raised. When an individual student is working on the task it is likely that he may encounter with stress, with the help of his team mates he can overcome his stress as he is responsible for the group success. Students facing with emotional problems can be guided by individual assistance, guidance and attention

which is provided by their team mates as these team mates act as the strongest support system. Thus, it can be summarized that cooperative learning carries all the components through which Life Skills can be enhanced.

Sandhu (2014) in his survey reported that majority of the students have just average level of life skills which are not adequate, and suggested that there is a need to train the teachers and consequently develop the life skills among the students. If the life skills of the students can be nurtured through school subject such as social sciences it will not only help the child in academics but to maintain and have healthy relationships with the people and the society. The content of social sciences has drawn from the society and the social environment; therefore, it has an ample scope on inculcating life skills among the students.

1.3.0 MEANING OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

As per J. F. Forrester the term Social Sciences as the name suggests stands for the type of sciences that deals with the study of the society and its functioning. It is much like the same as to interpret Natural Science as a science dealing with the study of the nature and its world of work (Physical as well as Biological). (as cited in Mangal, S.K, 2018). Social Sciences is the study of the society and human beings - their behaviour, relationships, growth and development, the resources they use and various institution they require to function such as family, school, colleges, government, clubs, etc. All these aspects are associated with one another.

According to the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE) (2023), the objective of social science education is to help students gain a comprehensive understanding of the society they live in. This includes exploring how individuals within the society interact, communicate and behave, including their eating habits, languages, artistic expressions, customs, clothing, and aspirations. Moreover, social science education aims to connect students with their heritage and identity. It encourages them to learn about their ancestors, cultural traditions and local communities. This understanding of their historical and cultural roots helps students develop a sense of belonging and self-awareness. By integrating knowledge of society and personal history, social science education fosters a well-rounded understanding of the world and one's place within it.

Social science education fosters in students a sense of pride in their heritage and their nation as well as a forward-thinking drive to keep doing better as people as a community and as a country. In school, social science is taught as a combination of several topics. It covers Civics (which studies how governments function), Economics (which deals with money and resources), History, Geography, and Political Science (which studies politics). It also occasionally draws ideas from disciplines such as psychology (the study of human thought and emotion), anthropology (the study of various cultures), philosophy (the study of profound life problems), and law (the study of laws and regulations). Social Science attempts to provide students with a comprehensive awareness of the world that is around them by combining all these diverse courses together.

Below mention aims and objectives of social science highlight the importance of the subject in students' lives by emphasizing its role in promoting a deeper understanding of society, culture, and human behaviour.

1.3.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AS PER NCF-SE 2023

Social science aids our understanding of human civilization and its relationship to mother nature which functions as a map. Learning how things come along is more important than simply remembering information. Social science education teaches students how to observe and comprehend what is happening around them. This comprehension will not only serve their personal interests but also assist them in being well-accounting members of society. It aids in the acquisition of critical beliefs and dispositions that are necessary for participation in a democratic society. National Curriculum Framework for School Education (2023) has mentioned the aims of social sciences in school education, which is presented below.

a. Understanding how society function

Social science studies examine several facets of society, including politics, economy, geography, culture, history, and environment, to help us comprehend the way communities perform. Students gain a greater understanding of these elements and how they influence the world around them when they study social science. Students will gain knowledge and comprehension of:

- i. Human civilization's consistency and evolution, as well as its causes and consequences
- ii. The relationship that exists between the environment, earth's resources, and humans; this includes the patterns that emerge from this relationship in space and time, how it affects human life, and how activity from humans affects the environment.
- iii. The similarities and differences between individuals and their customs in various societies, areas, and cultural settings within communities
- iv. The history, purpose and evolution of diverse institutions in society, politics and the economy to the present day.

b. Capabilities for social science inquiry: Students will acquire the following abilities for using and executing the social science inquiry methods:

- i. Finding, confirming, and cross-checking information from various sources, analyzing it and creating logical stories
- ii. Identifying characteristics of the external environment, observing spatial and temporal trends, interpreting maps, analyzing and interpreting a range of related ideas and procedures
- iii. Pondering logically and imaginatively, developing well-informed ideas, making sensible choices and being inclined to solve problems.
- iv. Gathering, arranging, evaluating, and presenting facts and information on a range of topics, including socio-political, historical, geographical, cultural and economic.
- v. Offering thoughtful recommendations for addressing current societal issues using these research techniques.

Thus, the aims of social sciences are to raise students' awareness in growing up as the active, responsible and reflective member of the society. To understand the concept of family, community and nation- to understand how the society is been structured, managed and governed. To help in attainment of knowledge of various cultural and diversity and to respect nation's struggle for freedom, and to appreciate the contribution of the people and inculcate the habits of patriotism, courage, cooperation and tolerance.

By learning about different societies, cultures, and social interactions students gain practical skills to navigate and contribute to their communities. This connection enhances their ability to understand and manage personal and social challenges,

fostering responsible and informed citizenship. Social sciences provide insights into human behaviour, social structures, cultural norms and historical contexts, which are essential for understanding the complexities of the world. Life skills, such as critical thinking, communication, empathy, problem-solving, and decision-making, are developed through the study of social sciences. Life skills and social sciences are interconnected as both aim to equip individuals with the knowledge and abilities necessary for effective functioning in society. The various approaches how life skills can be enhanced through cooperative learning is mention below.

1.3.2 ENHANCING LIFE SKILLS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

The task of teaching and learning of Social Science at the school level is a challenging task. Gera (2018) in her article on “Importance of Life Skills as part of the school curriculum” states that the most practical way of teaching life skills in school is to incorporate them in the lesson plan. It is evident from the above statement that if the school subject is incorporated in the promotion of Life Skills the purpose of providing learning experience can be fulfilled. By providing practical experiences to the students, they will be able to understand the importance of the subjects and will develop the skills which will enable them to deal with the day-to-day challenges of their life. Life Skills are the abilities that promote an individual’s physical, mental and emotional well-being. Social science is the subject that provides huge scope for promoting life skills. The aims of teaching social sciences are interlinked with life skills. Such as:

- The students will think critically about the past struggles of mankind and will think creatively for the progress of the society.
- Interpersonal skill enables the students to praise their personal relations with the society and with the nation
- Empathy will enable the students to develop sympathy, tolerance and understanding among people, groups and nations and promote world peace.
- Self-awareness will prepare the students to become an active, responsible and effective member of the society.
- Problem solving will enable the students to develop the habit of investigating and solving all individual and social welfare problems.
- Decision making will enable the students to develop the ability to lead the society in the right direction.

- Coping with stress and managing emotions will enable the students to promote an understanding and appreciation of life in society.
- Effective communication will enable the students to make him intelligent citizen of the society and as well as making the society intelligent too.

NCF (2005) pointed out that the main focus of social sciences curricula should be to emphasize the process of learning and thinking rather than the mere acquisition of facts. Social Sciences provides day to day life experiences to the students it helps them to intelligently deal with problems they will face in the future. The content of social sciences is taught differently at every stage of the students for example on topic of community life, children study about the history of the community, its geography, its climate, native plant and animal life. At first, social sciences look at how individuals grow in their immediate surroundings. Then, they broaden to study how people relate in bigger communities - locally, statewide and nationally. The child does not grow he needs guidance. Therefore, during the stages of their growth a child requires care of his physical needs, emotional and social potentialities. Hence the growth and development suggest a pattern for the advancement of children on the developmental path. (Mangal, 2005).

1.4.0 RATIONALE FOR THE PROPOSED STUDY

Adolescence is a critical transitional stage that can lead to challenges and conflicts if not properly managed with adequate knowledge, supervision, guidance, and counselling. Given the significance of this developmental period, education must be continually updated to include essential knowledge and life experiences. The specific needs of young people necessitate incorporating life skills into education, as life skills education is one of the most effective preventive measures for addressing the challenges faced by adolescents globally. The CBSE has required its schools to incorporate Life Skills Education into the curriculum for classes VI-X to foster self-confidence, eco-sensitivity, and positive attitudes toward life among students. This implies that schools are the ideal place to achieve the most effective outcomes of life skills education at the elementary level. Schools, where students spend a significant portion of their day and much of their productive time, are well-positioned to promote holistic development by incorporating life skills education into the regular curriculum.

Life skills can be enhanced in number of ways. Through this study researcher intend to make an effort to enhance life skills through cooperative learning as one of the methods of constructivism. Cooperative learning is one of the strategy which can be used in daily teaching learning environment. It is considered as one of the highly effective teaching strategies which helps in raising motivation, retention, raise self-esteem, increase social skills, enhance cognitive skills, increase higher level thinking among adolescents. Research indicates that cooperative learning methods improve student knowledge and academic achievement, increase student engagement with their learning, improve verbal communication skills, foster social skills, boost student confidence and contribute to positive race relations, along with positive outcomes in other areas. The findings from various studies provide strong support for the implementation of cooperative learning in educational settings.

Despite the numerous cooperative learning techniques proposed by various scholars, only a limited number have seen widespread use, as reflected in the literature review. This raises the question as to why other techniques have not been more commonly implemented. Therefore, the researcher aims to explore the effects of these less commonly used techniques to assess their impact on student enhancement. Therefore, for the present study the researcher has taken cooperative learning as one of the strategies to enhance life skills.

One of the solutions that can be made is teaching life skills through school subjects. WHO (1997) has suggested that life skills programme can be designed in such a way that it can be infused into other subjects and integrated either as a new subject, or withing the existing subject, this would offer greater potential for programme success. Therefore, researcher has taken social sciences as one of the subjects to enhance life skills. As social sciences is one of the scientific disciplines that focuses on the study of societies and the interactions between people within them. Young children can develop the ability to solve problems and become engaged members of their communities and beyond by participating in social sciences inquiry. Chetri (2020) suggested that “life skills should be taught in every regular school by a life skills trainer/teacher/counsellor so that students learn basic skills which are very much needed in the present society to enhance mental health, peace and adjust in the changing environment.”

1.5 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Enhancement of life skills through cooperative learning in social sciences among elementary school students

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

1. What is the level of life skills among elementary school students?
2. How can life skills be enhanced in social sciences class?
3. To what extent cooperative learning strategy will be helpful in enhancing Life Skills among elementary school students?

1.7 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the current level of life skills among elementary school students.
2. To design lesson plan using cooperative learning techniques.
3. To study the process of enhancement of life skills through cooperative learning among elementary school students.
4. To study the reaction of students on cooperative learning techniques.

1.8 EXPLANATION OF THE TERM

Life Skills: For the present study life skills are considered as the capabilities for dealing with the challenging situations of everyday life with positive behaviour. For the present study 10 core life skills as laid by WHO (1996) have been selected:

(i) Self-awareness, (ii) empathy, (iii) critical thinking, (iv) creative thinking, (v) problem solving, (vi) decision making, (vii) interpersonal skill, (viii) effective communication, (ix) coping with stress, (x) managing emotions.

Cooperative learning: Cooperative learning is a teaching method where small teams of students, usually four to six works together to accomplish a common task. The students will be instructed through eight methods. These methods are:

(i) Jigsaw, (ii) Student Teams Achievement Division, (iii) Think-pair-share, (iv) Three step interview, (v) Round table or Rally table, (vi) Note taking pairs, (viii) Numbered head, (viii), Write around, (ix) Structured problem solving, (x) Turn to your neighbour, (xi) Rally Coach, (xii) Think, write, pair, compare, (xiii) Reciprocal teaching, (xiv) quiz

quiz trade, (xv) Group problem solving, (xvi) Three stay one stray, (xvii) Write, pair, share.

Social Sciences: Social Sciences refers to the NCERT class VI text book of social science, which contain History, Geography and Civics text book.

1.9 DELIMITATION OF THE PROPOSED STUDY

The proposed study is delimited to class VI students (of one section) from a private unaided senior secondary school in Vadodara district, affiliated with the Central Board of Secondary Education. (CBSE) for the academic year (2023-24).

1.10 ORGANIZATION OF THESIS

The thesis is divided into 7 chapters. The first chapter deals with theoretical and conceptual framework of the study. It contains explanation on initiatives taken for life skills in world, theories of cooperative learning and objective of teaching social sciences as per NCFSE 2023. The second chapter summarizes review of the related literature done in the area of life skills and cooperative learning. The review studies have been divided between studies conducted in India and studies conducted abroad. The third chapter explains the methodology chosen for the present study. It contains research design, sample for the present study, data collection methods and data analysis method. Fourth chapter is about the settings. It explains the description of Baroda city, its location, educational settings, detail information of sample background. Fifth chapter presents analysis and interpretation of data. Chapter six present findings and discussion on findings. Seventh chapter presents summary and conclusion of the present study.

1.11 CONCLUSION

The current chapter has described the theoretical background of life skills, initiatives taken in India and Gujarat for life skills, its need and role of school and teacher. The chapter further explained the interconnection between life skills and cooperative learning, theories of cooperative learning, various techniques of cooperative learning. Further the chapter explained the aims and objectives of social sciences and its interconnection with life skills. The next chapter presents the literature review on life skills, cooperative learning and social sciences and implication for the present study.