

# The Influence of Training of Teachers in Life Skills Education on Implementation of Life Skills Curriculum in Public Secondary Schools In Kenya

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## -----ABSTRACT-----

*The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of training of Teachers in life skills Education on implementation of life skills curriculum in public Secondary Schools in Matinyani sub-County, Kitui County Kenya. The study objectives sought to establish the influence of the level of training of Life skills subject teachers' in life skills education on implementation of life skills curriculum in Matinyani Sub County. The study was based on the Social Cognitive Theories. Descriptive survey research design was used in the study. The target population for the study consisted of all the 26 public secondary school principals and all the Life skills subject teachers and one Sub County Director of Education in Matinyani Sub County who were all selected using census. Data was collected by use of an interview guide and questionnaires. Qualitative and quantitative data was generated from the study was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Quantitative data was analysed quantitatively and presented using frequency distribution tables. Qualitative data gathered from the open-ended items was organized into themes based on the study objectives and presented in a narrative form. The study found from majority of 95.7% and 4.3 % of the principals who disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively with the statement that their school had teachers who had been trained to teach Life Skills Education. The study recommended that the government should enhance the teaching of LSE in schools, capacity building of teachers through workshops and seminars, pre-serve and in-service training in teaching Life Skills Education.*

### **Key words**

*Life skills, Education, Curriculum, Implementation, Training, Teachers, Principals*

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## I. Introduction

Life skills is an educational program that emphasizes on needs- and outcome-based participatory learning (United Nations Children's Emergency Funds (UNICEF), 2015). The term curriculum refers to the academic content and lessons offered in a school or in a specific course or program. Curriculum also represents a course of subjects covered by students in their race towards the finishing line (Shiundu & Omulando, 1992). The finishing line in this context implies acquisition of various types of awards. Such awards may be in form of certificates, diplomas, Degrees, masters or Doctorate's degree.

Implementation is a methodical procedure that ensures that the planned curriculum is able to impact the learners. It also includes convincing policymakers, teachers, and parents to embrace the new curriculum, giving in-service and pre-service training to instructors, and offering the materials and administrative resources to ensure the process is feasible. Curriculum implementation entails putting new concepts into practice (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009).

Life skills education is a body of knowledge which consists of three categories of skills. They include the capacity for self-awareness and interpersonal harmony as well as the capacity for making wise decisions (Global Evaluation, 2012). Vij (2016), opines that life skills are behaviors that help people adjust and interact well with the demands and obstacles of life. There are several life skills. World Health Organization (WHO) has laid down 10 core life skills. They include creative thinking, critical thinking, decision making, effective communication, self-awareness, empathy, interpersonal relationships, stress management, and emotion management. As a result, these essential life skills serve as the foundation for life skills curriculum.

Prajapati, et al., (2017) noted that life skills education is very important since it links between the basic functioning and abilities. It expands an individual's capacity to fulfill the needs and expectations of today's society and assists in coping with life challenges in a way that makes desired behavior possible. Thus, imparting

life skill training by instilling life skill education has the ability to assist youngsters in overcoming life's challenges.

According to Global Evaluation (2012), teachers believe that implementing life skills provides benefits including health, education, social and cultural benefits. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2017) has in addition stressed the necessity of LSE in the school curriculum so as to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS).

Data on implementation of life skills curriculum shows that worldwide, approximately 164 nations have incorporated life skills implementation in their curriculum as fundamental learning for their kids so as to equip them with information for dealing with difficult life challenges (United Nations Children's Fund, 2017). World Health Organization (1997) opines that life skills curriculum implementation necessitates participation from the school, education authorities, teacher training, and the production of teaching and learning resources. One goal of implementing life skills education is to incorporate a significant component of conflict resolution. However, training of teachers of life skills education can enhance the implementation of LSE in schools. However, in schools where life skills education is to be implemented principals need to be conversant with the subject for this can enhance effective curriculum supervision.

Global Evaluation (2012) observed that most countries' school principals have not received training or direction for internal monitoring in schools where life skills curriculum is already being implemented. Teachers, according to Ornstein and Hunkins (2009) must have a thorough comprehension of the curriculum since they are the ones who apply it. It is noted that this could be achieved through ensuring that teachers of life skills subject are well trained.

In the United States of America (USA) for example, instructors are offered in-service training prior to the adoption of life skills curriculum, including two-day workshops. This is because training would help teachers to effectively implement the life skills curriculum. When one is not trained, he/she is not supposed to teach life skills in United States of America.

Singh and Sharma (2016) found that Life skill in India was recognized as among of the six goals of Education for all (EFA). As a result, for classes 6 to 10, life skills education is an intrinsic element of the curriculum via Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE). Life skills guides for teachers teaching classes 6, 7, and 8 have been developed to offer instructors with broad principles for each of the 10 key life skills outlined by the World Health Organization (WHO). Secondary students in India are heavily influenced by life skills education, with adolescence being a critical time of growth and development marked by fast psychological changes, psychological maturation, abstract thinking, risk-taking mindset, and sexual behaviors. It is envisaged that instructors would play an important part in developing students' personalities in the appropriate direction by offering required advice and counseling and suggesting that they adopt certain basic life skills. Life skills Curriculum is also implemented regionally as noted by Chiara (2009) who said that Teachers in South Africa (SA) and Malawi are trained using the cascade paradigm. In Eastern and Southern Africa, life skills curriculum has been utilized to pass on information, skills, and attitudes about HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) and AIDS, peace education, smoking, and gender issues (Chemtai, 2011). Nonetheless, as per Prinsloo (2007) many South African instructors are unable to deal with HIV/AIDS concerns. They avoid engaging students in the issue because they are uncomfortable teaching what affects them and their students.

According to Chemtai (2011) Life skills education in Malawi is practical and it frequently focuses on HIV and AIDS education and drugs. However, Chirwa and Naidoo (2014) noted that a number of social and structural contextual factors, including the unfavorable working conditions for teachers, the emphasis placed on subjects like Math and Languages, the sequence framework of teacher training and the brief period of training, limit the teaching of life skills in Malawi.

According to Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, HIV and AIDS are on the agendas of multilateral organizations like the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (UNICEF,2018). Thus, it is observed that in some countries, HIV and AIDS has been one of the key focus in life skills education. Goal three (3) of Education for All (EFA) emphasizes the importance of ensuring that all young people and adults' learning needs are satisfied via equal access to suitable learning and life skills (Republic of Kenya,2012). The Jomtien Declaration on Education for All (EFA) of 1990 expanded on this concept by incorporating life skills as critical learnings tools for survival, capacity development, and quality of life (UNESCO, 2005). At this conference, officials from several nations, including Kenya, expressed fears regarding the significance of education, stressing the importance of focusing on relevant life skills for all learners from all over the world. The Dakar World Education Conference in 2000 also said that all young people and adults had the human right to "an education that encompasses learning to know, do, live together, and be," and included life skills in objectives 3 and 6 of the six Educations for All (EFA) goals (UNESCO, 2005). In order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, UNESCO (2017) also stressed the importance of LSE in the school curriculum.

LSE was integrated and mainstreamed into the primary school curriculum in Kenya in 2003 (KIE, 2002). According to Narayana (2006) Life skills was first introduced in Kenya as an intervention program to break a behavioral habit including alcoholism or drug addiction, stop unfavorable behavior from happening again, and allow learning to learn and build new skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to deal with day-to-day psycho-social issues. LSE, however, was not prioritized in the Kenyan curriculum until 2008, when the Kenya Institute of Education created a curriculum for the new topic that was to be taught in both primary and secondary schools in one session per week and as a non-examinable subject (KIE,2008). Teachers do not, however, take LSE seriously because it is not a topic that can be examined. As a result, the results fall short of what the curriculum designers had hoped for (KIE, 2011).

Many pupils and students worldwide have continued to face several life skills related problems in their everyday lives. Schools in Kenya have not been spared either. In the recent past, schools in Kenya have experienced riots, general indiscipline, dropout instances, drug and substance addiction, and early pregnancy cases. Matinyani Sub-County Education Office (2022) reported that there is a high proportion of pupil drop-out owing to drug and substance misuse, pregnancy, peer pressure, and increasing general indiscipline. In the year 2021, a total of 86 girls and 21 boys did not report back to school due to pregnancy related cases and drug and substance abuse respectively. This is attributable to wanting implementation of life skills. As a result, students drop out at a high rate owing to drug and substance misuse, pregnancy, peer pressure, and increasing general indiscipline. Such issues might be ascribed to a lack of life skills expertise. However, the Kenyan government is dedicated to providing excellent education to all school-age children through the Free Primary Education (FPE) and Free Day Secondary Education (FDSE) programs, which were launched in 2003, and to achieving Vision 2030. In order to close the gap between knowledge and behavior, a life skills curriculum was introduced in Kenya in 2009. This study was conducted in order to fill a knowledge gap on the influence of teachers' training in life skills education on implementation of life skills curriculum in Matinyani sub county, Kitui county Kenya. The study objective sought to establish the influence of teachers' level of training in life skills education on implementation of life skills curriculum in Matinyani Sub County.

## **II. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Level of training of Teachers in life skills Education and implementation of life skills curriculum**

Teacher training in LSE can influence the implementation of life skill curriculum. Life skills programs are best administered in Geneva by teachers or life skills educators who have participated in LSE training sessions (program on mental health, 1997). A study by Simona (2014) sought to investigate teacher training for infusing life skills into vocational instruction in Politehnica University of Buchares. The study comprised of 96 instructors and trainers from partner countries such as the United Kingdom (47, 92%), Denmark (14,58%), Spain (13,54%), Romania (13,54%) and Portugal (10,42%). A questionnaire, focus group discussions and Desk research was used in the study. The study highlighted the significance of teacher training in integrating life skills into specialty topic instruction. It was noted that although certain life skills are taught by specialist instructors, particularly in VET (vocational Education Training) programs, others ought to be covered in existing specialized topic teaching. Thus, Teachers might benefit greatly from relevant methodological ideas for learning assignments or student evaluation so as to enhance learning to learn and interpersonal skills.

Arasomwan and Mashiya (2021) in their qualitative study that was carried out at a South African university's Foundation Phase department of a teacher-training institution sought to explore the experiences of pre-service Foundation Phase Learning Skills teachers during their teaching practice in South Africa. Twenty final-year pre-service teachers were purposefully chosen to engage in semi-structured interviews and reflective writing tasks. The study established a lack of understanding of the significance of Learning Skills as a discipline and concluded that a review and revision of the LS teacher-training curriculum is required to enhance the methodology of future LS teachers. The study recommended inclusion into the LS curriculum of more intensive micro-teaching that enhances teachers' general fluency in their learners' native languages and provides them with appropriate teaching practices. The implementation of the LS curriculum must be examined on a regular basis to ensure that these abilities are transferred to young learners for their individual and societal benefit.

Odhiambo (2013) conducted a study on implementation of LSE in secondary school in two districts which had undergone LSE syllabus implementation in Uriri and Awendo districts, Migori County Kenya. The study targeted 357 public secondary schools in Uriri District and 37 public secondary schools in Awendo Districts respectively. It was revealed that lack of qualified teachers affected the implementation of LSE curriculum. The findings indicated that majority (66.7%) of LSE teachers in secondary schools were only trained for 1-2 weeks. Nevertheless, at least 33.3% of teachers had more than one month of training.

### III. Research Methods

This study employed descriptive survey research design. A descriptive survey research design enables a researcher to collect data and report without manipulating any variables (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Descriptive survey research design was used to enhance the collection of in depth information in this study in order to establish the influence of teachers training in life skills education on implementation of life skills curriculum in public secondary schools. The study target population consisted of all the 26 public secondary school principals in Matinyani Sub County and all the 26 Life skills subject teachers in the Humanities Departments.

Census was used to select principals and Life skills subject teachers and one sub county director of education. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) observed that populations which are less than 30 are considered small. This was done since the cases are less than 30. However, 3 schools were excluded from the main study due to their participation in a pilot study. The total respondents in the study were 23 principals, 23 subject teachers of life skills education. This study used an interview guide and a questionnaire as data collection tools. Validity is the extent that the findings gotten and data analyzed signify the situation being investigated (Orodho, 2009). This study utilized content validity, face validity and pilot testing to validate the research instruments. Content validity is a non-statistical method applied in validating the content used in questionnaire (Orodho, 2008). Expert judgment can improve content validity (Best & Kahn, 2011). The research instruments were developed in consultation with research supervisors to make sure that the instruments were content valid after which pretesting of the tools was done. Instrument validity enhanced identification of areas of weakness in the research instruments after which corrections were incorporated on the research tools.

This study used a Test- re test technique to establish the reliability of research instruments. The tools were administered to the same group of respondents and repeated after a time lapse of two weeks between the first and the second tests. The results from the pre-test and post- test results were correlated using Pearson's Product Moment's Correlation formula which after correlation of pretest and posttest reliability results gave a reliability of 0.08 which was considered reliable.

Orodho (2008) stated that data analysis encompasses grouping data collected and categorizing the data in like terms and calculating the percentages of each division. After collecting the data in the field, this was organized to find errors made by the respondents including spelling and non-response to items. SPSS version 26 enabled the data analysis and the outcomes were displayed in tables and frequencies. Qualitative data from the interviews was grouped into patterns and themes based on the study objectives and narrated. Some of the qualitative data was also tallied based on common responses and presented in frequency distribution tables.

### IV. Research results(analysis results )

This study sought to investigate the influence of teachers' training in life skills education and implementation of life skills curriculum in Kenya. The study objective sought to establish the influence of life skills subject teachers' level of training on implementation of life skills Education in Matinyani Sub County.

This study sought to establish the level of subject training of teachers in LSE. The results from the respondents are as indicated in table 1 and table 2 respectively

**Table 4.1 Response from the principals on level of Training of teachers in life skills education**

statement	S D		D		N		A		S A	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Life skills Education is best implemented by trained teachers	0	0	1	4.3	1	4.3	9	39.1	12	52.2
The school has teachers who have been trained to teach LSE	1	4.3	22	95.7	0	0	0	0	0	0

The results in table 1 show that majority of the principals 39.1% and 52.2% agreed and strongly agreed with the statement that LSE is best implemented by trained teachers. However, minority, 4.3 % of the principals disagreed with the statement that LSE is best implemented by trained teachers.

The study also established that majority 82.6% of the principals disagreed with the statement that teachers in their school understand the content and features of implementation of LSE. However, 17.4 % of the principals were neutral.

The study also found that majority 95.7% and 4.3 % of the principals disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement that the school had teachers who had been trained to teach LSE.



**Table 4.2 Response from life skills subject teachers on training of teachers in LSE for implementation of life skills curriculum**

Statement	S D		D		N		A		S A		No Res	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Life skills Education is best implemented by trained teachers	5	21.7	5	21.7	2	8.7	4	17.4	6	26.1	1	4.3
The school has teachers who have been trained to teach LSE	6	26.1	10	43.5	3	13.0	4	17.4	0	0	0	0

The study in table 2 found that 21.7% and 21.7% of the Life skills Subject teachers strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively with the statement that Life skills Education is best implemented by trained teachers. However, 8.7% of the LS Subject teachers were neutral. The study also found that 17.4 % and 26.1 % of the LS Subject teachers strongly agreed and agreed respectively with the statement that Life skills Education is best implemented by trained teachers yet 4.3% of the LS Subject teachers gave no response. The findings also indicated that 26.1 % and 43.5 % of the LS subject teachers strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively with the statement that the school had teachers who had been trained to teach LSE. 13.0% of the LS subject teachers were neutral while only 17.4 % of the teachers agreed with the statement that the school had teachers who have been trained to teach LSE

This study also sought to establish whether Life skills subjects had attended training in life skills education for implementation of life skills curriculum. The respondents were asked to give their responses on whether life skills subject teachers had attended life skills training. The findings on attendance of life training by life skills subject teachers are as reported by the principals and life skills subject teachers in table 3.

**Table 3: Responses form principals and subject teachers on attendance of in service life skills training by life skills subject teachers for the last five years for implementation of life skills curriculum**

	Principals		Life skills subject teachers	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	percent
Yes	2	8.7	16	69.6
No	21	91.3	5	21.7
No response	0	0	2	8.7
Total	23	100.0	23	100.0

The study in table 3 has established from LS subject teachers that majority 69.6% of the life skills subject teachers attended LS training for the last five years whereas 21.7 % of the teachers said that they attended no training and 8.7 % of the teachers gave no response. However, majority of the principals 91.3% gave a No response when asked about attendance of life skills training by life skills subject teachers while 8.7% of the principals gave a No response. The sub county director of Education also said that in-service training is never organized in their sub county on training of Life Skills subject teachers and that the teachers don't often attend in-service training on LSE. The respondents were further asked about who had organized for the training. All the principals gave no response. The teachers of LS subject said that it was organized by the school, others said that it was organized by the sponsor and others said that Strathmore University had organized the training. The respondents said that the type of training was a workshop which lasted for a week and that the training was relevant for implementation of LSE.

## V. Discussion

### 5.1 Training of life skills subject teachers in life skills education and implementation of LSE

This study sought to establish the influence of level of training of life skills subject teachers in LSE on implementation of life skills curriculum in public secondary schools. According to Odhiambo (2013) the implementation of LSE was influenced by lack of qualified teachers. This study found from majority of the principals 39.1% and 52.2% who agreed and strongly agreed with the statement that LSE is best implemented by trained teachers. However, minority, 4.3 % of the principals disagreed with the statement that LSE was best implemented by trained teachers; the study also found that majority 95.7% and 4.3 % of the principals disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively with the statement that the school had teachers who had been trained to teach LSE.

The study also found out that 21.7% and 21.7% of the Life skills Subject teachers strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively with the statement that LSE is best implemented by trained teachers. However, 8.7% of the LS Subject teachers were neutral. The study also found out that 17.4 % and 26.1 % of the LS Subject teachers strongly agreed and agreed respectively with the statement that Life skills Education was best implemented by trained teachers yet 4.3% of the LS Subject teachers gave no response. These findings agree

with the programme on mental health (1997) in Geneva, which suggested that teachers or life skills educators who have participated in life skills education training sessions were best suited to implement life skills programs.

The findings also indicated from 26.1 % and 43.5 % of the LS subject teachers who strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively with the statement that the school had teachers who have been trained to teach LSE. However, the sub county director of Education confirmed that in-service training had never been organized in their sub county on training of Life skills subject teachers and that the teachers didn't often attend in-service training on LSE. 13.0% of the LS subject teachers were neutral while only 17.4 % of the teachers agreed with the statement that the school has teachers who had been trained to teach LSE

The study also established from LS subject teachers that majority 69.6% of the teachers attended LS training for the last five years whereas 21.7 % of the teachers said that they attended no training and 8.7 % of the teachers gave no response. The training for those who attended had been organized by the school. Others said that it was organized by the sponsor and Strathmore University. The type of training was a workshop which lasted for a week and that the training was relevant for implementation of LSE. This implies that the life skills teachers were trained after they had been posted to their respective schools and the training was in form of workshops or seminars which did not last for a long time. Thus, for teachers to understand the content and features of implementation of LSE, they need to be well trained in LSE. The findings concur with Odhiambo (2013) who established that majority (66.7%) of teachers LSE in secondary schools Uriri and Awendo Districts in Migori County, Kenya were trained for 1-2 weeks. But even so, only 33.3% of teachers received more than one month of training.

## **VI. Conclusions**

The study concluded that LSE was best implemented by trained teachers. Teachers in many schools had not been well trained to teach LSE for implementation of life skills education and the training received by life skills subject teachers was a post training in form of workshops and seminars.

## **VII. Recommendations**

The study recommended the teachers of LSE should be professionally trained through pre serve and in-service courses. Workshops and seminars can also be organized and used as avenues for training the serving teachers in LSE.

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