

**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

# Formation of Life Skills in Students by Future Teachers

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## Abstract

The formation of life skills in students has become one of the priority directions of modern education, since the school is expected to prepare learners not only for academic achievement, but also for productive, responsible, and adaptive participation in social life. In this context, the professional training of future teachers acquires special significance, because it is the teacher who organizes the educational environment in which students learn communication, decision-making, self-regulation, cooperation, critical thinking, and responsible behavior. This article examines the theoretical and practical foundations of forming life skills in students through the pedagogical activity of future teachers. The study aims to substantiate the pedagogical conditions, methodological approaches, and professional competencies necessary for future teachers to integrate life-skills development into the educational process. The research is based on an analysis of pedagogical, psychological, and methodological literature, as well as on the conceptual interpretation of competency-based, personality-oriented, and activity-based approaches. The findings show that the effective formation of students' life skills depends on the readiness of future teachers to design educational situations that promote reflection, social interaction, independent choice, and problem-solving. It is argued that teacher education programs should purposefully develop future teachers' methodological, communicative, ethical, and reflexive competences. The article concludes that life-skills education is not an auxiliary component of schooling, but a core dimension of holistic personality development, and that future teachers must be prepared to implement it systematically in both classroom and extracurricular contexts.

## KEY WORDS

Life skills, future teachers, teacher education, students, competence-based approach, personality development, pedagogical conditions, social adaptation, communication, critical thinking.

## INTRODUCTION

Contemporary education is increasingly oriented toward the comprehensive development of the learner's personality. In this process, the formation of life skills has become one of the most urgent educational tasks, since modern society requires not only subject knowledge, but also the ability to communicate effectively, make responsible decisions, adapt to

changing conditions, manage emotions, resolve conflicts, and work collaboratively. The rapid transformation of social, technological, and cultural realities has made life skills a necessary condition for successful socialization and self-realization. In school practice, these skills are manifested in students' ability to organize their activity, interact with peers

and adults, maintain psychological stability, and respond constructively to everyday challenges.

The formation of life skills in students depends to a great extent on the professional position and pedagogical mastery of the teacher. The teacher is not merely a transmitter of academic content, but a mediator between the child and the social world, a designer of developmental situations, and a facilitator of value-based and practical learning. Therefore, the issue of preparing future teachers to develop life skills in students becomes particularly relevant. If teacher education focuses only on subject knowledge and general teaching methods, without equipping future teachers with the ability to organize life-oriented educational experiences, then school education risks remaining detached from the real developmental needs of students.

The relevance of the topic is determined by several factors. First, educational reforms in many countries increasingly emphasize competence-based learning outcomes. Second, schools face growing challenges related to student well-being, communication difficulties, digital risks, and the need for social-emotional learning. Third, higher pedagogical education must respond to these changes by updating the content and methods of teacher preparation. In this regard, the purpose of this article is to examine the pedagogical foundations of forming life skills in students by future teachers and to identify the conditions under which teacher education can effectively prepare future educators for this task.

This study is theoretical and analytical in nature. Its methodological basis includes competence-based, personality-oriented, activity-based, and socio-cultural approaches to education. The competence-based approach makes it possible to consider life skills as an integrated system of knowledge, attitudes, values, and practical abilities necessary for effective functioning in various life situations. The personality-oriented approach emphasizes the individuality of the student, the importance of subjective experience, and the need to create conditions for self-expression and self-development. The activity-based approach highlights the fact that life skills are formed not through passive perception, but through purposeful participation in meaningful action. The socio-cultural approach allows the phenomenon of life skills to be interpreted in connection with the norms, expectations, and communicative practices of society.

The research methods included the analysis of pedagogical and psychological literature devoted to life skills, teacher

competence, socialization, and personality development; comparative interpretation of theoretical positions; synthesis of scholarly ideas related to modern teacher education; and conceptual generalization of practical implications for higher pedagogical institutions. The article does not present an empirical experiment, but rather develops a theoretical framework that can serve as a basis for future applied studies and methodological models. Particular attention was paid to works that interpret life skills not as isolated habits, but as a holistic pedagogical outcome emerging from educational interaction.

The analysis of theoretical sources and pedagogical concepts demonstrates that life skills should be understood as a complex set of practical, social, emotional, and cognitive abilities that enable students to respond adequately to everyday challenges, build constructive relationships, regulate their own behavior, and make conscious choices. These skills include communication, cooperation, critical thinking, creative problem-solving, emotional self-control, decision-making, empathy, responsibility, resilience, and self-organization. In the context of school education, they are not formed spontaneously or automatically. Their development requires purposeful pedagogical support and systematic modeling of educational situations in which students can practice socially meaningful action.

One of the central findings of this analysis is that future teachers can contribute to the formation of life skills in students only if they themselves possess an integrated readiness for such activity. This readiness includes several interrelated dimensions. The first is conceptual readiness, which presupposes that future teachers understand the essence of life skills, their pedagogical value, and their role in child development. Without a clear theoretical understanding, life-skills education remains fragmented and episodic. The second is methodological readiness, which includes the ability to choose and apply teaching strategies that stimulate active participation, dialogue, cooperation, reflection, and practical problem-solving. The third is communicative readiness, which enables the teacher to establish trusting relationships, support student voice, and organize interaction based on respect and empathy. The fourth is reflexive readiness, which allows future teachers to evaluate their own pedagogical influence, recognize the needs of learners, and improve their educational decisions.

The results of the conceptual analysis also show that the

educational process in higher pedagogical institutions often devotes insufficient attention to the practical aspect of life-skills development. Future teachers are usually trained in lesson planning, classroom management, and subject-specific instruction, but they are not always systematically prepared to embed life-skills formation into ordinary learning processes. As a result, they may perceive life skills as an additional task of extracurricular work rather than as an organic component of every educational interaction.

Another important result concerns the pedagogical conditions necessary for the successful formation of life skills in students. First, the educational environment must be psychologically safe and supportive. Students develop life skills more effectively in contexts where they feel respected, heard, and encouraged to express themselves. Second, the teacher must use interactive methods that engage students in meaningful activity. Life skills are shaped in communication, cooperation, and decision-making, not in mechanical memorization. Third, educational content should be connected with real-life situations. When learning becomes relevant to students' personal and social experience, it creates stronger motivation and facilitates the transfer of knowledge into practice. Fourth, the teacher should create opportunities for reflection. Students need not only to act, but also to analyze the consequences of their choices, understand their emotions, and evaluate their interactions with others.

The analysis further indicates that future teachers need practice-oriented training in university settings. This includes modeling of pedagogical situations, role-playing, case analysis, microteaching, supervised practicum, and reflection on student behavior in real classrooms. Only through such experiences can teacher candidates learn how to guide students in conflict resolution, cooperation, goal-setting, and responsible choice-making. The traditional lecture format alone cannot provide sufficient preparation for this dimension of pedagogical work.

An essential result of the study is the recognition that the formation of life skills is closely linked with value education. Life skills are not purely technical competencies. Communication without respect, decision-making without responsibility, or self-confidence without empathy may produce socially problematic outcomes. Therefore, future teachers must be prepared to foster life skills within an ethical and humanistic framework. They should understand that education involves not only training for adaptation, but also

cultivation of dignity, mutual respect, civic consciousness, and moral responsibility.

The findings of this study confirm that the formation of life skills in students should be regarded as one of the strategic goals of modern schooling. At the same time, the realization of this goal depends substantially on the professional preparation of future teachers. This conclusion is consistent with contemporary pedagogical thought, which increasingly views the teacher as a facilitator of holistic development rather than as a narrow instructor. In many educational systems, discussions about 21st-century skills, social-emotional learning, and competence-based instruction all point toward the same general idea: schools must prepare children for life, not only for examinations.

In this regard, the role of future teachers becomes especially significant. Their university preparation must go beyond subject competence and include the ability to perceive the child as a developing personality situated in a complex social context. If a future teacher learns to analyze only curriculum standards and lesson objectives, but not student needs, group dynamics, and emotional climate, then the educational process loses one of its most important developmental dimensions. Therefore, pedagogical higher education should be restructured in such a way that future teachers are trained to integrate cognitive, social, and emotional aims within their teaching.

The discussion of life-skills formation also raises the issue of educational methods. Traditional authoritarian or reproductive models of teaching are poorly suited to the development of life skills because they limit student initiative, suppress dialogue, and reduce opportunities for independent choice. By contrast, methods based on cooperation, inquiry, discussion, project activity, role simulation, and problem-based learning create conditions in which students can experience responsibility, negotiate meaning, and practice self-regulation. This does not mean that academic rigor should be weakened. On the contrary, the integration of life skills into subject teaching can deepen learning because students become more engaged, reflective, and capable of applying knowledge in various contexts.

The preparation of future teachers for this kind of work requires methodological transformation in teacher education. University instructors who train future teachers should themselves model interactive, respectful, and reflective pedagogical behavior. Teacher candidates learn not only from

course content but also from the style of communication and instructional methods they experience in higher education. If their own training remains purely lecture-based, rigid, and detached from authentic pedagogical dilemmas, it becomes difficult for them to internalize student-centered approaches. Thus, the formation of professional readiness for life-skills education depends on the hidden curriculum of teacher education as much as on its formal curriculum.

An additional issue concerns assessment. Life skills are often more difficult to evaluate than subject knowledge because they are manifested in behavior, attitudes, communication, and situational choices. This may lead some educators to underestimate their importance or to treat them as immeasurable. However, this difficulty should not be interpreted as a reason for pedagogical neglect. Rather, it suggests the need for more qualitative, formative, and observation-based assessment practices. Future teachers should be prepared to notice changes in students' participation, cooperation, emotional regulation, and responsibility. Such assessment requires professional sensitivity, continuous observation, and constructive feedback.

The article also suggests that life-skills formation should not be isolated from cultural and social realities. The content and expression of life skills may vary depending on social context, family expectations, school climate, and community values. Therefore, future teachers should be capable of adapting pedagogical strategies to the age, background, and lived experience of students. A universal model imposed without sensitivity to context may produce superficial imitation rather than genuine personal growth. This is why reflexive and adaptive competence is so essential in teacher education.

Another important aspect is the relationship between life skills and professional identity in future teachers themselves. A teacher who is expected to cultivate communication, empathy, resilience, and responsibility in students must also embody these qualities in his or her own professional behavior. This means that teacher education should include not only methodological preparation, but also personal and ethical development. Reflective seminars, pedagogical dialogue, collaborative projects, and supervised practice can contribute to the maturation of future teachers as socially responsible and emotionally competent professionals.

The discussion confirms that the formation of life skills is not an optional addition to the curriculum, but a foundational

dimension of schooling in the contemporary world. It is especially relevant in contexts where young people face uncertainty, digital overload, social tensions, and increasing demands for adaptability. In such conditions, the teacher's role expands, and teacher preparation must expand accordingly. If future teachers are systematically trained to recognize and develop life skills in students, the school becomes a more humane, relevant, and developmentally effective institution.

The conducted theoretical analysis has shown that the formation of life skills in students by future teachers is a complex and pedagogically significant process that should occupy an important place in both school education and teacher preparation. Life skills represent an integrated system of cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioral abilities that allow students to navigate everyday challenges, build healthy relationships, make responsible decisions, and participate productively in society. Their development cannot be reduced to occasional educational conversations or isolated extracurricular events. It requires systematic pedagogical work embedded in the daily educational process.

The article has demonstrated that the effectiveness of this work depends on the professional readiness of future teachers. Such readiness includes conceptual understanding of life skills, methodological ability to organize developmental interaction, communicative competence, ethical orientation, and reflexive self-awareness. Higher pedagogical education must therefore provide not only academic and didactic training, but also practice-oriented, value-based, and personality-centered preparation for life-skills education.

It has been established that the successful formation of life skills in students is supported by a psychologically safe educational environment, interactive teaching methods, connection between learning and real-life situations, reflective practice, and the teacher's ability to create meaningful situations of choice, cooperation, and responsibility. At the same time, the study emphasizes that future teachers should themselves become bearers of the qualities they are expected to cultivate in learners. This gives teacher education a dual task: to train competent professionals and to foster mature pedagogical personalities.

In general, the topic under consideration reflects the broader transformation of education from a knowledge-transmission model toward a developmental and humanistic model. In this transformation, the future teacher becomes a key figure in

helping students acquire not only academic literacy, but also life competence. For this reason, the modernization of teacher education in the direction of life-skills formation should be regarded as one of the important conditions for improving the quality and social relevance of contemporary schooling.

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