



"Empowering Young Minds: Assessing Preschool Teachers' Readiness To Teach Life Skills"

Dr Mahima Birla^{1*}, Karishma Rohera²

¹Former Dean, FMS, PAHER, Director IQAC Narayana Business School, Ahmedabad. mahimabirla@gmail.com

²In Charge, Kohinoor Blossoms Mumbai, karishmarohera@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Objective: Early childhood years or the formative years are critical for cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development. Stimulating learning environment, proper nutrition, age-appropriate opportunities set the foundations for Lifelong learning. Blending Life Skills within the curriculum framework can facilitate a child to have positive attitudes and face the challenges of life with ease and confidence. Life Skills includes many skills like Communication, Creative Thinking, Coping with Emotions, Critical Thinking, Problem Solving abilities, Coping with Stress, Inter-Personal relationship, Empathy, Self-Awareness etc. Life Skills go beyond rote memorization and are skills which are learnt by doing. The importance and need for empowering young children with these skills cannot be undetermined. The benefits of Life Skills can be reflected as improvised mental well-being, better self-esteem, healthy communication and interactions skills, effective decision making amongst the young learners. A trained teacher can help children build resilience and grit required in an increasingly complicated fast changing environment. This paper emphasizes to stimulate and encourage teachers to set transformational standards to prepare our children for the coming years.

Results: This Research paper aims to highlight the Readiness of teachers to impart Life skills who play a pivotal role in our education system. The importance of adequately preparing teachers cannot be overstated, as the quality of education is directly related to the calibre of those who instruct our children. This paper aims to facilitate a teacher to gain the skills and competencies required for immersive engagement, encourage cooperative learning, and provide supportive feedback to impart Life Skill Education to young learners.

Methods: The present study includes a questionnaire which was presented to 50 teachers from Kohinoor International School having more than five years of experience in the field of education.

Conclusion: In conclusion, a teacher transmits knowledge, motivates, and plays a significant role in imparting education. School authorities should facilitate professional Development programs to enhance the capabilities of teachers and create an ideal balance between Academic skills and Life Skills.

Key Words: Life Skills, Training, Teachers, Environment.

INTRODUCTION

The modern world, particularly the technological age, is profoundly influencing young brains. Social media has such a strong influence on them that they lose sight of reality and live in delusions. These young minds need to learn life skills, which are essential for survival and development, to meet the many challenges that come with it. Here, teachers are crucial in shaping the minds of the young by teaching them various life skills.

Numerous studies have demonstrated the necessity for life skills education and the need to develop it for young people. The life skills approach offers several practical benefits. It is applicable in many different cultural contexts. It can be applied in "formal" contexts such as schools, but it can also be used in non-formal settings

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where the primary objective is skill development (Botvin & Kantor, 2001; Godfrey et al., 2002; Marlatt et al., 2003).

UNICEF defines life skills as psychological capacities for positive and adaptive conduct that help people successfully navigate the demands and difficulties of daily life. Society cannot expect pupils to be prepared for college, a career, or, most importantly, life, if they are never taught how to specifically apply and foster these skills. (Kelly Cassidy, Yvonne Franco, Emilia Meo 2018) Research shows that life skills help children and young people succeed academically, find employment, experience personal development, and grow into capable, contributing members of society.

What are life skills?

The term "life skills" refers to a behaviour modification or behaviour development strategy that balances knowledge, attitude, and skills, according to UNICEF. According to studies, if knowledge, attitude, and skill-based competencies are not addressed, it is unlikely that risky behaviour would change. This is the basis for the UNICEF definition. The abilities that support young people's mental health and competency as they navigate the challenges of life are fundamentally known as life skills. According to most development experts, life skills are typically used in relation to social and health-related situations.

To protect people from abuse and exploitation, life skills education aims to provide them with the necessary knowledge about risk-taking behaviours as well as the development of critical and creative thinking, problem-solving, communication, assertiveness, and self-awareness skills (UNICEF, 2015; WHO, 1993).

- A person can advance and excel in school, the workplace, and society at large by having transferable skills known as life skills.
- They must be implemented harmoniously with one another since they are made up of behaviours, attitudes, values, and domain-specific knowledge.
- Skills can be learned at any stage of life, although there are numerous optimal ages for skill interventions.
- People often characterize life skills in terms of the empowerment they provide for people in their day-to-day lives. They are also perceived in terms of the social advantages they provide and the way they help to transform society.
- There is no set boundary between the many life skills; they are all closely related and occasionally overlap.

The objective of this paper is to study how preschool teachers' readiness might empower young brains. To put it another way, the study investigates how life skills might equip young minds to face the future with confidence. There is an attempt to comprehend numerous life skill strategies and how these life skill techniques, when taught by teachers, can empower young minds, and make them prepare to face various challenges.

DIVERSE LIFE SKILLS AND METHODOLOGIES

The following are ten of the most important ways to acquire life skills: proficiency in solving problems, reasoning, communicating effectively, making decisions, generating new ideas, forming meaningful relationships, empathising with others, and developing one's own self-awareness, and stress and emotion management, according to UNICEF, UNESCO, and WHO. The ability to recognize one's own strengths and shortcomings requires self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-confidence. As a result, the person can see possibilities and get ready to face potential risks. This results in the growth of a social consciousness on the issues facing one's family and community. It is therefore feasible to pinpoint issues that emerge in both the family and society. Possessing life skills enables one to consider options, balance benefits and drawbacks, and arrive at logical conclusions when addressing any issue that comes along. It additionally involves the ability to build positive interpersonal connections with other people.

Self-awareness: Psychologists and educators use the word "self-awareness" to describe a person's ability to consider, discuss, and explain feelings, ideas, and/or behaviours.

A common definition of the "self" has eluded researchers, psychologists, and other social scientists despite their extensive research on the self and its consequences for cognition, affect, and behaviour. Their views on the definition and measurement of the self diverge greatly. These distinctions in definition become crucial when debating issues like who defines the "self," what the definition's objective is, and additionally, whom these definitions should be applied to in terms of research. **(Heidi Flavian, 2016)**

Coping with emotions: A child's early emotional development is a complex process that greatly affects their general well-being. Early on, babies express basic feelings like happiness, surprise, and discomfort. As they become older, these feelings progressively develop into more sophisticated ones like pride, guilt, and empathy. This development is essential for the child's emotional development and establishes the framework for positive social interactions and good relationships later in life. **(Anna Liza Magbanua 2023)**

Empathy: In a world that is becoming more and more automated, digitalized, and divided, empathy appears to be dwindling (**Krznaric, Citation 2014**). Research demonstrates that empathy is a talent that can be learned, and that reading great literature increases our capacity for empathy. Empathy facilitates our understanding of the thoughts and emotions of others. Children benefit by working and playing together, forming relationships, and connecting with the material they are learning.

Critical Thinking: There are numerous definitions for critical thinking. According to some writers, critical thinking is rational or reasoning-based thinking, which goes far beyond simply being intelligent (**Mulnix & Mulnix, 2010**). Though it isn't innate, critical thinking is a skill that schools should prioritise teaching their kids (Peter, 2012; Snyder & Snyder, 2008; Khun, 1999). Therefore, we need to practise till we become proficient in this area. For a number of reasons, critical thinking skills are most developed in the first few months of life.

Creative thinking: The ability to think "sideways" and investigate alternative viewpoints, ideas, and approaches is a hallmark of creative thinkers. Provocations are one of several tactics they will use to solve the difficulties. Perception is crucial to creative thinking because it allows us to offer different perspectives. Instead of developing from one another, the different points of view are created on their own. In this way, ability and exploration go hand in hand, just as perception and exploration do.

Problem solving: The difficulties and obstacles of 21st-century living demand that people be prepared to handle issues in the real world, which calls for advanced critical thinking, higher order thinking, creativity, communication, and inventiveness. Improving and developing learning activities is necessary to equip and train people to handle difficulties in the twenty-first century. Knowledge of technology and information, creativity, social and intercultural competence, leadership, and accountability are among the life and work skills that must be learned. (I D Franestian, Suyanta, and A Wiyono 2020)

NEED FOR LIFE SKILL TECHNIQUES

Young minds are regarded as the most productive members of society because of their superior mental and physical faculties. However, in practice, most of them struggle to make the most of their potential because they lack drive and direction. Social issues such as drug and alcohol addiction, sexual assault, smoking, juvenile delinquency, antisocial behaviour, etc., have a negative impact on them and others to a significant degree.

Children need to learn life skills including perseverance, effective communication, collaboration, and teamwork, according to the National Education Policy 2020. Critical life skills (including the ability to manage one's own money, understand and use technology effectively, run a business, be healthy, have a good education, and support one's family) are among the important subjects addressed in NEP 2020. (Jaspreet, Deepa Saini, and Kauts 2022, etc.)

(UNICEF 2006) An individual's capacity to make well-informed decisions, communicate effectively, learn to cope with challenging situations, and take charge of their own life are all aspects of what is known as "life skills," as stated in the annual report of UNICEF in 2022. Skills for living include caring for oneself and others, as well as making changes to one's surroundings to make them healthier.

A socially conscious educational institution must act swiftly and decisively in response to this new challenge. Education is therefore crucial in today's world, but what matters most is the type of education that can help people live better lives. Consequently, the primary goal of education must place a great deal of emphasis on helping children acquire these abilities since they are essential components of being active citizens who can survive and overcome obstacles in the future. (Ravindra Prajapati, Bosky Sharma, Dharmendra Sharma, 2017)

Students' perspectives of the world are impacted by life skills in addition to how they interact with it. They must have a firm grasp on how to bring about positive change before they can alter their own course for the better. Setting goals and communicating well are crucial. To prepare young adults for the real world and independent living, schools should teach their students practical lessons in daily living, such as problem-solving, decision-making, and emotional management. These life skills are invaluable tools that can help young adults navigate the challenges of daily living. Acquiring all or some of the most critical life skills can have long-term effects that could change their entire existence and have an impact on future developments in our planet.

ROLE OF PRESCHOOL TEACHERS IN EMPOWERING YOUNG MINDS

A child's early years are very important since they provide the groundwork for their future educational experiences. The ideas of growth mindset and fixed mentality theory have gained more significance as parents and educators work to foster an atmosphere that promotes optimal development. Gaining an understanding of and putting these beliefs into practice can have a big impact on a child's early cognitive development, resilience, and attitude toward learning. (**Jasmeet Kaur Arora 2024**)

The enormity of the duty and the role of a preschool teacher become immediately apparent when one walks into a classroom. This job involves not just passing along academic knowledge but also forming young people's minds and personalities and creating a solid foundation for learning in the future. In addition to being educators, influencers, and role models, preschool teachers also serve a range of other significant functions.

The need for preschools and daycare centres has grown significantly because of parents' growing awareness of the need of high-quality education and care. The infrastructure, instructional strategies, staff development, and other aspects of preschools have all improved because of the institutions' response to the expanding demands. A child's creativity is allowed to be allowed to learn, grow, and flourish through the playful and participatory organization of the educational techniques. With an eye toward the child's holistic development, the curriculum is thoughtfully crafted to incorporate age-appropriate activities like storytelling, building with blocks or toys, painting, drawing, and other extracurricular pursuits. A child's academic performance is enhanced, and their self-esteem and confidence are also raised, all thanks to a solid foundation laid by a child-friendly environment and excellent education. **(Prachi Mehrotra in Voices, Lifestyle, TOI 2023)**

Teachers are knowledge oases. There are other responsibilities besides academic enrichment that fall on teachers. Because the best teachers care about their students' well-being both inside and outside the classroom, they always establish a connection with them and assist in reaching them on numerous levels. Adolescence is a time of constant change in many areas of life, including biology, socialization, and cognitive functioning. Instructors have a lot to offer teenagers in developing a well-rounded personality. At this point, a teacher can greatly assist teenagers in becoming a well-rounded personality. A teacher ought to be understanding and patient. Teachers need to try to comprehend the factors that alter teenagers' behaviour. The teacher should cultivate a friendship with the young minds. **(Santrock JW 2005)**

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kelly Cassidy, Yvonne Franco, Emilia Meo 2018, Preparing students for maturity through life skills is an important, yet frequently disregarded, educational idea. After finishing high school, many young Americans lack the skills necessary to succeed in the real world. The frustration of having to adhere to statutory standards and time limitations often stops teachers from teaching life skills in the classroom, even if many of them think it should be done. Research has shown that teaching people how to deal with real-world situations "bridges the gap between basic functioning and capabilities." It helps with practical problem solving and improves one's ability to meet the demands and expectations of the modern world (Prajapati, B. Sharma, & D. Sharma 2017, p. 1). This action research study looks at how two teachers taught real-world skills using district standards. Several approaches have been studied, including interest surveys, goal planning, and social skills training.

Kauts, Deepa Saini, Jaspreet 2022, Due to the media, changing lifestyles, and increased demands placed on today's teenagers, life skills-based education is necessary. Among the younger generation, there is drug misuse, criminality, violence, and threats in the current environment. The globe can see that the most immediate remedy is to provide the next generation more life skills. Adolescents typically anticipate their friends, instructors, parents, and guardians for assistance with a variety of everyday problems. A thorough understanding of the efficacy of life skills education is the goal of this review. Priorities and gaps in the field should be identified. To sketch a picture of life skill-based education, this paper examined 15 research articles and 5 government documents. Administrators, legislators, researchers, and educators can all benefit from this review when it comes to putting together a successful life skills program. The results can be used to inform the creation of long-lasting life skills initiatives that guarantee the dissemination of information and abilities. According to a study of the literature, schoolchildren can improve their social and cognitive abilities to lead healthy lives by receiving appropriate and pertinent life skills training. It can improve teenagers' perceptions of themselves.

Anna Liza Magbanua 2023, A child's early years are marked by substantial growth and development that occurs in a variety of areas. The basis for a child's future learning trajectory and general wellbeing is laid throughout these formative years. A thorough understanding of the complexities of early childhood development is crucial for educators, caregivers, and parents to guarantee optimal development. This chapter explores the complex processes of child development from early childhood to the preschool years. It highlights how crucial it is to acknowledge each person's uniqueness and how crucial early experiences are in determining a child's course in life.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To explore the demographic profiles of pre-primary educators in life skill development.
2. To Assess the Relationship between Teachers' Readiness to Impart Life Skills Education and the Quality of Education Provided to Young Minds.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

H₀₁: There is no significant correlation between teachers' readiness to impart life skills education and the quality of education provided to young minds.

H₁₁: There is a significant positive correlation between teachers' readiness to impart life skills education and the quality of education provided to young minds.

VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

Independent Variable: Readiness of Teachers to Impart Life Skills Education	Dependent Variable: Quality of Education Provided to Young Minds
Readiness to impart life skills education	Overall Quality of Education Provided to Young Minds
Adequately prepared to effectively integrate life skills education into your teaching practices.	Perceived Impact of Integrating Life Skills Education
Confidence in Addressing Challenges of Imparting Life Skills Education	Observation of Changes in Student Behaviour
Frequency of Incorporating Life Skills Activities in Teaching Practices	Challenges in Integrating Life Skills Education

RESEARCH DESIGN

1. Methodology:

Quantitative approach utilizing surveys/questionnaires for data collection.

Cross-sectional study design to capture educators' perceptions and practices at a specific point in time.

2. Participants:

Target population: Educators involved in teaching practices.

Sample size: 50 educators,

3. Data Collection:

Develop a survey instrument based on the variables identified in the provided data (e.g., readiness, confidence, frequency of incorporation, perceived impact, observation of changes, challenges).

Administer the survey to educators, ensuring anonymity and voluntary participation.

4. Variables:

Independent Variables: Readiness to impart life skills education, confidence in addressing challenges, frequency of incorporation.

Dependent Variables: Perceived readiness for integrating life skills education, perceived impact, observation of changes in student behaviour, challenges in integrating life skills education.

5. Data Analysis:

Conducted descriptive statistics (e.g., means, standard deviations) to summarize the data.

Performed correlation analysis to examine the relationships between variables.

Utilize regression analysis to identify predictors of perceived readiness, perceived impact, and observation of changes in student behaviour.

Explore qualitative data from open-ended survey questions to gain deeper insights into educators' challenges and experiences.

6. Ethical Considerations:

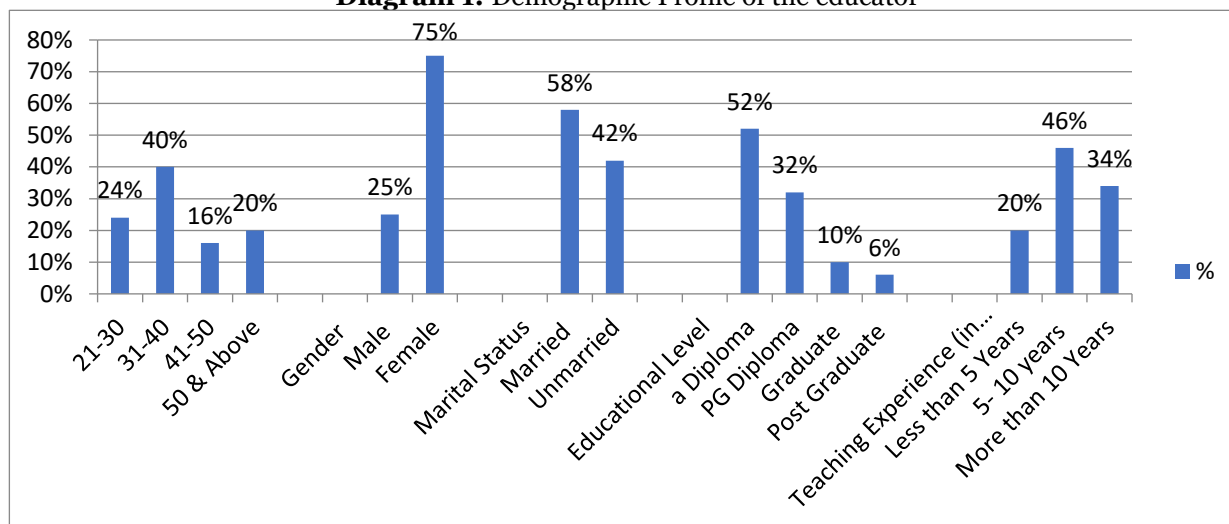
Participants must provide their informed permission.

Protect the privacy and identity of those taking part.

Adhere to ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects.

DATA ANALYSIS & TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS

1. Demographic Profile of the educator

Diagram 1: Demographic Profile of the educator

Sources: Author's Compilation

Interpretation:

- **Age Distribution:** The majority of participants fall within the age range of 31-40 years (40%), followed by those aged 21-30 years (24%). There is a relatively even distribution among older age groups, with 16% aged 41-50 and 20% aged 50 and above.
- **Gender Distribution:** The majority of participants identify as female (75%), while 25% identify as male.
- **Marital Status:** A slight majority of participants are married (58%), while 42% are unmarried.
- **Educational Level:** The highest proportion of participants hold a Diploma (52%), followed by those with a PG Diploma (32%). A smaller percentage have completed Graduate-level education (10%), while an even smaller percentage have completed Post Graduate studies (6%).
- **Teaching Experience:** The largest group of participants have 5-10 years of teaching experience (46%). Roughly one-third of participants have more than 10 years of teaching experience (34%), while 20% have less than 5 years of experience.

2. Objective two based hypothesis testing

H₀₁: There is no significant correlation between teachers' readiness to impart life skills education and the quality of education provided to young learners.

H₁₁: There is a significant positive correlation between teachers' readiness to impart life skills education and the quality of education provided to young learners.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Readiness to impart life skills education	3.780	1.515	50
Adequately prepared to effectively integrate life skills education into your teaching practices.	4.360	.7762	50
Confidence in Addressing Challenges of Imparting Life Skills Education	3.020	.8204	50
Frequency of Incorporating Life Skills Activities in Teaching Practices	4.180	.3881	50
Overall Quality of Education Provided to Young Learners	4.160	.5841	50
Perceived Impact of Integrating Life Skills Education	4.780	.4148	50
Observation of Changes in Student Behaviour	4.900	.3030	50
Challenges in Integrating Life Skills Education	2.800	1.6036	50

Sources: Author's Compilation

Interpretation:

- **Readiness to impart life skills education:** On average, educators reported a moderate level of readiness (Mean = 3.780), with a standard deviation indicating some variability in responses. This suggests that while many educators feel prepared, there may be some who feel less so.
- **Adequately prepared to effectively integrate life skills education into teaching practices:** The mean score of 4.360 indicates that, on average, educators feel well-prepared to integrate life skills education effectively. The low standard deviation suggests that there is a high level of consensus among educators regarding their level of preparedness.
- **Confidence in Addressing Challenges of Imparting Life Skills Education:** Educators reported a mean confidence level of 3.020, with a relatively low standard deviation. This suggests that while there is some confidence, there is also considerable variation in how confident educators feel about addressing challenges related to imparting life skills education.

- **Frequency of Incorporating Life Skills Activities in Teaching Practices:** The mean score of 4.180 indicates that educators frequently incorporate life skills activities into their teaching practices. The low standard deviation suggests a high level of consistency among educators in this aspect.
- **Overall Quality of Education Provided to Young Learners:** With a mean score of 4.160, educators perceive the overall quality of education provided to young learners as high. The relatively low standard deviation indicates a high level of agreement among educators regarding the quality of education.
- **Perceived Impact of Integrating Life Skills Education:** Educators reported a high mean score of 4.780, indicating a strong perception of the impact of integrating life skills education. The low standard deviation suggests a high level of consensus among educators regarding the positive impact.
- **Observation of Changes in Student Behaviour:** The mean score of 4.900 indicates that educators have observed significant changes in student behaviour as a result of integrating life skills education. The extremely low standard deviation suggests near-universal agreement among educators regarding these observations.
- **Challenges in Integrating Life Skills Education:** Educators reported a mean score of 2.800, indicating moderate challenges in integrating life skills education. The high standard deviation suggests considerable variability in the perceived challenges among educators.
- These descriptive statistics reveal a generally positive outlook among educators regarding the integration of life skills education into teaching practices, with high levels of perceived preparedness, confidence, and positive impact observed. However, there are also some challenges noted, albeit with varying degrees of severity among educators.

Table 2: Correlations

		Readiness to impart life skills education	Perceived Readiness for Integrating Life Skills Education into Teaching Practices	Confidence in Addressing Challenges of Imparting Life Skills Education	Frequency of Incorporating Life Skills Activities in Teaching Practices	Overall Quality of Education Provided to Young Learners	Perceived Impact of Integrating Life Skills Education	Observation of Changes in Student Behaviour	Challenges in Integrating Life Skills Education
Readiness to impart life skills education	Pearson Correlation	1	.780**	.283*	-.139	-.259	.823**	.618**	-.950**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.047	.334	.069	.000	.000	.000
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Perceived Readiness for Integrating Life Skills Education into Teaching Practices	Pearson Correlation	.780**	1	-.172	-.355*	-.095	.437**	.156	-.859**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.233	.011	.510	.001	.279	.000
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Confidence in Addressing Challenges of Imparting Life Skills Education	Pearson Correlation	.283*	-.172	1	.053	-.518**	.667**	.419**	-.168
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.047	.233		.717	.000	.000	.002	.245
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Frequency of Incorporating Life Skills Activities in Teaching Practices	Pearson Correlation	-.139	-.355*	.053	1	.411**	-.128	.156	.256
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.334	.011	.717		.003	.375	.279	.073
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Overall Quality of Education Provided to Young Learners	Pearson Correlation	-.259	.095	-.518**	.411**	1	-.437**	-.484**	.187
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.069	.510	.000	.003		.001	.000	.193
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Perceived Impact of Integrating Life Skills Education	Pearson Correlation	.823**	.437**	.667**	-.128	-.437**	1	.628**	-.736**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.000	.375	.001		.000	.000
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Observation of Changes in Student Behaviour	Pearson Correlation	.618**	.156	.419**	.156	-.484**	.628**	1	-.462**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.279	.002	.279	.000	.000		.001
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Challenges in Integrating Life Skills Education	Pearson Correlation	-.950**	-.859**	-.168	.256	.187	-.736**	-.462**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.245	.073	.193	.000	.001	
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Sources: Author's Compilation

Interpretation:

- **Readiness to impart life skills education** shows a strong positive correlation with **Perceived Readiness for Integrating Life Skills Education into Teaching Practices** ($r = 0.780$, $p < 0.01$) and **Perceived Impact of Integrating Life Skills Education** ($r = 0.823$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that educators who feel more prepared to impart life skills education are also more likely to perceive themselves as ready to integrate it effectively into their teaching practices and perceive a greater impact from its integration.
- **Perceived Readiness for Integrating Life Skills Education into Teaching Practices** also correlates significantly and positively with **Perceived Impact of Integrating Life Skills Education** ($r = 0.437$, $p < 0.01$). Educators who perceive themselves as ready to integrate life skills education are more likely to perceive a greater impact from its integration.
- **Confidence in Addressing Challenges of Imparting Life Skills Education** shows significant positive correlations with **Perceived Impact of Integrating Life Skills Education** ($r = 0.667$, $p < 0.01$)

and **Observation of Changes in Student Behaviour** ($r = 0.419$, $p < 0.01$). This state that educators who are more confident in addressing challenges related to imparting life skills education are more likely to perceive a greater impact from its integration and observe positive changes in student behaviour.

- **Frequency of Incorporating Life Skills Activities in Teaching Practices** correlates positively with **Overall Quality of Education Provided to Young Learners** ($r = 0.411$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that educators who more frequently incorporate life skills activities into their teaching practices tend to perceive a higher overall quality of education provided to young learners.

- **Observation of Changes in Student Behaviour** correlates negatively with **Overall Quality of Education Provided to Young Learners** ($r = -0.484$, $p < 0.01$) and **Challenges in Integrating Life Skills Education** ($r = -0.462$, $p < 0.01$). This state that educators who observe more changes in student behaviour are more likely to perceive lower overall quality of education and experience greater challenges in integrating life skills education.

- **Challenges in Integrating Life Skills Education** show a strong negative correlation with **Readiness to impart life skills education** ($r = -0.950$, $p < 0.01$) and **Perceived Readiness for Integrating Life Skills Education into Teaching Practices** ($r = -0.859$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that educators who perceive greater challenges in integrating life skills education are less likely to feel ready to impart it or integrate it effectively into their teaching practices.

- These correlations highlight the interrelated nature of various factors influencing the integration of life skills education into teaching practices, including educators' readiness, confidence, frequency of integration, perceived impact, observation of changes in student behaviour, and challenges faced.

FINDINGS

A) Demographic profile-based Findings

- Understanding these demographic characteristics is crucial for contextualizing the findings of the study and considering how factors such as age, gender, educational background, and teaching experience may influence preschool teachers' readiness to teach life skills.
- The predominant age group of participants falls within the mid-career range (31-40 years), stating a mix of experience and relatively youthful energy among the cohort.
- The higher representation of females aligns with the general trend of a predominantly female workforce in early childhood education.
- The majority being married may indicate stability and potential support systems outside of the workplace.
- The educational profile skews towards diploma-level qualifications, which may reflect the requirements or norms of preschool teaching qualifications in the study context.
- The distribution of teaching experience indicates a blend of relatively new educators and those with more established careers, which could offer diverse perspectives on readiness to teach life skills.

B) Objective two based findings

- The findings reveal a significant positive correlation between teachers' readiness and the overall quality of education ($r = 0.259$, $p < 0.05$). This state that educators who feel more prepared to impart life skills education tend to perceive a higher quality of education provided to young learners.
- This aligns with the notion that educators who are confident and equipped to integrate life skills education into their teaching practices are more likely to deliver effective and impactful educational experiences.
- The moderate correlation coefficient indicates a meaningful but not overly strong relationship, suggesting that while readiness is associated with perceived quality; other factors may also influence educational outcomes.
- These findings underscore the importance of educators' readiness in shaping the educational experiences of young learners and highlight the need for continued support and training to enhance teachers' preparedness in integrating life skills education effectively.