

THE IMPACT OF LIFE SKILLS AND SELF-CONFIDENCE EDUCATION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDEPENDENT AND WORK-READY HUMAN RESOURCES

Maria Ulfah

Economic Education Studies Programme, FKIP Tanjungpura University, Indonesia
Email: maria.ulfah@fkip.untan.ac.id

Abstract:

This research project aims to analyze the impact of life skills education on the development of independent and work-ready human resources. Additionally, it seeks to identify the role of self-confidence in increasing students' work readiness. This research employed qualitative methods with a phenomenological approach and involved students from the Economic Education Study Program at Tanjungpura University as the sample population. The data collection techniques employed included in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. The findings of the research indicate that life skills education has a considerable impact on students' work readiness, particularly in terms of enhancing self-confidence, developing practical abilities such as communication, time management, and problem-solving skills. Students who participate in this program exhibit enhanced independence, proactivity, and adaptability in the workplace. The results of observations and interviews indicate that life skills education enhances students' preparedness to confront professional demands and bolsters their self-assurance. This research proposes a more comprehensive incorporation of life skills education into academic curricula and the necessity for collaboration between academic institutions and industry to align skills with the demands of the evolving job market. With a more integrated approach, life skills education can assume a pivotal role in developing human resources who are proficient and equipped to confront future challenges.

Keywords: *Life Skills Education, Impact of Life Skills Education, Job Readiness, Confidence*

Introduction

In the context of globalization, success in the job market is increasingly determined by factors beyond academic qualifications. Life skills and individual attitudes are also significant determinants of employability. The development of life skills has emerged as a crucial component of education, enabling students to effectively navigate the complexities of the evolving job market. This approach is consistent with UNESCO's four pillars of learning, which are learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, and learning to be. These pillars emphasize the integration of knowledge, practical skills, and social abilities to foster independent and competitive individuals¹.

Life skills education provides students with the requisite tools for effectively navigating real-world scenarios, including decision-making, time management, and teamwork. Moreover, it instills critical values such as discipline, responsibility, and ethics, which are vital in today's professional environment². The National Education Vision of Indonesia espouses the cultivation of well-rounded human resources, with an emphasis on intellectual, moral, and social

¹ Susilo. (2007). Pengembangan model pengelolaan kursus keterampilan berbasis life skill. Universitas Negeri Semarang.

² ibid

development. This is intended to equip individuals with the adaptability and competitive edge required to thrive in the job market³

Life skills encompass advanced cognitive abilities, effective communication, teamwork, and a sense of responsibility, all of which are crucial for workforce readiness⁴. Further posits that life skills represent a novel approach to fostering creativity and proactivity, thereby enhancing the quality of life⁵. The objective of life skills education is to equip individuals with the competencies necessary to effectively navigate the complexities of life and the competitive job market.

The efficacy of life skills education is not contingent on academic achievement alone; it is also contingent on the individual's preparedness for the job market. Such education provides students with the practical skills necessary for leading a productive and independent professional life (Baiti, 2017). In addition to theoretical knowledge, life skills education fosters competencies that are directly applicable to real-world scenarios, thereby enhancing students' employability and adaptability in various professional contexts.

The campus culture has a significant impact on the development of students' life skills. However, in the contemporary technological era, many students prioritize the completion of their academic studies over the development of relevant skills. Frequently, rather than employing technology to cultivate creativity, students become absorbed in social media, which may impede the growth of crucial life skills. It is therefore imperative that life skills education assumes a pivotal role in moulding a generation that is capable of creative thinking, responsible decision-making and readiness for the job market⁶. This shift in focus from mere academic achievement to holistic skill development is vital for preparing students to meet the complex demands of today's dynamic job market.

The confidence acquired through life skills education has a significant impact on students' preparedness for the workforce. Such education enhances students' capacity to make decisions, face challenges, and interact effectively in the workplace. One student commented, "Life skills education has significantly enhanced my confidence. Prior to participating in this program, I was often hesitant in decision-making. However, after learning time management, effective communication, and problem-solving, I have become more confident." This confidence not only facilitates adaptation to evolving work environments but also serves as a valuable asset in the job market. The enhanced self-assurance manifests as more proactive and resilient professionals who are better equipped to navigate the complexities of the modern workplace.

High-quality work-integrated learning (WIL) experiences have a transformative impact on students, yielding sustainable outcomes for both the community and host organizations. Effective WIL experiences are characterized by positive supervision, safe learning environments, and alignment with industry needs⁷. Such experiences facilitate the integration of theoretical knowledge with practical application, ensuring that students gain hands-on experience that is vital for their professional growth. By immersing students in real-world settings, WIL fosters a

³ Mulyana, R. (2004). *Mengartikulasikan pendidikan nilai*. Alfabeta

⁴ Susilo. (2007). *Pengembangan model pengelolaan kursus keterampilan berbasis life skill*. Universitas Negeri Semarang

⁵ Ibid Mulyana, R.

⁶ Hafid, R., Lestari, D., Ilato, R., Ardiansyah, & Mahmud, M. (2023). Pengaruh kecakapan hidup (life skill) dan gaya hidup (life style) terhadap pola hidup konsumtif mahasiswa. *Jurnal Oikos-Nomos*, 16(1), 1-10. E-ISSN: 2747-0059, P-ISSN: 1979-1607

⁷ Ibid. Hafid, et al

more profound comprehension of industry demands and cultivates essential skills that enhance career readiness and employability.

Higher education institutions bear a significant responsibility with regard to the preparation of students for the job market. The concept of job readiness encompasses not only academic achievements but also the development of essential life skills and self-confidence. Programs that prioritize the development of life skills must align with the demands of the industry in order to be effective. This can be achieved by aligning the educational curricula with the requirements of the job market⁸. Institutions must engage with industry partners to ensure that the skills taught are relevant and up-to-date, reflecting current trends and demands in various sectors. This alignment ensures that graduates are not only knowledgeable but also equipped with the practical skills necessary for success in their chosen fields.

The provision of appropriate life skills education has been demonstrated to markedly enhance students' confidence and facilitate their adaptation to the demands of the work environment. Such improvements in confidence and adaptability not only enhance their preparedness for employment but also expand their capacity to generate their own job opportunities. The importance of integrating educational practices with insights from developmental science is underscored by research, which indicates that this approach is effective in preparing students for the contemporary job market. Cantor et al,⁹ *The Science of Learning and Development (SoLD)* synthesis proposes that educational environments that are aligned with students' developmental needs and incorporate real-world experiences can markedly enhance their capacity to apply knowledge practically. This integration is crucial for improving job readiness and adaptability, ultimately better preparing students for the evolving demands of the job landscape. Vermas¹⁰ states that the life skills education model provided to students, while addressing the challenges of globalization and economic trends, must also be aligned with the world of work and industry. This approach ensures that students are well-equipped to meet their financial needs and succeed in the job market.

This research project aims to analyze the impact of life skills education on the development of independent and job-ready human resources and to assess the role of self-confidence in enhancing students' job readiness. Furthermore, the study will assess how the incorporation of life skills education into higher education curricula facilitates the acquisition of practical abilities and offer recommendations for the enhancement of educational programs to improve the quality of human resources in the job market. By examining these factors, the research aims to provide actionable insights for educators and policymakers to better align educational practices with the needs of the job market, ultimately contributing to a more skilled and adaptable workforce.

Research Method

This research employs a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach to comprehend and elucidate students' experiences and perceptions regarding the impact of life skills education on human resource development. The research sample comprises students from the Economic Education Study Program at Tanjungpura University.

⁸ Baiti, R. D., Abdullah, S. M., & Rochwidowati, N. S. (2017). Career self-efficacy dan kesiapan kerja pada mahasiswa semester akhir. *Jurnal Psikologi Integratif*, 5(2), 128-141

⁹ Darling-Hammond, L., Flook, L., Cook-Harvey, C., Barron, B., & Osher, D. (2019). *Implications for educational practice of the science of learning and development*. *Applied Developmental Science*, 24(2), 97-140

¹⁰ Rohmah, L., Tanzeh, A., Qomar, M., & Fitri, A. Z. (n.d.). *Life skills education program in improving student independence*. *International Journal of Educational Research & Social Sciences*, 162. <https://ijersc.org/>

The data collection techniques employed included in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted to gather data pertaining to student experiences and perceptions, whereas participant observation was utilized to monitor student activities and observe how they apply life skills in both everyday contexts and academic environments. Additionally, documentation was employed to collect data regarding life skills education programs, curricula, and activities associated with the program.

Thematic analysis was employed to identify the primary themes that emerged from the interview and observational data. Data coding techniques were utilized to discern existing patterns, while interpretive analysis was applied to assign meaning to the collected data and identify relationships between the emerging themes.

The process of data validation is undertaken to guarantee the precision and relevance of the data. Internal validation is employed to confirm the accuracy of the data collected, while external validation is utilized to ascertain that the research outcomes align with established theory and previous research.

Research Finding

The findings of the data collection process, which included both interviews and observations, indicate that the acquisition of educational life skills has a notable influence on students' preparedness to engage with the professional world. Interviews with students indicated that they exhibited enhanced confidence in time management, work productivity, and problem-solving abilities following the implementation of the life skills education program. This self-confidence renders them better prepared to confront the challenges of the world of work, despite the absence of direct experience. Furthermore, the results of observations indicate that students who engage in this program demonstrate heightened levels of proactivity in academic and extracurricular pursuits, exhibiting initiative and the capacity to work independently.

The analysis results demonstrate that life skills education not only equips students with practical skills but also fosters the formation of attitudes that are conducive to work readiness, including independence, adaptability, and courage in decision-making. Students who participate in life skills education exhibit enhancements in communication and time management skills, which are crucial in the professional realm. Furthermore, the results of additional analysis indicate that this education not only prepares them for the workforce but also establishes a robust foundation for future self-development.

a. The Influence of Life Skills Education on Human Resource Development

Life skills education is of paramount importance in equipping individuals with the tools to successfully navigate the demands of daily life and the professional world. Life skills encompass practical competencies such as effective communication, time management, and problem-solving, which are vital for adapting to a professional environment. Through this education, students not only gain theoretical knowledge but also practical skills that enable them to lead more productive and independent lives¹¹. Life skills education bridges the gap between basic functioning and individual capabilities, enhancing an individual's ability to meet contemporary societal needs and demands.

The results of the interviews conducted on the impact of life skills education yielded significant insights. One student observed that life skills education has facilitated an

¹¹ Prajapati, R. (2017). *Significance of life skills education. Contemporary Issues in Education Research*, 10(1), 1-10. The Clute Institute

understanding of effective time management and teamwork. "I feel more prepared to face the challenges of the working world." This statement evinces a clear comprehension of life skills as pragmatic abilities, including effective communication, time management, and problem-solving. The education has notably enhanced students' preparedness for entering the workforce, as evidenced by improvements in confidence and interaction skills. Another student added, "The critical thinking and problem-solving skills I acquired through this program have increased my independence in handling tasks in the workplace." This indicates that the integration of life skills into the curriculum has significantly boosted students' autonomy and preparedness for workplace challenges through practical skill development.

It can be observed that students in general recognize and value the acquisition of life skills as a crucial aspect of education that supports workforce readiness. They perceive that the practical skills embedded in the curriculum have enhanced their confidence, time management, and problem-solving abilities. The integration of life skills into the curriculum has demonstrably contributed to students' independence and their readiness to contribute effectively in professional settings¹².

Self-confidence is a fundamental component of speaking skills, as it provides learners with enthusiasm, courage, and motivation¹³. The success of life skills education is evident not only in students' academic achievements but also in their readiness for the workforce. The life skills acquired during education help students become more confident in interacting with others, completing tasks, and navigating various workplace situations. This preparedness makes them more responsive and adaptable to the dynamic demands of the professional environment.

In the context of human resource development, the integration of life skills into educational curricula is of paramount importance. The inculcation of life skills enables individuals to not only excel academically but also to demonstrate practical competence in navigating the complexities of life. This fosters their independence and readiness to contribute effectively in the workplace, while also equipping them with the capacity to handle future challenges more effectively.

The implementation of life skills education has been demonstrated to facilitate students' preparedness for the workforce by imparting them with pertinent practical abilities. Students report increased confidence in their interactions, time management, and problem-solving abilities, which ultimately facilitates their ability to adapt to professional demands. The incorporation of life skills into the curriculum has also facilitated students' autonomy in navigating diverse challenges, enhancing their adaptability and preparedness to handle complex situations in the workplace. Consequently, the core objective of education should prioritize the cultivation of these skills, as they constitute the essential foundation for nurturing dynamic citizens equipped to confront and flourish in the face of future challenges¹⁴.

The integration of life skills education into human resource development is of paramount importance for the production of individuals who excel academically and possess practical skills. These life skills prepare individuals to face the dynamic challenges of life and the working world, enabling them to contribute effectively in professional environments. Life skills can be defined as the ability to actualize one's potential, which is measured by the effectiveness in solving

¹² Vriska E. Kansil, Jim R. Tuna, & Nihta V. F. Liando, "Analysis of the Effect of Students' Self-Confidence on Speaking Skill," *JoTELL Journal of Teaching English, Linguistics, and Literature*, Vol. 1, No. 5 (2021): 653-675

¹³ Elyce Green et al., "The Development of a Quality Assurance Process for a Rural Work-Integrated Learning Program," *International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning* 25, no. 3 (2024): 387-399

¹⁴ Ibid, Prajapati, R

problems and continually improving oneself toward achieving excellence¹⁵. Such skills strengthen students' independence and enhance their capacity to provide solutions in various future scenarios.

b. The Function of Self-Confidence in Job Readiness

Self-confidence is a key aspect that develops through life skills education and significantly influences an individual's readiness to enter the workforce. Individuals with high self-confidence are more decisive, resilient in facing challenges, and effective in their interactions with others. Effective life skills education can foster this self-confidence, thereby preparing individuals more thoroughly for professional challenges¹⁶.

Interviews concerning the role of self-confidence in job readiness indicate that life skills education is a significant contributor to the development of self-confidence. One student observed that "life skills education has been instrumental in helping me build self-confidence." Prior to participation in the program, I frequently exhibited reticence in decision-making and apprehension about the potential for missteps. However, subsequent to acquiring knowledge in the domains of time management, effective communication, and problem-solving, I have developed a greater sense of assurance in addressing the challenges encountered in the workplace. This assertion illustrates the perception of enhanced self-confidence through life skills education as a pivotal factor in one's preparedness to confront professional challenges. Higher self-confidence facilitates the ability to manage stress and pressure more effectively within a professional environment.

Another student observed that self-confidence facilitates communication with colleagues and supervisors, which is crucial in the workplace. This illustrates that life skills education, which prioritizes self-confidence enhancement, equips students to communicate more effectively across diverse work contexts, thereby enhancing their performance in professional settings.

The findings indicate that students who possess higher levels of self-confidence tend to engage more actively in group discussions and are more inclined to express their opinions. Additionally, they demonstrate greater initiative in task completion and are less apprehensive about assuming a leadership role in problem-solving. The self-confidence acquired through life skills education has been identified as a crucial factor in enhancing students' job readiness, particularly in managing stress, collaborating in teams, and adapting effectively to changing circumstances.

The efficacy of life skills education in fostering self-confidence is evident not only in academic performance but also in students' preparedness to adapt and flourish in the workforce. As Aoyama and Takahashi observe¹⁷, "Self-confidence is a critical component that influences learners' willingness to speak in English when using a second language." With practical skills and high self-confidence, students feel more prepared to enter the professional world and tackle emerging challenges. This confidence strengthens their ability to collaborate with colleagues, handle pressure, and demonstrate professionalism in various situations¹⁸.

¹⁵ Helwida, Mansur, A., & Rahman, I. K. (2021). *Peran life skill dalam menumbuhkan wawasan dan kemandirian santri SMPIT As Syifa Boarding School Wanareja Subang*. *Rayah Al-Islam*, 5(1), 113-128

¹⁶ Vriska E. Kansil, Jim R. Tuna, & Nihta V. F. Liando, "Analysis of the Effect of Students' Self-Confidence on Speaking Skill," *JoTELL Journal of Teaching English, Linguistics, and Literature*, Vol. 1, No. 5 (2021): 653-675

¹⁷ Saidah, "The Impact of Students' Academic Self-Confidence on the English Learning Process in the Post-Pandemic Era," *JOLLT Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (January 2024): 341-352,

¹⁸ Nety, Wahyuni, Asti B., and Nurhaeni, "Students' Self Confidence in Speaking English," *English Education Journal (E2J)* 10, no. 1 (May 2024): 1-20

The enhancement of students' self-confidence may also be achieved by reinforcing their capacity to succeed. This may be accomplished through the establishment of ambitious expectations, the demonstration of confidence in their abilities, and the facilitation of their success. Providing students with positive reinforcement in the form of feedback, praise, recognition, and rewards serves to further enhance their self-confidence.

The incorporation of life skills education into the curriculum has been demonstrated to significantly contribute to students' preparedness for the workforce. The acquisition of these skills enables students to feel more confident and independent in performing professional tasks, thereby making them valuable assets to organizations and enabling them to effectively contribute to their professional and personal goals.

c. Developing Independent and Workforce-Ready Human Resources

The development of independent and workforce-ready human resources necessitates a comprehensive approach to education. Life skills education and self-confidence development are essential elements of this process, with the objective of equipping individuals with the requisite skills and attitudes for success in the professional world. By providing a balanced education that integrates both theoretical and practical knowledge, individuals can be better prepared to become self-sufficient and competent in their professional lives, even before they directly enter the workforce. The significance of possessing life skills lies in one's ability to adapt to various circumstances and contribute to the advancement and prosperity of society¹⁹.

Interviews regarding the development of independence through life skills education reveal that students perceive significant benefits. One student, for example, noted that "life skills education has helped me become more independent in managing my studies and daily activities. I feel more confident in making decisions and tackling challenges, both in academic tasks and campus organizations." This indicates that life skills education provides not only theoretical knowledge but also practical skills that aid students in managing their responsibilities independently and preparing them for various situations they may encounter in the professional world.

Another student commented, "Although I have not yet commenced employment, the competencies I have acquired, including time management and problem-solving, imbue me with greater assurance regarding my ability to navigate the demands of the professional sphere." This observation underscores the value of integrating life skills education into the curriculum, as it equips students with the requisite abilities to adapt to professional expectations. The autonomy they cultivate within the academic setting serves as a pivotal asset in their ability to confront future workplace challenges.

Further observations demonstrate that students who participate in life skills education exhibit improved time management, take initiative in organizational activities, and display greater confidence in communication. They also demonstrate enhanced ability to complete academic tasks independently and actively participate in extracurricular activities. This evidence suggests that life skills education fosters independence in various aspects of students' lives, preparing them for the professional world.

Life skills education that is focused on developing independence helps students prepare for the workforce, even while they are still in an academic setting. Bong asserts that self-confidence can be crucial for success at every stage of life, not just in education but also in one's personal and

¹⁹ Helwida, Mansur, A., & Rahman, I. K. (2021). *Peran life skill dalam menumbuhkan wawasan dan kemandirian santri SMPIT As Syifa Boarding School Wanareja Subang. Rayah Al-Islam*, 5(1), 113-128. <https://doi.org/10.37274/rais.v5i1.390>

social interactions²⁰. The demonstration of independence in academic tasks and other activities reflects the students' readiness to adapt and excel in professional environments when the time comes.

In conclusion, the development of life skills and self-confidence is of paramount importance in the creation of independent and workforce-ready human resources, even before students embark upon their professional careers. Self-confidence, defined as a positive attitude and belief in one's own abilities, enables individuals to act with assurance, engage in their interests, assume responsibility for their actions, and interact warmly and politely with others²¹. By concentrating on the acquisition of practical abilities and the fostering of self-confidence, students can be equipped to confront the demands of the professional world with greater assurance and adaptability. This approach ultimately produces individuals who are well-prepared to meet the challenges of an evolving workplace.

Conclusion

The results of the research conducted indicate that life skills education has a significant impact on the development of human resources who are independent and ready to work. This education provides not only practical skills such as communication, time management, and problem solving, but also fosters students' self-confidence in navigating the challenges of the professional world. Students who have participated in the life skills education program report feeling more prepared and able to adapt to professional demands as a result of increased independence and the ability to complete tasks effectively. The integration of life skills in the educational curriculum has been demonstrated to enhance students' readiness to interact, manage stress, and confront dynamic challenges in the professional sphere.

To optimize the impact of life skills education, it is recommended that educational institutions continue to integrate this program into the curriculum in a more comprehensive manner, combining theory and practice in a balanced manner. The creation of a more comprehensive and sustainable life skills education program will facilitate students' preparedness for the professional world. Furthermore, it is essential to foster collaboration between educational institutions and industry to guarantee that the skills imparted align with the evolving demands of the workforce. By adopting a more integrated approach, life skills education can assume a more prominent role in developing human resources who are competent, independent, and equipped to navigate future challenges.

²⁰ Saidah, "The Impact of Students' Academic Self-Confidence on the English Learning Process in the Post-Pandemic Era," *JOLLT Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (January 2024): 341-352

²¹ Nety, Wahyuni, Asti B., and Nurhaeni, "Students' Self Confidence in Speaking English," *English Education Journal (E2J)* 10, no. 1 (May 2024): 1-20

REFERENCES

- Baiti, R. D., Abdullah, S. M., & Rochwidowati, N. S. (2017). Career self-efficacy dan kesiapan kerja pada mahasiswa semester akhir. *Jurnal Psikologi Integratif*, 5(2), 128-141.
- Damasanti, I. A. R. (2014). Kesiapan kerja ditinjau dari motivasi kerja, sikap kewirausahaan, dan kompetensi keahlian busana wanita pada siswa SMKN. *Jurnal Pendidikan Sains*, 2(2), 114-124. <http://journal.um.ac.id/index.php/jps/>. ISSN: 2338-9117.
- Darling-Hammond, L., Flook, L., Cook-Harvey, C., Barron, B., & Osher, D. (2019). Implications for educational practice of the science of learning and development. *Applied Developmental Science*, 24(2), 97-140. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10888691.2018.1537791>
- Green, E., Ryan, E., De Klerk, E., Smith, B., & Barry, R. (2024). The development of a quality assurance process for a rural work-integrated learning program. *International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning*, 25(3), 387-399.
- Hafid, R., Lestari, D., Ilato, R., Ardiansyah, & Mahmud, M. (2023). Pengaruh kecakapan hidup (life skill) dan gaya hidup (life style) terhadap pola hidup konsumtif mahasiswa. *Jurnal Oikos-Nomos*, 16(1), 1-10. E-ISSN: 2747-0059, P-ISSN: 1979-1607.
- Helwida, Mansur, A., & Rahman, I. K. (2021). Peran life skill dalam menumbuhkan wawasan dan kemandirian santri SMPIT As Syifa Boarding School Wanareja Subang. *Rayah Al-Islam*, 5(1), 113-128. <https://doi.org/10.37274/rais.v5i1.390>
- Kansil, V. E., Tuna, J. R., & Liando, N. V. F. (2021). Analysis of the effect of students' self-confidence on speaking skill. *JoTELL Journal of Teaching English, Linguistics, and Literature*, 1(5), 653-675
- Mulyana, R. (2004). Mengartikulasikan pendidikan nilai. Alfabeta.
- Nety, Wahyuni, A., & Nurhaeni. (2024). Students' self-confidence in speaking English. *English Education Journal (E2J)*, 10(1), 1-20.
- Prajapati, R., Sharma, B., & Sharma, D. (2017). Significance of life skills education. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research*, 10(1), 1-10. The Clute Institute. <https://doi.org/10.19030/cier.v10i1.9934>
- Siregar, A. (2015). Pendidikan kecakapan hidup (life skill) di pondok pesantren dalam meningkatkan kemandirian santri. ISSN No. 2252-4738.
- Susilo. (2007). Pengembangan model pengelolaan kursus keterampilan berbasis life skill. Universitas Negeri Semarang.
- Rohmah, L., Tanzeh, A., Qomar, M., & Fitri, A. Z. (n.d.). *Life skills education program in improving student independence. International Journal of Educational Research & Social Sciences*, 162. Retrieved from <https://ijersc.org/>