



Designing Skills for Life Skills Education Plan of Pedagogical Students in Vietnam



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Article history:

Submitted: 18 January 2022

Revised: 27 February 2022

Accepted: 09 March 2022

Keywords:

design;
educational activities;
pedagogical students;
skills;
Vietnam;

Abstract

How to organize educational activities in general and life skills education in particular at all levels to achieve the desired effect is a matter of concern to the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam along with schools, especially after the Ministry of Education promulgates the 2018 general education program, life skills education had become an even more important role in the good implementation of educational goals for students at all levels. The 2018 general education program is gradually being implemented according to the approved roadmap in the coming years in Vietnam, which has been placing high demands on the educational capacity of high school teachers. However, at present, whether high school teachers are able to meet the requirements of educational capacity in general and the capacity to teach life skills for students, in particular, is a question that is being asked by all levels of management. This question has prompted scientists to have studies on this situation, thereby taking measures to improve the capacity of life skills education for high school teachers and students of pedagogical schools. In that context, the author of the article delves into the skills of designing life skills education activity plans of pedagogical students, thereby serving as a practical basis for proposing measures to develop life skills education competence for pedagogical students in the current context of general education reform in Vietnam.

International research journal of management, IT and social sciences © 2022.

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1 Introduction

Nowadays, life skills education has become an important component of education quality at all levels (Binh, 2006; Binh, 2008). After the new general education program was promulgated, high schools in Vietnam considered life skills education for students one of the very important educational contents of all grades and the ability to teach life skills to students is an indispensable educational capacity of high school teachers. In order to have this capacity, when training teachers, pedagogical schools must focus on forming and developing students with many component skills, in which, it is necessary to mention the skill of designing a plan of life skills education activities (Binh et al., 2014). Below is the current situation of this skill of Vietnamese pedagogical students.

Theoretical framework

Overview of life skills, life skills education, skills in designing life skills education activities in high schools

There are many different definitions of life skills. According to the view of the World Health Organization (WHO): Life skills are psychosocial competencies, an individual's ability to effectively cope with the demands and challenges of life (Binh et al., 2014; Minh, 2015; Quang, 2010; Son, 2009, World Health Organization, 1994). This point of view is used by many scientists and social activists more than anything else because it speaks up the most socio-psychological and educational nature of life skills of an individual to maintain a state of mental well-being, as demonstrated by appropriate and positive behavior, in interactions with others, culture and surroundings. Psychosocial competence, on the other hand, plays an important role in promoting health in the broadest possible physical, mental and social sense in order to meet and cope with the demands and challenges of everyday life.

Therefore, life skills are both personal and social. Life skills are personal because it is an individual's ability. Life skills are social because in each development stage of social history, each region requires each individual to have appropriate life skills. Life skills not only deal with stress, solve social problems, but also improve people's quality of life. Educating and forming life skills for people in general and children, in particular, is being carried out by countries around the world and in Vietnam as an important task. However, the content of life skills education in different countries is not the same, it shows both general and specific characteristics (World Health Organization, 1994). Life skills education will help learners, especially children, to take care of themselves and protect themselves from dangers. Children can integrate quickly with the surrounding life, they know how to develop relationships with people and nature, thereby learning and enriching their own knowledge, experience and skills. When equipped with appropriate life skills, children would have the opportunity to develop their personalities fully and in the right direction. Based on the nature and characteristics of personality education in general and the characteristics of life skills in particular, we believe that: Life skills education is an educational process with purpose, planning, content, specific methods and forms of organization, in order to form and develop necessary life skills for individuals in certain times of social development (Duc, 2010).

Currently, educational program development is one of the important competencies required for teachers (Duc, 2010), which requires skills in designing, adjusting, and supplementing... an educational activities program. The educational activity design process is the process by which the teacher must plan an educational activity. In that plan is the expression of the goals, contents, methods, and organization of educational activities (Thang et al., 2019). Life skills education activities in high schools are usually integrated in the process of teaching subjects and into experiential educational activities (Binh et al., 2014; Kolb, 2014). However, teachers can also conduct life skills education activities for students according to specific topics. Thus, we believe that: The skill of designing life skills education activity plan is the process by which teachers plan a life skills education activity, which shows the activity's theme, objectives, and content, methods, and ways of organizing activities under certain conditions.

Requirements when designing a plan of life skills education activities for high school students

To organize an educational activity in general, the teacher must follow certain educational principles. Based on educational principles in general and principles of life skills education in particular, when designing life skills education activities for students, teachers must pay attention to the following requirements:

Requirements when designing life skill educational activities

- Requirement 1: Life skills education activities must be experiential, therefore, when designing life skills education activities, it is necessary to pay attention to identifying the topic (name) of the activity. The topic or name of the activity needs to be interesting, fascinating, and related to real-life situations and students' understanding.
- Requirement 2: Life skills education activities must be interactive educational activities, therefore, when designing this activity, it is necessary to pay attention to the environment, the context of the activity, the subjects participating in the activity, as well as what the effect of that interaction is.
- Requirement 3: Life skills education activities must exploit the emotions and experiences of students, therefore, when designing life skills education activities, teachers need to integrate touching stories, inspirational stories or self-asking questions in each educational story to affect emotions and make a strong impression on students.
- Requirement 4: Life skills education activities must help students acquire or change appropriate behavior. Therefore, life skills activities must be expressed into specific and vivid behaviors, associated with each specific situation, so that students can receive those behaviors and form new behaviors easily.
- Requirement 5: Life skills education activities must be carried out in a sequential manner, ensuring that students' receiving education take place in accordance with psychological laws. Therefore, life skills education activities need to be designed and implemented in such a way that it is suitable with the psycho-physiological characteristics of the age group, according to the correct process, which clearly defines the goals and educational messages, content, methods and organization of life skills education.
- Requirement 6: Designing life skills education activities need to follow a certain process.

The process of designing educational life skills activities Based on the process of designing an educational activity in general [4], the process of developing an educational program, the process of designing a plan of a life skills education activity takes place according to the following process:

Step 1: Identify the name (topic) of the life skills or activity

Step 2: Determine goals of life skills education or define life skills education messages (if integrating life skills education into other educational activities)

Step 3: Determine the content of life skills education activities

Step 4: Determining methods, ways of organizing activities and conditions for conducting life skills education activities

Step 5: Determine the requirements for testing and evaluating the results of life skills education activities

- *Requirement 7:* With the above process, the content structure of the educational activity design includes the basic contents and is arranged in the following order:

Name of the activity

- Objective of the activity
- Content of the activity
- Method and how it works
- Conditions for conducting activities
- Performance evaluation

The above are the requirements when designing life skills education activities plan for students. To find out how in reality pedagogical students can to practice designing life skills educational activity plans, we conducted a survey on this situation at pedagogical schools in Hanoi city.

2 Materials and Methods

In order to evaluate the current situation of designing life skills education activity plans of pedagogical students, we conducted the following survey:

Survey objective

Aim to assess the current situation of pedagogical students' skills in designing life skills education plans, thereby proposing measures to improve these skills for pedagogical students.

Survey object

We surveyed 1042 senior students of 04 pedagogical schools, including: Hanoi National University of Education, Central College of Pedagogy; Hanoi National University of Education 2; Hanoi Capital University.

Survey method

- Educational investigation method: Building and using questionnaires around the issues of forming skills in designing life skills education activities of pedagogical students;
- Conversational method: Discussing with students the contents related to the design of life skills education activities plan, to find out their skills;
- Methods of researching products of educational activities: Studying design students' plans of life skills education activities, thereby evaluating their skills.

Processing survey results: Quantifying the obtained information by using SPSS 20.0 for Windows, the survey results are as follows:

3 Results and Discussions

Principles of designing life skills educational activity plans of pedagogical students

We conducted a survey on a questionnaire with 1042 pedagogical students about the principles of designing their life skills educational activity plan, the results are summarized in Table 1 below:

Table 1
The actual situation of compliance with design principles of life skills education activity plans of pedagogical students

Principles of designing life skills educational activity plans	%
According to the prescribed form	56.89
According to the individual's form	38.12
Design that doesn't base on any model	4.99
No need for a design	0.0

The table above shows that all pedagogical students design life skills education activities before conducting life skills education, in which 56.89% of students design life skills education activities according to the prescribed form. However, 4.99% of students design life skills education activities without using any model, the rest design according to their own model. To study how the student models often used to design life skills education activities are structured, we continue to study the following content (Lewis & Bonollo, 2002; Kvan, 2001; Velásquez et al., 2022).

The actual situation of the structure of the educational activity plan of life skills of pedagogical students

To study this issue, we used the question: Would you please arrange the following contents in order to match to the design of your life skills education activities? The results are summarized in Table 2

Table 2
Structure of the plan of life skills education activities of pedagogical students

Structure of the action plan of life skills education	The level of arrangement of items compared to the template (%)			Level of perception (%)	
	Similar	Close to similar	Differ	Correct	Wrong
<i>Name of the activity</i>	50.36	44.66	4.98	49.76	50.24
Objective of the activity					
Message of life skills education					
Content of the activity					
Preparation of teachers and students					
Participants, conditions, means					
Operation progress					
Summarize and evaluate performance results					

The data in Table 2 shows: Half of the students (50.36%) think that their design of life skills education activities is similar to the design, but only 49.76% of students arrange the structure of the design like the model; The remaining half of students (49.64%) think that the design of their own life skills education activities is not similar to or close to be similar to the design pattern, this leads to 50.24% of students arranging the structure sequence differ to the design. Thus, the number of students designing life skills education activities according to the same model as those presented in Section 1 of the Content section of the article accounts for the average percentage (Gobert et al., 2015; Cronin et al., 2020; Maryam et al., 2011). We continued to delve deeper into the design techniques of life skills education activities by using the follow-up question in the questionnaire about the contents they noted in the design of life skills education activities, the results obtained are as follows in table 3.

Items in the content structure of the noticed design by pedagogical students

Table 3
Notes of pedagogical students in the process of designing life skills education activities

Design sequence	Noted		Not noted	
	Q	%	Q	%
Name of the activity	102	12.11	740	87.89
Objective of the activity	403	47.86	439	52.14
Message of life skills education	69	8.19	773	91.81
Content of the activity	798	94.77	44	5.23
Preparation of teachers and students	337	40.02	505	59.98
Operation progress	316	37.53	526	62.47
Participants, conditions, means	118	14.01	724	85.99
Results of education and life skills education to be achieved	196	23.28	646	76.72
Summarize and evaluate performance results	111	13.18	730	86.82

The data in Table 3 shows that the parts of the structure of the design that pedagogical students pay the most attention to are the content of life skills education activities (up to 94.77% of teachers pay attention to the part of the curriculum). The following contents in the structure of the design are not available or are not noticed by many pedagogical students: Up to 91.81% of pedagogical students did not pay attention to identifying the message of life skills education;

- 87.89% of pedagogical students did not pay attention to identifying the name of the activity;

- 85.99% of pedagogical students did not pay attention to determining conditions and means for activities;
- 76.72% of pedagogical students did not pay attention to determining the results of life skills education to achieve;
- 66.82% of pedagogical students did not pay attention to the summarization and evaluation of activities in the process of designing life skills education activities;

The number of pedagogical students who do not pay attention to determining the goal of the activity, prepare themselves and the child, and the progress of the activity also account for the average rate, the difference between these points is not significant. With the above data shows, the design of life skills education activities of pedagogical students has not met the requirements of a design of life skills education activities. The priority of parts of the design is not reasonable. General comments on the current situation of designing life skills education activity plans of pedagogical students. Through surveying the current situation of designing life skills education activities of pedagogical students, we draw some following comments: 100% of pedagogical students have designed life skills education activities, more than 50% of them have designed them according to the prescribed form of educational activities. The rest are not designed according to the model. More than 50% of pedagogical students correctly identify the sample design and arrange it according to the correct content structure of the design (Mohammadzadeh et al., 2020; De los Rios & Charnley, 2017; Hidayat et al., 2018).

In the process of designing educational activities, most pedagogical students pay much attention to determining the content of the activity. The rest of the design, such as: objectives of the activity, the progress of activities, preparation of teachers, determination of life skills education results, testing and evaluation of performance results are not noticed by many pedagogical students. This poses unreasonableness in the content of the design and will likely to limit the results of life skills education activities.

Evaluation of the current situation of pedagogical students' skills in designing life skills plans

On the basis of the information and data obtained on the above situation, we evaluate the pedagogy's skills in designing life skills education activity plans as follows:

Evaluation Criteria

- 1) Good and attractive activity name: 2 points
- 2) Age-appropriate activity: 2 points
- 3) Clearly identify life skills that need to be taught to students: 2 points
- 4) Full basic contents of the design: 2 points
- 5) The contents of the design are arranged in the correct order: 1 point
- 6) Scientific plan: 0.5 points
- 7) Creative plan: 0.5 points

Rating scale

The assessment of life skills education skills is carried out on an interval scale with the following levels: Very good skill, good skill; skilled and unskilled. As follows:

From 9-10 points: Very good design skills

From 7 to less than 9 points: Good design skills

From 5 to less than 7 points: Having design skills.

Below 5 points: No skills yet

Table 4
Results of evaluating the skills of designing life skills plans of pedagogical students

Levels achieved	Ratio %
Very good design skills	11,40
Good design skills	11,64
Have design skills	27,08

Statistical results in the above table show that the number of pedagogical students with skills in designing life skills education activities accounts for 50,12%, of which 11,40 are pedagogical students with very good skills, 11,64% of pedagogical students have good skills. Up to 49.88% of pedagogical students do not have skills in designing life skills education activities. Thus, more than 70% of pedagogical students still need to continue to practice the skills of designing life skills education activity plans for high school students (Blau et al., 2020; Shorey et al., 2018; Herianto, 2017).

4 Conclusion

In order to train and develop life skills education capacity for students, Vietnamese pedagogical schools need to pay great attention to training the skills of designing life skills educational activity plans for students, because despite it belongs to the preparation stage, it plays an important and decisive role in the implementation of life skills education activities for students. There are some measures to improve this skill for pedagogical students, we suggest as follows:

- During the course of teaching the Education module, teachers of pedagogical schools need to organize for students to design life skills educational activity plans during practice, and to design experiential and career-oriented educational activity plans
- Adding practical content of life skills education in high school to the educational skills practice program and pedagogical practice so that students could have the opportunity to practice skills in designing and implementing educational plans for students in high schools;
- In the curriculum of the Education module, pedagogical schools should consider including the content of Life skills education organization for students in high schools as a content of the module.

With the above measures, we hope that the skills of designing life skills education activity plans in particular and the life skills education capacity of pedagogical students, in general, will be developed, meeting the requirements of teachers in the current general education reform in Vietnam.

Conflict of interest statement

The authors declared that they have no competing interests.

Statement of authorship

The authors have a responsibility for the conception and design of the study. The authors have approved the final article.

Acknowledgments

This work was supported by the Research Fund provided by Ministry of Education and Training, Vietnam (The subject code: B2020-SPH-09).

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