# CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. INTRODUCTION

Education is the most critical factor that contributes to the progress of any society. School education helps in the formation of a sound personality and character building in children. The purpose of education is learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be (Delors, J., 1996). As globalization has opened up vistas of opportunities to the younger generation, the traditional perspectives of education are changing and paving the way to address the needs of the global world. The combination of conventional and out-of-box approach is of utmost importance to lead a successful life in the 21st century (Sivalingam and Yunus, 2017). Only then students will be enabled to experience the three dimensions of education namely the ethical and cultural, scientific and technological, and economical and social. Education is a social experience through which children learn about themselves, develop their interpersonal skills and acquire basic knowledge and skills (McDonnell, 2017).

As Kay (2009) in his study describes that student need education that offers skills to thrive in a complex, connected, and a constantly changing world. When students leave school they must be empowered with a deeper knowledge of academic content and with the 21st century skills which in turn, will help them apply their knowledge and work with others and manage their lives. The basic purpose of education is to impart knowledge, attitude and skills. While knowledge is imparted through class room learning sessions, attitude and skill are ignored. According to

Yuen et al. (2011) appropriate skills and attitude are necessary for competence and successful careers of students. By introducing life skills in all areas of school education, students will have academic engagement, belonging, discipline, fairness, linking school with community, student voices, extra-curricular activities, peer relations, safety and teacher support and will help develop appropriate attitude and skills in children.

In this scenario, it is essentially important to teach our children at school the power of interdependence and empathy than transmitting educational contents that lead them to get higher academic results and admission into prestige professional colleges. Today, to live in harmony and integrity, what one needs is a greater sense of self-awareness, empathy, communication and interpersonal relationship skills (Gogoi et al., 2015). Life skills taught in schools when children are still young can affect healthy signs of growth in one's personality. It is this which will invariably enhance our education system to produce effective fruits in one's life and living (Balda and Sangwan, 2015). Life skills classes will have greater and a lasting effect on the students. There are many ways to teach life skills in schools, like introducing it as part of the curricular activity or co-curricular sessions or by conducting training programmes in life skills (Ranjan and Nair, 2015). It has been proved that children do learn quickly when they are exposed to experiential way of learning (Powell and Wells, 2010) and community service learning could be one of the ways to impart life skills in children.

The present study will explore whether life skills could be enhanced in school children by involving them in community service learning.

## 1.2. COMMUNITY SERVICE

Community service is work done by a person or group of people that benefits others. People do not get paid to perform community service. It is often organized through a local place of worship, school or a profit organization. It is a voluntary work that is completed for free in a given community with no expectation or regard to money from the beneficiary. This may include one activity or a series of activities from one person or multiple persons. Community Service is designed to improve the quality of life for community residents, to solve particular problems related to their

needs, including fields such as: health care, child care, literacy training, educational welfare, social services, transportation, housing and neighborhood improvement, public safety, disaster relief, crime prevention and control, recreation, rural development, community improvement, among others. It can help any group of people in need: children, senior citizens, and people who are differently abled and language learners. It could also involve the care for animals; improve the environmental places like a local park, historic places and science area. Community service programmes may be mandatory or voluntary and it is planned for students to perform acts of service that are beneficial to the community. Community service does not have a particular curriculum designed for it. It is not integral within existing school or classroom curriculum nor does it have classroom objectives.

### 1.2.1. Definition and Discussion

Enster and Weinbech have defined community service 'as service to the local, state and national governments' (Enster and Weinbech, 1983).

In community service, the word service has a strong emphasis on providing service, is an activity which provides benefits to the recipient who addresses the social issues like recycling, homelessness, and environment. It often takes place after the school hours and is not formally related to any academic course (Furco, 1996).

The elements of community service are that the work done is unpaid and the community is benefited. It is considered as a way for students to help others by volunteering their time, effort, or talents and is performed to benefit others without any compensation in whatsoever form (Camara, 2012).

This innovative approach encourages students to develop an awareness and understanding of civic responsibility and of the role they can play in supporting and strengthening their communities. Individual development and social development can flourish for students who are involved in community service (Farahmandpour, 2011). The youth engagement in community service has several advantages not only for the moral, cognitive, social and intellectual development of young people but also for the

welfare and betterment of community and neighborhood (O'Keefe, 2015). The impact of community service on the students depends on the efficacy of the programme. It is a meaningful experience that teaches the young to realize the power of human potential to create change and gives space to explore reality, ask questions, reflect and act (Herzberg, 2006). In recent years, there has been a decline in the overall civic engagement among youth especially when it came to civic attitudes and participation in political processes (Raskoff and Sundeen, 2001). Community service helps the student not only to become autonomous individuals but also members of a larger community to which they are accountable. It instills in youth an ethics of civic responsibility, seen as an instrument for processing civic change (Bonnet, 2008).

## 1.3. COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING

In the 21st century the students must learn to link what they have learned in academic courses to real life situations in the work environment. Community service learning, which is one of the applied learning strategies, provides students with meaningful opportunities to make connections between theory and practice (Astin and Sax, 1998).

Community service learning is a structured learning experience that combines community service with classroom instruction, focusing on explicit learning objectives, preparation, reflection and civic responsibility (Barkley, 1999; Bringle and Hatcher, 1996; Karayan and Gathercoal, 2005). It provides students with opportunities to apply what they are learning in the classroom to solve real-life problems in real-world contexts (Robinson and Torres, 2015). Community service learning project is developed, implemented, and evaluated in collaboration with the stakeholders i.e. the community. It attempts to balance the service that is provided and the learning that takes place and finally increases the understanding of the context in which the service work occurs (Farber, 2017).

### 1.3.1. Definition and Discussion

Professor Freddy Cardoza defined community service learning as 'a Pedagogy' (or a specific teaching-learning approach) that has few lectures, and its more interactive

hands on educational strategy provides students with instruction while leading them through a meaningful community service process.

The Canadian Alliance for Community Service-Learning articulated its first definition in 2006: "Community Service-Learning (CSL) is an educational approach that integrates service in the community with intentional learning activities. Within effective CSL efforts, members of both educational institutions and community organizations work together towards outcomes that are mutually beneficial."

The National Service-Learning Clearing House defines service-learning as "a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility and strengthen communities" (National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, 2012).

Learn and Serve America, a programme by America's National Service-Learning Clearing House has defined service learning as a course-based, credit bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs, and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain future understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility" (Camara, 2012, p.11).

The National Youth Council's founder, President, and CEO said, "Service-learning combines classroom instruction with reflection and meaningful service to the community" (National Youth Leadership Council, 2010).

University of Georgia Office of Service-Learning (2014) has pointed out that service learning aims at the application of academic skills and knowledge to address a community need, issue, or problem and to enhance student learning.

National Society for Experimental Education, 1994 broadly defines service learning as "any carefully monitored service experience in which a student has internal learning goals and reflects actively on what he or she is learning through the experience" (National Society for Experiential Education, 1994).

The corporation for National Service Providers, gives an insightful and a narrower definition that sees service learning as a "method under which students learn and develop through active participation in....thoughtfully organizes service experiences that meet actual community needs that (are) integrated into the students' academic curriculum or provide structured time (for reflection, and) that enhance what is taught in school by extending student learning beyond the classroom and into the community (Corporation for National Community Service, 1990).

The American Association of Community Colleges offers a concise definition that service learning combines service with academic instruction, focusing on critical reflective thinking and personal and civic responsibility. A community service learning programme involves students in activities that address community identified needs while developing polishing and honing their academic skills and commitment towards their community.

The above definitions are a clear indicator that service learning is a teaching strategy that invites students to identify, research, address real community challenges and issues, using knowledge and skills learned in the classroom service learning takes place in structured time to investigate community needs, thoughtful planning of the service project, and guided reflection on their service experience (Kasinath, 2013). Community service learning is a teaching method that utilizes what is taught in a classroom and equips the student to apply this knowledge, in the real world situations. It is designed to make classroom learning meaningful and relevant to help students' apply their learning beyond the school setting. The integration of service experiences into curriculum as an instructional strategy can be used as an in-class experience and as an extracurricular activity. It is a way to reconnect the young and help them gain a sense of community in a variety of ways through direct experiences. The teacher is encouraged to manage the classes or "coach" the students rather than providing direct instruction through lecturing and note taking. According to Keen and Hall, (2009) community service learning becomes a way for students to learn basic skills, and enable them to apply what they learn in the class. It is planned around student's learning and active participation rather than teaching. A focus on efficiently and

effectively addressing needs with the community, and not just for the community. This experience actively involves the students' in all stages, from planning to assessment. Austin et al. (2002) suggests both faculty and students develop heightened sense of civic responsibility, personal effectiveness through participation in community service learning. Community service becomes community service learning when there is a deliberate and explicit connection made between services and learning opportunities which are accompanied by reflection and evaluation.

Community service learning challenges students to become active participants in their community. It enables them to discover the connections between academic objectives and the service experience. Community service learning intends to develop the community through valuable and meaningful service projects (Todd, 2008). Community is considered as an integral component of educational experience both for enhancing a student's education and for developing future societies. Community service learning evolved as a vehicle to strengthen students' learning, to reconnect them with their communities, to counter the imbalance between learning and living, and to repair the broken connection between learning and community. Students learn to serve and serve to learn through active reflection (Herlihy and Brown, 2015). Payne and Edwards (2010) suggests that early adolescents learn better through peer interactions, active learning involving in civic engagement and connecting with community. They develop meaningful learning by social interactions (Vygotsky, 1978).

### 1.3.2. Historical Evolution of Community Service Learning around the Globe and in India

Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm (IPP) is rooted in the spiritual exercises devised in the 16th century by Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of Society of Jesus (commonly known as Jesuits). He wrote Ratio Studiorum (Latin for "Plan of Studies") or in the year of 1599. Although the method was not called the "Ignatian pedagogical paradigm" initially, Jesuit institutions of learning all over the world almost for 400 years have adopted this educational system laid out in the *Ratio* (Hise and Messey, 2010). Jesuits were the first religious order to have a fully-fledged school for any student, lay or clerical, who chose to come to them (O'Mally, 1993). The five elements of

IPP i.e., context, experience, reflection, action and evaluation remain a statement of educational operating methods and objectives for the hundreds of Jesuit colleges in Europe, Asia, and America. These exercises call for a cycle of experience, reflection, and action to help an individual uncover truth, grow closer to God, and take steps toward making the world a better place. Chubbuck S.M. (2007) explains that this method of education focuses to know the context of the students, involving them in experiential learning by engaging the students into various experiences, build opportunities for reflection which help them to think about what they have learned, what it means to them and feel the need for action, and lastly assess them on the specific areas of growth. This way of education sculptures the students' to become men and women for other (Mountin and Nowacel, 2012). Many have adapted this method as a way of education from which the components of community service learning have evolved.

John Bosco was born in 1815 popularly known as Don Bosco in Turin Italy; he was a Catholic priest, educator and writer of 19$^{th}$ century. He dedicated his life for the betterment of people who were suffering from many of the ill-effects of industrialization and urbanization. He worked tirelessly for the street children, juvenile delinquents and other disadvantaged youth. He developed teaching methods based on love rather than punishment, a method known as the Salesian preventive system. His spirit of service is alive even till today among the many institutions which are established and run by Salesian fathers. It was Don Bosco's dream to look after the youth especially those who are school dropout and aimless in life. He initiated many technical and vocational training courses which brought them to main stream. Even today it continues to function in many parts of the world. This community service activity oriented education continues even today and Don Bosco is considered one of pioneers of community service.

Paulo Freire was a Brazilian educator and philosopher and a leading advocate of critical pedagogy. He had indelible and enduring influence on late 20$^{th}$ century educators and was characterized by many learned men and women as "the Latin John Dewey". As one of the most important critical educators of the twentieth century

Paulo Freire emphasized that education should liberate the oppressed and give freedom especially to the marginalized and the disadvantaged. He was against rote learning where the students are just receiver of knowledge instead he emphasized on their need to think and respond. According to him the teacher needs to engage in dialogue and involve the students for active participation (Blackburn, 2000). His work proposes pedagogy with a new relationship between teacher, student, and society. It is dedicated to the upliftment of the oppressed and is based on his experience of helping Brazilian adults to read and write. He criticized the system of education, where students are treated like empty vessels to be filled in with knowledge. He argues that pedagogy should instead treat the learner as a co-creator of knowledge (Braa and Callero, 2006). This led to the cataclysmic liberation in Brazilian education. He gave a different dimension to education itself and proposed it as an active participation of students in liberating the weak and transforming the oppressive structures of those who are marginalized and dehumanized. Community service learning also evolved more strongly based on this concept where in a new way of education system was introduced and the students' participation was emphasized upon. More importance was given to uplift the deprived and the needy in the society.

The intellectual foundation of community service learning in the United Sates traces back to the early 1900's with the work of John Dewey who promoted models of "learning by doing," and linked service to personal and social development. Unlike traditional educators who stressed on rote learning and an authoritative teacher, Dewey emphasized on the concept of learning by doing. John Dewey was one of first persons to develop service based learning in educational setting by combining experiential learning and service to the community. As the benefits of service were acknowledged a bigger number of associations that focused on service in the community were established. The idea of making students actors of their own learning is attributed to John Dewey (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Pacho, 2015). The same concept was reinforced in the 1980s, with David Kolb, who developed his "Experiential Model Learning" (Kolb, 1984) which is based on Dewey's work.

CLAYSS (Centro Latinoamericano de Aprendizaje y Servicio Solidario) is an innovative pedagogy that was founded in 2002 in Latin American Centre for service-learning (CLAYSS). In the early 2000's, the Latin America Center for Service-Learning (CLAYSS) was called upon at various points to promote its service-learning model in Latin America, Africa, and Eastern Asia as well as in Spain and Italy. CLAYSS was invited to present this model to a group of NGO's and universities from Central and Eastern Europe which was the starting point of a joint effort to promote service-learning in the Central and Eastern Europe region (CEE). It develops financial educational programs for those who wish to design service-learning projects. CLAYSS was created to support students' educators and community organizations the development of community and to support the solidarity in educational or service learning projects. According to this pedagogy there are four elements in the process of service learning projects such as; motivation, diagnosis, project designing and planning, closure and multiplication. The mission of CLAYSS is to construct a more democratic, just and equal approach in the society (CLAYSS, 2013).

Campus compact was founded in 1985 to develop service learning in colleges and universities nationwide. In 1990 the U.S. Congress passed the National and Community Service Act a way to enhance national and community service. Therefore, community service is an integral part of social life in the US. At present there are many countries such as Canada, Finland, Ireland, and Australia who have adapted community service learning as part of their school curriculum. The term service learning was coined in 1976 but has its roots dating back to the 1900's when educator Arthur Dunn incorporated service in the community as part of the social studies curriculum.

The Gurukula education system that started in pre-Vedic period until the introduction of English education system in India is one of the traditional forms of community service learning. The students were staying with the "Guru' – the teacher and learning from him. Not only that the *Shishya* – the student was in turn helping the Guru in his everyday life and participated in his community. It was the oldest form of experiential learning. Later, Mahatma Gandhi's schemes to uplift the deprived and the

marginalized during the freedom movement with the tool of non-violence was indeed a beginning of the community service learning modern era. For instance the Harijan Sevak Sangh, the Khadi movement and the Sarvodaya were all glimpses of community service learning started by Gandhiji during the freedom movement in India. But later the education plans failed to carry over these ideas into the new education system. The Viswa Bharati University started by Rabindra Natha Tagore has embedded the concept of community service in the curriculum. The Sriniketan project initiated by him for the upliftment of the downtrodden people and makes them self-sustainable was another example of community service initiative in India.

Community and social service was given utmost importance in Gandhiji's scheme of Nai Talim. The C.D. Deshmukh Committee (1956) had commended compulsory national service for all adolescents before they could have access to higher education or employment in government. The Education Commission (1964-66) had also recommended that community and social service should be an integral part of the educational process. NSS (National Service Scheme) was launched in the year 1969 while celebrating Mahatma Gandhi's Birth Centenary. The NSS aims at developing student's personality through community service. It is offered in schools at higher secondary levels, universities and colleges. NSS functions well in the higher education level but unfortunately not many schools have introduced it. In India community service learning is practiced only in colleges and higher secondary schools in the form of NSS (National Service Scheme). As for the ISCE board it offers a subject called SUPW (Socially Useful Productive Work) and community service but unfortunately most of the schools give more importance to SUPW than community service. Community service learning is still a very new subject in Indian schools and colleges. CBSE schools have introduced the concept of *Sewa* a few years ago, which is not given due emphasis any more. Therefore, in India it is still in its juvenile phase with finite opportunities at the school level. There are no volunteers' opportunity programs offered for children and youth. In India, at present service is an evolving process where the students are involved in awareness campaigns.

### 1.3.3. Philosophical Underpinning of Community Service Learning

The philosophy of Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm, John Dewey and Paulo Freire, articulate how each one dealt with the two key relationships namely action to reflection, and individual to society. The Ignatian pedagogical paradigm is a way of learning and a method of teaching taken from the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of Society of Jesus commonly known as Jesuits. Among the five elements of his method of education the three main elements are experience, reflection, and action. However, context and evaluation are also necessary for the success of this method. Ignatian pedagogy uses this dynamic five-step method along with an Ignatian vision of the human and the world to accompany the learner in their journey of growth and development. It is all about developing and questioning one's own conscience, as well as in making sound and conscientious decisions (Meirose, 2001).

Jesuit education through Ignatian pedagogy can be seen as a critical pedagogy. It focuses on truth, accuracy, and comprehensiveness as a path into the world, especially used in order to stand for the silenced, excluded and the poor (Gregory, 2001). The Jesuit approach towards education for women and men encourages teachers to walk alongside with students in their learning process. It begins with paying attention to experience, moves to reflecting on its meaning, and ends in deciding how to act. For Jesuits, education does not only mean to live authentically enough in the world but to participate in the transformation of the world (McAvoy, 2013). The goal of Jesuit education is to produce men and women for whom discernment is a habit and a way of life (Haynes, 2006).

In Dewey's writings on pragmatic philosophy, progressive education has been invoked to the theory and practice of active, experiential, and student-centered learning. Dewey applied both philosophical and psychological perspectives to build his theory of education (McDermott, 1981). It is applied from elementary school to college and from project-based learning to internship programs also in the ongoing process of constructing a philosophical and theoretical framework for community service learning. John Dewey has been considered as the founding father of community service learning. Dewey's philosophy is both a pioneer and exemplar for

the theory and practice of community service learning (Giles and Eyler, 1994). Experience and democracy were the central tenets of his philosophy of education (Kolb, 1984). Dewey was convinced that children should not be authoritatively told what is good and what is bad even before they discover it for themselves (Dewey, 1897). Dewey's pragmatic philosophy ties knowledge to experience, his progressive political vision connects individuals to society, his student-centered educational theory combines reflection with action, and his ethical writings emphasize on democracy and community. He is also referred as child-centered educationist (Bantock, 1963). Dewey is an apt thinker who contextualizes community service learning not only because of his deliberations on experiential learning but also because he connects these matters, through his social philosophy, to the issues of reflective activity, citizenship, community and democracy (Pacho, 2015). In other words, Dewey comprehensively thinks and emphasizes in his education pedagogy not only on learning but service too, and the nature of their dialectical relationship as the most important and essential for any educational system.

Another reason that Dewey's voice resonates with community service learning is that to do something with the social context, Dewey wants learners to become active participants in the world. He promotes an active and participatory theory of learning and pedagogy. For Dewey, education is a form of growth through active experimentation and reflective thought (Talebi, 2015). Dewey's conception of democracy rests on social interaction and it makes sense for his theory of education to follow. The radical interaction and continuity between the individual and society is a cornerstone of Dewey's social, political, and ultimately educational philosophy. Dewey's curriculum theory is based on anthropological, psychological, and social-philosophical (political) perspectives that hold on a child. The child has to be exposed to various experiences and these difference in experiences have to be valued (Berding, 1992). Community service learning is supported by Dewey's experiential learning, as it offers students a hands-on, collaborative learning experience, which helps them to "fully learn new skills and knowledge" (Haynes et al., 2007). Eyler and Giles (1999) asserted that Dewey described service-learning as experiential learning and that such learning has a continuous direct experience followed by periods of reflection and then action.

Paulo Freire began his work in 1947 with adult illiterates in North-East Brazil and gradually evolved a method of work with which the word conscientization has been associated. Paulo Freire in education was praxis of action and reflection. He vehemently believed that it is not enough for people to come together in dialogue in order to gain knowledge of their social reality. Rather, they must act together upon their environment in order to critically reflect upon their reality and so transform it through future action and critical reflection (Saleh, 2013). Paulo Freire while talking of 'Easter Experience' says that those who authentically commit themselves to the people must re-examine themselves constantly. Those who undergo it must take on a new form of existence they can no longer remain as they were. To him conscientization is the process of developing a critical awareness of one's social reality through reflection and action therefore it's important that the students are endowed with the courage and ability of "critical consciousness" (Yang-Wang, 2010). Action is fundamental because it is the process of changing the reality. Paulo Freire describes that social myths will have a dominant tendency, and so learning is a critical process which depends upon and covering real problems and actual needs (Nouri and Sajjadi, 2014).

Paulo Freire's work has influenced people working in education, community development, community health and many other fields with the concept of freedom (Shih, 2013). Freire developed an approach to education that links the identification of issues to positive action for change and development. Freire's critical pedagogy, which has been influenced by many educational institutions, has introduced a new approach to contemporary educational issues (Mahmoudi, Khoshnood & Babaei, 2014). Freirean pedagogy is considered as participatory, situated (in student thought and language), critical, democratic, dialogical, de-socializing, multi-cultural, research-oriented, activist and affective. Freire's understanding of the relation of knowledge to action suggests learning situations that are collaborative, active, community oriented, and grounded in the culture of the student and according to Freire, in terms of education, "freedom" should be its ultimate concern (Fong, 2004).

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi known as Mahatma meaning 'Great Soul' had a unified vision and worked towards the development of the rural areas in our

country. Gandhian strategy of rural reconstruction was based on village Swaraj and Swadeshi movement. Thus the idea of ideal village of Gandhian dream was comprehensive, self-sufficient and self-contained, encompassing the economic social political and educational dimensions. Gandhi emphasized on truth and nonviolence in every aspect of human life. Gandhi organized the National Indian Congress in order to defend the rights of Indians (Carter, 1995). Gandhi struggled to get freedom for India from the British rule based on the principles of Satyagraha and Ahimsa. The understanding of Satyagraha and Ahimsa is that which meant reaching the truth without violence, and a passive resistance without fight and violence. According to Gandhi's principle of Ahimsa, violence should not be reciprocated with violence, and cruelty, with cruelty. This mentality constituted Gandhi's philosophy of passive resistance. As Malik et al. (2011) states, Gandhi had a strong belief in the philosophy of Satyagraha. Faithful to this understanding, Gandhi stood against imperialism with non-violent actions such as hunger strikes and the Salt March, being a light of hope for other nations on an intellectual basis (Biswas, 2015). This Ashram was also the base and starting point of the Dandi (Salt) March. Outside of his ashram, Gandhi also advocated for a form of education that encouraged community service and character building. Gandhi wrote "studies should be undertaken only with the aim of equipping oneself for service." Throughout his life, his struggle was focused on humanity (Prabhu and Rao, 1967).

Raju and Raju (2012) had highlighted 18 item constructive programme which Gandhi propounded, comprises of (1) communal unity, (2) removal of untouchability, (3) prohibition, (4) Khadi, (5) village industries, (6) village sanitation, (7) new or basic education, (8) adult education, (9) women, (10) education, health and hygiene, (11) provisional languages, (12) national language, (13) economic equality, (14) kisans, (15) labour, (16) adivasis, (17) lepers and (18) students. These programmes provide a picture of the Gandhian concept of social order. Gandhi attempted to establish certain moral and spiritual values like truth, non-violence, non-discrimination, social justice and self-reliance through constructive programme. Gandhian principles are based on a set of philosophical beliefs - cooperation over competition, interdependence over rugged individualism, compassion for others over pursuit of self-interest, and

social justice over individual's greed and achievements. The quaint-essence of Gandhian ethics is well-being of all (Sarvodaya), justice for all (Satyagraha). The Gandhian concept of social development is based on the foundation of truthfulness, love for all, harmonious relations and service to others (Dundar et al., 2016). The philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi on community service learning can be understood from his quote "the service lies in serving others".

CLAYSS (2015) philosophy of community service learning emphasizes that in service learning, knowledge is used to improve something in the community and service becomes a learning experience that provides knowledge and values. Service learning becomes interwoven in a win-win relationship. Children gain new knowledge, explore new topics, and develop skills for life, work and civic participation. It is a way of thinking about education and teaching using the corresponding teaching tools and strategies that requires students to learn and develop through active participation in service activities to achieve objectives defined by educational institution. Service learning has a pedagogical linkage in which educators and students learn together from experience and engage together in the transformation of reality. It implies action and reflection on the practice and the establishment of solidarity links that allow one to act and learn from the community.

### 1.3.4. Theoretical Underpinning of Community Service Learning

Community service learning pedagogy has enriched itself with theory and practice, and it has been influenced by various theories. Community service learning evolved as a vehicle to strengthen student's learning, to reconnect them with their communities, to counter the imbalance between learning and living, and to repair the broken connection between learning and community.

### 1.3.4.1. Experiential Learning Theory

Community service learning literature embraces Dewey's idea that effective learning requires contextualization through application and experience. He is seen as a key contributor to community service learning theory because of his pragmatic

philosophy and education as a social phenomenon that serves to reinforce the aims and methods of the society. It lays emphasis on democratic participation and student-centered educational theory (Fredericksen, 2000; Hugg and Wurdinger, 2007; Deans, 1999). John Dewey expanded a theory on education which was known as learning by doing. He believed that it was essential for effective education to include active student involvement in learning and that the community was an essential component of education. Because the knowledge learned in schools must be applied to the "real-world" for the advancement of the students and the betterment of society (Dewey, 1916).

According to him reality must be experienced because each child is actively inquisitive by birth and wants to explore. When students are exposed to hands on learning they experiment with trial and error, only then they learn from mistakes and understand potential gaps between theory and practice. It inculcates in them a critical approach and analytical thinking. Learning by doing is an effective way of learning because it helps the brain create pathways that make it easier and quicker to retain (Anzai and Simon, 1979). Learning by doing theory is applied in community service learning. The students apply the theoretical knowledge to solve the problems of the community, while they practice the abstract content they learn to understand the concept.

Social psychologist, David Kolb's considered experiential education as a process where knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Experiential learning is an engaged learning process whereby students "learn by doing" and by reflecting on experience. It is the process of learning through experience, and is more specifically defined as 'learning through reflection on doing'. Experiential learning theory proceeds from different set of assumptions. Ideas are not fixed but formed and re-formed through experience. Kolb's theory is linked to community service learning as a learning approach that requires both action and reflection (Chambers, 2009; Kolb, 1984). He published his learning styles model in 1984 from which he developed his learning style inventory. Kolb's experiential learning theory works on two levels: a four-stage cycle of learning and four separate learning styles. Experiential learning style is represented by four stage of learning cycle such as: 1. Concrete experience,

2. Reflective observation of the new experience, 3. Abstract conceptualization and 4. Active experimentation (Kolb, 1974).

Edward Thorndike was the initiator of trial and error theory. According to Thorndike learning take place by trial and error. There is no readymade solution available to the problem. It is all about trying one method and observing if it works otherwise trying another method till a the problem is solved. It is an attempt to learn/solve problem by trying alternative possibilities until correct solution or desirable outcome is achieved. It leads to repeating the performance of the correct response and strengthening the association between the behaviour and its outcome. Once behaviour is learnt it is usually performed quickly with fewer errors. Learning is a process where you need to take risks. In learning the learner selects a correct response out of a large number of possible ones. In community service learning the students try to solve the problem of the community by using certain methods and after the completion of the project, it is evaluated and if they find out their endeavour did not work, the students try another method.

**1.3.4.2. Constructivism**

Constructivism is not a specific pedagogy. Piaget's theory of constructivist learning has had a wide ranging impact on learning theories and teaching methods in education. Piaget's theory of constructivism argues that people produce knowledge and form meaning based upon their experiences. Constructivism theory encourages students to explore an aspect of something that they have not tried or thought about before. It covers learning theories and teaching methods. A student assimilates when he incorporates new experiences into the old experiences.

A child's cognitive development is conceived to be a collaborative process, developed through interactions with other people and with the environment. Thus the individual is not the centre of knowledge-making, but gets his or her learning and understanding through social interactions (Mangrulkar et al., 2001). The gist of constructivist psychology is that individual development, including higher mental function, is rooted in social sources. Educators and psychologists, (Piaget, 1972 and

Vygotsky, 1978) suggest that a fundamental mechanism for child development is the cognitive conflict that is created through social interaction; a contradiction between a child's existing understanding and a child's experience with others, especially with peers slightly older or more knowledgeable. It causes him or her to question current beliefs and seek new levels of understanding. Vygotkey, in particular, argues that "Learning awakens a variety of internal development processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment with his peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 80). Separating the individual from his or her social influences is thought to be impossible and learning itself is viewed as culturally and contextually specific.

### 1.3.4.3. Freire's Liberation Theory

Brazilian educator Paulo Freire's ideas about liberatory education have provided a theoretical anchor for many community service learning programmes and courses. Freire advocated learning situations that are collaborative, active, community oriented, and grounded in the culture of the student. (Chambers, 2009; Chovanec et al., 2012; Kajner et al., 2013) Freire saw development of human nature as a dynamic and fluid process taking place at the intersection of individuals and their worlds based on revolutionary restructuring of the political and economic status. Liberation pedagogy intends to transform oppressive structures, people who are marginalised and humanized need to engage in learning and take them from where they are by knowing their context of social economic and political situation of their background. He outlined widely influential theory of education in pedagogy of the oppressed in 1968. His principles of education were social change, transformation, reflection and action (Stetsenko, 2008; Deans, 1999).

### 1.3.5. Community Service Learning as Pedagogy

Community service learning is aligned with academic curriculum, with the objectives and clear goals of the students. Students' academic engagement performance is good when the service and learning is connected. Students apply what they have learnt in the classroom. Community service learning has positive influence

on the participants who benefit socially and academically (Ceclio et al., 2011). It is a pedagogical method that connects academic content to service and connects the learning from the service experience to the content gained. It is a fertile ground to practice the abstract concept of the text (Lena, 1995). Service becomes another text for the course of study as the student participant integrates the learning with academic content. Community service learning is a teaching pedagogy because it proposes that learning take place in and from the community. It empowers the students to become responsible learners (Schulteis, 2013). Community service learning pedagogy programme promotes comprehensive, inclusive and quality education. It meets the need of a community. The students are involved in planning development and assessment of the project. It integrates the learning contents (theory) with community service. Community service learning fosters civic engagement, inclusivity, builds networks and modifies common perceptions.

**Figure 1.1  Academic learning and service learning**
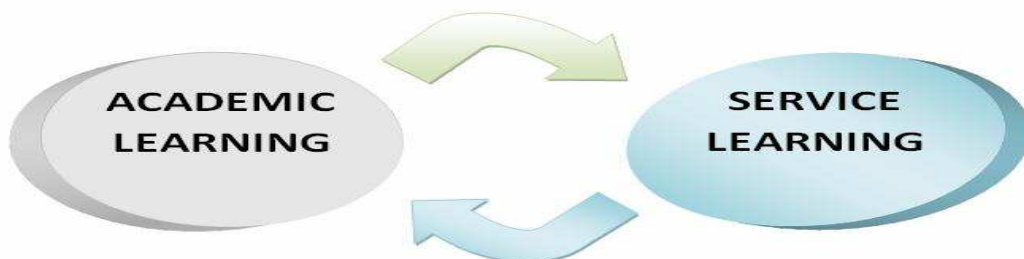


(Source: Self)

Figure 1.1 explains how one could use the academic knowledge to serve the community and in turn from the community service learning how one could enhance his/her knowledge and this chain of learning takes place constantly.

**1.3.6.  Models of Community Service Learning**

Speck & Hoppe (2004, p. 69) have discussed three models of community service learning.

**Philanthropic Model** is based on the perceived need for charity. Philanthropy is all about love of humankind. Philanthropic model is a tool where the service is done with

love and care.  It is best applied in cases and situations where immediate relief is required. One little act can make a lot of difference. It is about giving time, talent and reassurance for the common good. It is a collective action for the private good.

**Civic Engagement Model** is all about equal participation and voice of all citizens which democracy demands. Civic engagement has a long-term positive impact on communities, as faculty and students serve as agents of social change consistent with democratic principles. Civic engagement model renews and alters the focus of higher education institutions on service as the focal point of their mission of teaching, research, and professional service. In this approach the people actually will have to become active agents of change not mere passive recipients.

**Communitarian Model** assumes that humans are social beings who see their main concern in politics as protecting their liberty and property instead of being self-interested individual egotists. Service-learning is central to developing a sense of human community at the local level. It is about civic action which becomes a public action and public action converts to collective action. Communitarian paradigm strives to characterize the good society as one that nourishes both social virtues and individual rights.

**Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm**

This model consists of context, experience, action, reflection and evaluation. It is used in Jesuit education around the world. Community service learning drew inspiration from the model developed by Ignatius of Loyala. The context of learning of the student includes: The real context of his/her life, the socio-economic, political and cultural context, ethos and climate of the society and the concepts that the students have already acquired. One needs to know the context of the students, the predisposition of the learner, whether the student would benefit personal care and concern. In terms of experience, the students' gets a feel or a hold on the subject, knowing facts, concepts and principles with regard to the discipline. When the students understand the subject accurately then they can appreciate the dynamics involved in it. The experience with the subject motivates the students. The students

are exposed to participate in various intellectual activities such as analysis, comparison, synthesis, contrast and evaluation. The students are encouraged to reflect on their experiences and come up with action oriented projects in service of humanity which are then evaluated.

**CLAYSS Model**

There are five elements in the CLAYSS service learning framework which includes motivation, diagnosis, project design and planning, implementation and closure and multiplication. The concept of service learning and its purpose are introduced to school management, teachers, students, community members and other agencies. They are motivated and invited to be part of the service learning programme. Community service learning experiences for students are described, including information about the community, their role as service provider and best practices for working in collaboration with community members. The participants identify the needs, problems of the community and finds out the challenges and the possibilities related in executing the activity. Once the needs of the community are found, the process of planning and preparation starts to solve the problem and the students are guided to connect their book knowledge with to the real world problem. After well planning of activities they are impelled to get into action of their plan. All these activities are carried out in a team and in consultation with the community. Reflection is followed after every activity which helps the students to become aware of their personal learning which then is followed by closure and multiplication. The projects are evaluated with their peers and with the community and the students are encouraged to share their experience with others.

**IPARD Framework** represents the student-centered inquiry model in community service learning projects. This form of community service learning framework has five stages namely investigate, plan and prepare, action, reflect and demonstrate. The students investigate the needs and the problems of the community. They prepare and plan realistic and meaningful service projects and implement the plan through direct or indirect community service learning approach. The participants make connection

between learning and action and involve others to complete every step together to get the most out of the experience.

### 1.3.7. Community Service Learning Framework

In the present study community service learning framework consists of six features such as orientation, investigation/identification, planning and preparation, action, reflection and evaluation are used. A well-structured community service learning activities makes it successful.

**Figure 1.2  Framework of community service learning**



(Source: Self)

**The basic frameworks of community service learning are:**
### 1.3.7.1. Orientation

First and foremost the school management understands the meaning and impacts of community service learning on students. Teacher gets written permission from the school management and contacts the members in the community and informs them about students' involvement in the community development related issues. The teacher arranges an orientation programme to explain to the students the significance of community service learning and its importance. Meanwhile a session is also arranged for the parents of the students who are participants of the community service learning as their children will be involved in outdoor activities.

### 1.3.7.2. Identify/Investigate

After the introduction to community service learning programme and its concept they are taken to the community and encouraged to interact with people and to observe the surroundings and living conditions of the community especially, they are guided to find out the needs and problems of the community. With the help of classroom discussion the teacher helps the students to identify the issues related to the community and society at large and particularly the community in the school vicinity. The issues that the people face in the community are noted and the root causes of the problem are analyzed.

### 1.3.7.3. Planning and Preparation

Community service learning project is designed after identifying the needs of the community. To make this community service learning experience more enriching and learning, the teacher read the syllabus of class  and become familiar with all the subjects and its inter disciplinary features. The teacher and the students relate the community issues with the academic knowledge that they study in the classroom. The following questions are asked before planning the process and the execution of the activity. What are the problems? What can be done to bring about positive changes in the community? How to carry out the activity? Who will do what work? What is the time duration? Students are instructed well on the theoretical connection with the subject and the activities that will help them to solve the problems of the community. They are divided into groups and given sufficient time to prepare for the activity before they go to the community to execute the action. The learning objectives are planned based on the activity and the theoretical knowledge. The activities are designed to be fun learning and not boring. The time duration is well taken care of so that the students are not physically stressed.

**Figure 1.3  Planning and preparation of community service learning**
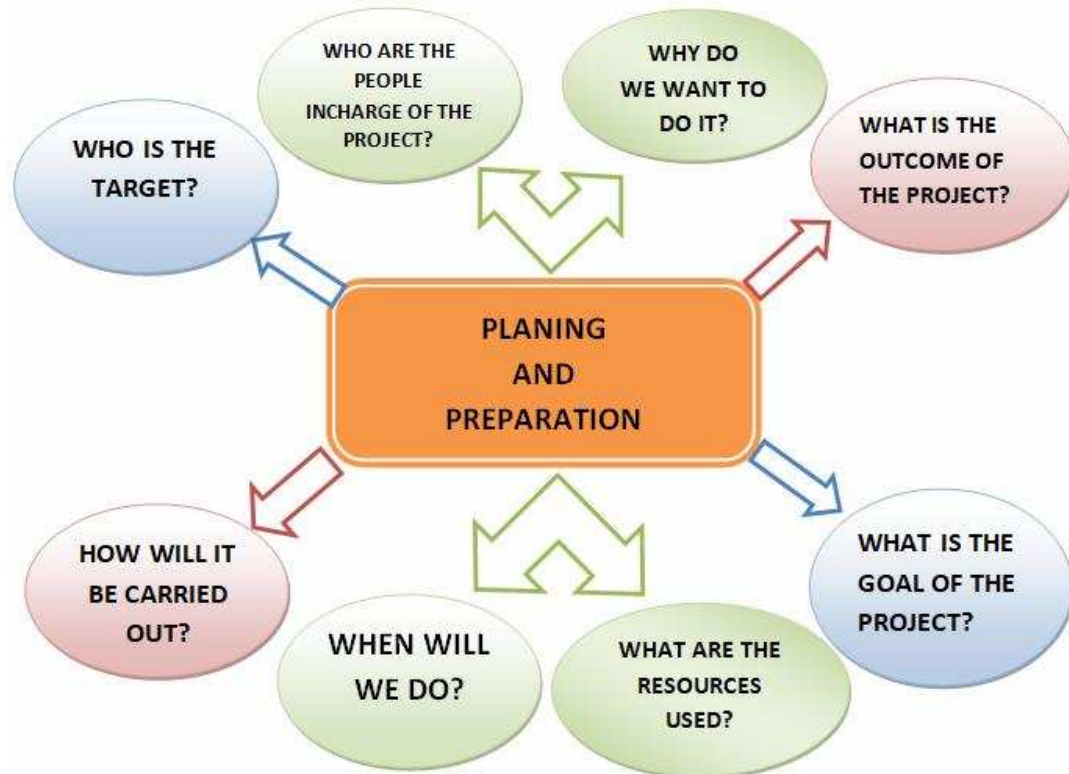


(Source: Self)

## 1.3.7.4.  Action

Students go to the community and interact with the members about the project and convince the members as to how they need their help and support to carry out the action that was planned. All the plans are executed with the community where community members become partners with the children. The students work in groups. If there is a possibility different NGOs, agencies and parents of the children are invited to be part of it. Action is for the welfare of the community. The students apply what they have learned in the classroom. It is the role of the faculty to see that the students are challenged to be more creative and imaginative to exercise what they have learnt. If the planned action is not done within stipulated time and it is carried forward to another day the faculty and make sure it is completed.

### 1.3.7.5. Reflection

The action being performed the students spend time in reflection. Reflection plays a critical role and acts as a bridge between service and learning (Dubinsky, J., 2006). Activities are designed to enable students to ponder and evaluate their experience, consider its value and transform it into knowledge. The students grow in a greater awareness, broadening his/her horizons of knowledge; understanding divergent viewpoints, perspectives of the poor, marginalized and disadvantaged and the oppressed categories of the society. Reflection is an essential part of community service learning and it fosters meaning in student's ability to make meaning from experience which results in creative thinking. Reflection contributes moral reasoning and generates new and improved action. Reflection supports the development of civic outcomes. Reflection is thinking intentionally about an experience, gaining understanding or insight, and results in taking new actions.

### 1.3.7.6. Evaluation

Evaluation is about recording what has been implemented. The students need to spent time on reflection and evaluation of the entire process. Since students look for appreciation it has to be celebrated. It is important to conduct evaluation or assessment to see if any adjustments, revisions are required. The Faculty should foster relationships of mutual trust and respect which set a climate for discussion and growth. Useful evaluative processes include mentoring and reviews of students' journals, as well as students' self-evaluation in light of personal growth profiles. Internal or external feedback may serve to launch the learners to continuity and multiplication of service learning projects. Regular feedback from school managements, teachers, parents and members of the community will help to design high quality community service learning projects. It leads the participants to think about the service performed and its impact on the community, considering what worked well and what could be changed to make the project better.

### 1.3.8. Characteristics and Concerns of Community Service Learning

Community service learning links academic content and it is reciprocal in nature, benefiting both the community and the service providers by combining service experience with a learning experience (Metcalf, 2010). It can be used in any subject area as it is appropriate learning goal and works at all ages even among children. It gives structure time for students to reflect. It is an opportunity to use skills and knowledge in real-life situation and extend learning beyond classroom. It fosters a sense of caring for others (Carson and Domangue, 2012).

Community service learning is positive, meaningful and real to the participants, involves cooperation rather than competitive experiences and thus promotes life skills associated with teamwork and community involvement (Hebert and Hau, 2015). It offers opportunities to engage in problem-solving from which the participants gain knowledge from experience rather than only to draw abstract knowledge such as might come from a textbook (Brown, 2011). As a result, community service learning offers powerful opportunities to acquire the habits of critical thinking i.e. the ability to identify the most important questions or issues within a real-world situation. It promotes deeper learning because the results are immediate and it is life time experience.

Community service learning applies to all curriculum and students of all ages and backgrounds. It is fundamental to the teaching-learning process in and out of the classroom. It helps faculty to become better teachers, personalizes learning, and stresses the social dimension of both teaching and learning (Bringle and Hatcher, 2000; Chessin, Moore and Theobald, 2011). When the heart is touched by direct experience, the mind may be challenged to change. It creates opportunities to be personally involved with people who are suffering innocently unjust structures, and to become a catalyst for solidarity which gives rise to intellectual inquiry and moral reflection. Students in the course of their formation face the reality of this world into their lives, so they can learn to feel it, think about it critically, respond to the reality and engage in it constructively (Root, Callahan and Spanski, 2002).

The major concern is for the administrators of the school to understand the importance of introducing it as part of the school curriculum. There is an immense pressure to complete the syllabus rather than involve children in other extracurricular activities. There is a fear of taking children for outdoor learning as there is a fear of children's safety. The administrators of the schools find it time consuming as there is a lot of planning and organizing involved. The challenge for the faculty is to find ways to integrate community service learning to the subjects one teaches and the project topics further as it needs to be adapted and applied to our own specific situations.

### 1.3.9. Impact of Community Service Learning on Individuals and Society

High school students who participated in high quality community service learning programme were more likely to develop bonds with more adults, they could learn from and work with the elderly and disabled and felt that they could trust others besides parents and teachers to whom they could turn for help. They were able to trust and be trusted by others, be reliable and accept responsibility (Morgan and Streb, 2001). Students who engaged in quality community service learning programme reported greater acceptance of cultural diversity and showed greater empathy and cognitive complexity than comparison groups. Students who engaged in community service learning were more likely to treat each other kindly, help each other and care about giving their best (Reinders & Yourniss, J., 2009). In their awareness of cultural differences and attitudes they enjoy helping others with projects, they become more interdependent and feel more comfortable communicating with ethnically diverse groups (Borden, 2007; Gutheil, Chernesky and Sherratt, 2006). Community service learning has a positive effect on students' interpersonal development and the ability to relate to culturally diverse groups (Conrad and Hedin, 1982).

Middle and high school students who participated in community service learning programme increased their grade points and test scores in reading/language, arts and maths and were less likely to drop out of school. They showed increase in measures of personal and social responsibility, competence, communication skills and sense of educational competence (Giles and Eyler, 1994). Community service learning has a positive effect on the personal development of school youth. The benefits of

community service learning on young people are vast, touching on almost every facet - moral, cognizant, social and psychological development (Boss, 1994). They begin to ask question, reflect, doubt and adapt. It is an educative experience for the student. Students dealing with social problems begin to develop critical thinking (Larkin and Mahoney, 2006).

It allows the students to solidify concepts taught in the classroom, apply their learning and discover how they can strengthen communities and positively impact society through their actions. In this process of learning the students study many subjects in the class and when they are involved in doing different action oriented projects on various subjects their learning becomes practical (Rhodes and Davis, 2001). So they understand the text better and contextualize the theory to the local needs and problems. It increases academic learning and ability to apply what they have learned in the real world (Warren, 2012). They get opportunities to practice leadership quality and become resourceful and take initiative not only in their school but also in other personal, academic and profession pursuits.  Students have optimal opportunities to practice and apply content and concepts and to reflect and evaluate both their own development and the impact of their service on the local and global community. Middle school male students reported increased in their confidence level and the ability to discern and self-esteem, self-efficacy, and fewer behavioral problems less likely to engage in "risk" behaviors (Simons and Cleary, 2006). Students who engaged in community service learning experienced a structured health curriculum, were less likely to engage in unprotected sexual activity or violent behavior.

Students have the opportunity to do what they are learning in class through experiential education. They have deeper understanding of their self and their involvement in the society. They become more aware of the issues in the community and develop a sense of civic responsibility to address those issues and plan for the future involvement (Astin and Sax, 1998; Skinner and Chapman, 1999). Students participating in community service learning build character, gain civic responsibility, open door for career possibility (Conway, Amel and Gerwien, 2009) and high school students who engaged in quality community service learning programme reported

powerful impacts on both individual and society (Perry and Katula, 2001). In the course of community service learning there will be community development and the people will have attitudinal change towards the youth and their capacity. There will be connection between the schools and the community (Einfeld and Collins, 2008).

### 1.3.10. Linkages with Life Skills Development

**Figure 1.4  Linkage of community service learning with life skills development**
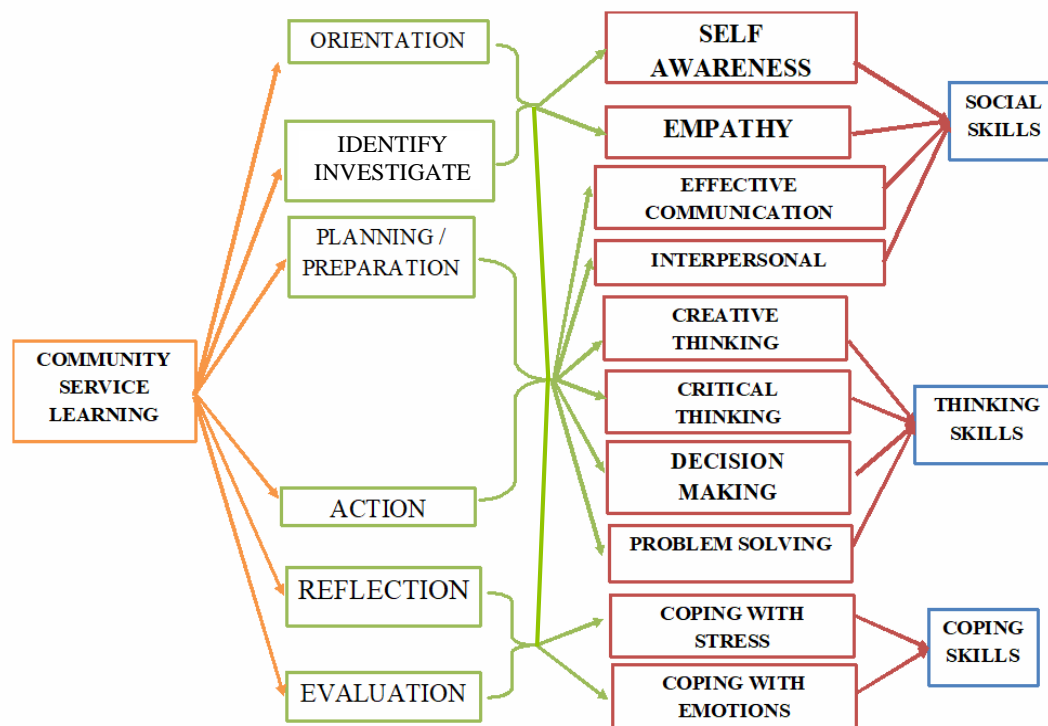


(Source: Self)

The impacts of community service learning are almost close to the ten core life skills. Therefore, the researcher sees community service learning as a pedagogy to teach life skills in the schools. The students improve in problem-solving skills and increase their interest in academics, engage more in their studies and get more motivated to learn (Parker-Gwin and Mabry, 1998). They more often come to class on time, complete more classroom tasks and take the initiative to ask questions frequently (Wang and Rodgers, 2006). Students who participate in community service learning reported that they were gaining career skills, communication skills and increases in career exploration knowledge, positive work orientation attitudes and had

develop many other skills (Kendrick, 1996; Billing, 2000). Community service learning helped students to become more knowledgeable and realistic about their career. The teachers believed that participation in community service learning increased career awareness (Hamilton and Fenzel, 1988; Strage, 2000).

At the time of orientation the teacher motivates and make the students realize the current situation and the reality of the world. The students become more aware of oneself and his/her surroundings. When the students visit the community to identify and investigate the needs of the community they empathize for the community and realize what they are capable of doing for them. As a result they grow in self-awareness and empathy. During the time of planning and preparation they tend to think creatively and critically to solve the problem and make few decisions and plan how to execute it. During the period of action and implementation they work in groups with their own peers and community and develop communication skills, interpersonal relationship skills, decision making and the skill of problem solving. Reflection helps them personalize their own experience which gradually builds the emotional skills of coping with stress and time constraint. Evaluation enables the students to become aware of their own contribution to the society, community and to their peers. Through the dialogue and interaction with teachers, peers and community members they develop self-awareness. It increases critical thinking and problem analysis skills. They are involved in various activities which encourage them to develop competencies orientated towards collaborative and creative work, effective communication, decision making and active participation in their community.

## 1.4. SCHOOL CHILDREN (MIDDLE ADOLESCENTS)

### 1.4.1. Definition

Adolescence is often described, as an exciting transitory phase in the human life cycle but is perhaps the most challenging stage as well. This is a time when adolescents are constantly in search of their own identity (Khera and Khosla, 2012). The alteration between childhood and adulthood is one of the most dynamic stages of human development. The changes in their biological cognitive and emotional

functioning help to develop the ability to assimilate new feelings and outlooks in relation to their environment (Santrock, 1990). Adolescence is defined as a period of growth in an individual's life after the individual passes from childhood to adulthood (World Health Organization, 2008). Atwater (1992) considered adolescence as a period of rapid growth between the childhood and adulthood of an individual including his/her psychological and social developments. According to Hopkins (1993), adolescence is the period between childhood and adulthood with much personal, physical, psychological and social a harness that gives the period its unique place in the field of psychology. Jersild (1997) considered adolescence as a span of years during which boys and girls move from childhood to adulthood mentally, emotionally, socially and physically.

Mascaren (1990) has classified adolescence into three stages in terms of age such as early, middle and late adolescence

- Early adolescence is from 10 to 12 years. The rate of growth increases starting first in the hands and feet and later in the limbs. In early adolescence persons shows signs of independence from the family and a desire for privacy.
- Middle adolescence is from 13 to 15 years. The timing for this is influenced by genetic factors and nutritional status.
- Late adolescence is from 16 to 19 years the body approximates the young adult and the development of secondary sex characteristics is completed. In late adolescence career decisions are finally traced. The child gradually returns to the family, on a new footing.

Adolescence also can be classified as school going or student and non-student. School is the centre of the daily life of many adolescents who view schooling to be essential to their long-term well-being and this attitude is reflected in their participation in academic and non-academic pursuits. These students tend to have good relations with the school staff, with the other students and they feel that they belong to the school.

### 1.4.2. Characteristics

Adolescence can be termed as persons in the age of 10-19 years Adolescence is characterized as a transitional phase and it is vital stage of growth and development. It is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood and is marked by rapid physical, physiological and psychological changes and some also refer to it as a period of confusion (Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde and Whalen, 1993). It is a period of intensive growth and development with respect to physical, cognitive, social, and emotional aspects of child's personality (Crosnoe and Johnson, 2011). Adolescence is a period of rapid development during which young people acquire new capacities and are faced with many new situations and challenges.

Adolescents are a diverse group and are in varying situations of risk, status and environments, for example could be married or unmarried, in-school or out of school, living in urban or rural areas or having a different sexual orientation (Offer, Ostrov and Howard, 1989). They begin extending their relationships beyond the family. They feel an inclination for distancing themselves from parents and expanding their social circle to carve an important niche amongst their peers. Due to the hormonal changes they are found to be more restless and fatigued (Garfinkel et al., 1986). There is a need for physical activity; therefore there is a tremendous energy (Biddle, 1993).

Adolescence is also the stage when young people extend their relationships beyond parents and family and are intensely influenced by their peers and the outside world in general. They have a basic need to be recognized and accepted by their parents (Parvizy and Ahmadi, 2009). As adolescents mature cognitively, their mental process becomes more analytical. They are capable of abstract thinking, better articulation and of developing an independent ideology. These are truly the years of creativity, connectivity, exploring individualism, idealism, buoyancy and a spirit of adventure (Rich, 2003). But these are also the years of experimentation and risk-taking, of giving into negative peer pressure, of taking uninformed decisions on crucial issues, especially relating to their bodies and their sexuality. Adolescence is thus a turning point in one's life, a period of increased potential but also one of greater vulnerabilities (Larson, 2000).

### 1.4.3. Concerns of Adolescents especially those related with Education

Adolescence is marked by immense turmoil in emotional and behavioral spheres. Some of the adolescents find the school work difficult or have problems in concentrating in the class. A few of them are noisy and disruptive; they get into tricky relationships with friends and friendship groups. Some of them do not get along with teachers, feeling that they are labeled as 'trouble makers' (Timalsina, Kafle and Timalsina, 2018). Adolescents who are in the school have an acute need to demonstrate competence and be recognized for any achievement however small it may be. Those who fail in academic achievements may be tempted to quit trying, or end up in misbehaving or seeking anti-social avenues of achievements and recognition (Steinberg, 1993; Wigfield and Eccles, 1994b). The major domain of disturbance during adolescence is the conflict with parents, therefore they have mood disruptions, risk behaviours and peer pressure which affects their relationships with teachers in the school as a result they get more distracted and fail to concentrate in their studies (Arnett, 1999).

A large number of children in a class are challenges for the teacher wherein he/she has to give individual attention to these students on homework questions or in-class assignments. Large class sizes breed rowdy student behavior so the teachers are forced to undertake behavior management in addition to providing an educational curriculum (Athawar, 2015). Through the formal education system only 5% of the adolescent population can receive skill training and when a large number of school going children are out of the school, they are unskilled and unable to identify or use opportunities for career advancement (Ramanujam, 2015). Adolescents who are 'at risk', such as orphans, child-labourers, street children and victims of riots and natural disasters, do not have access to school education. This section of youth become aimless and jobless (Singal, 2002).

In India children who can afford to study undertake learning in different schools like English-Medium schools affiliated to the upscale CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education), CISCE (Council for the Indian Schools Certificates Examination) and IB (International Baccalaurate) examination boards, offering globally recognized syllabi and curricula. Those who cannot afford private schooling, attend English medium

government-aided schools, affiliated to state-level examination boards. Government or municipal schools cater to the children who come from economically disadvantaged background. The quality of education that young people in India receive varies widely according to their means and background, which is a worrying and problematic trend (Lall, 2005).

The traditional educational systems gave importance to develop skills like reading, writing and arithmetic. But to meet the present day real life situations like growing unemployment, poverty, inequality, violence and environmental destruction, one is challenged to acquire and learn the contextual knowledge and skills to face the fast changing society. Society demands more skills, abilities and creative problem solving potentials in school children as an outcome of education which is a big challenge at the present scenario (Vranda and Rao, 2011).

### 1.4.4. Policies of Government related to Adolescents

Adolescence is a phase of rapid growth and development during which physical, physiological and behavioral changes occur. Adolescent phase is a transitional phase in life and the adolescents are neither child nor adult at this stage and are full of energy, have significant drive and new ideas. Young and growing children have poor knowledge and lack of awareness about physical and psychological changes that occurs during adolescence and the ill health affecting them. Existing Adolescent health programmes focus on rendering services like immunization, health education on sexual and reproductive health, nutritional education and supplementation, anemia control measures and counseling. For this, The Government of India has started a national programme known as "Rashtriya Kishor Swathya Karyakram" in 2014. However, India as a country does not have an adolescent health policy till date and hence the country requires a national adolescent health policy (Samal and Dehury, 2017). Sexual and reproductive health, nutrition problems, substance abuse, mental health, road traffic accidents, intentional violence, non communicable diseases and adolescent labour, are major concerns related to adolescents health.

Population Policies are formulated to address the unmet needs for contraception, health care infrastructure, and health personnel, and to provide integrated service

delivery for basic reproductive and child health care. The main objective is to achieve a stable population at a level consistent with the requirements of sustainable economic growth, social development, and environmental protection.

The National Commission for Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women. India has also ratified various International Conventions and Human rights instruments committing to secure equal rights of women. Key among them is the ratification of the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1993. Gender disparity manifests itself in various forms, the most obvious being the trend of continuously declining female ratio in the population in the last few decades. Social stereotyping and violence at the domestic and societal levels are some of the other manifestations. Discrimination against girl children, adolescent girls and women persists in many parts of the country.

From the above information one can see that Indian Government is concerned about overall development of adolescents. Imparting life skills will improve the adolescent health and other specific issues. Even adolescent boys need special care in competitive environment. Educated girls and mothers can only achieve success in promoting reproductive healthcare issues.

## 1.4.5. Problems of School Children and Life Skills as a Tool to Enhance their Capabilities

Globalization has not only affected the economy alone, it has affected every individual, their behaviour and the society in a whole and further leads to adolescent problems. There are wide normal variations between the time of onset and the attainment of full maturity. Drug abuse, homelessness, crime, delinquency, mental illness, suicide, school dropouts and numerous other social problems are very common these days. Adolescence is the age of change and it is a period of active growth and development-physical, sexual, social and emotional. As people live together personal problems, family problems and community problems are part of life because they are relational. The changes taking place in our society have affected

them in every sphere of life: political, economic and social. It is a vulnerable time when kids can develop unhealthy habits that grow into problems in their adult life. Behavior issues of adolescence, which are quite common, also crop up during this time, making it impossible for parents to reach out to their teenagers.

Outdoor activities are disappearing as there is an increase in the number of children playing computer games instead. Children have become screen-addicted. Experts believe that the lack of outdoor activity is having a significant impact on children's health as they exercise very less in the fresh air. Children are attached to electronic tablets, computers, mobile phones, video games and television show. Spending of much time with hi-tech gadgets makes the children more vulnerable to ADHD, vitamin D deficiency, depression and chronic weight related diseases. Spending more time indoor means that exposure to the good outdoor light that children need in early childhood is reduced thereby increasing risk of myopia in eyes already streamed and stressed due to using hi-tech gadgets with small screens.

Daily overuse of media and technology has a negative effect on health of all the children pre-teens as well as teenagers making them more prone to anxiety, depression and other psychological disorders, as well as making them more susceptible to future health problems. Experts worry that the social media and text message that have become so integral to teenage life are promoting and lowering self-esteem. Modern teens are learning to do most of their communication while looking at a screen, not another person. Children feel that they are hyper connected but they do not realize that they are missing out on social skills. It is also surprisingly easy to feel lonely in the middle of all the hyper connections.

Using social media increased youth's exposure to harm, sometimes contributed to social isolation and depression. It also opened the door to cyber-bullying. Cyber-bullying is growing among school students and is associated with their increased access to smart phones. Most of the data on the problem comes from students from 12 to 18 years of age. The impact of cyber-bullying on students not only can affect school performance but it can lead them to commit severe crime. Today, more students and teens have access to technological mediums than ever before. Technology has become

an integral part of most of the children. Cyber-bullying can lead to harms ranging from short to long-term physical, psychological, social or academic effects.

Now-a-days children come from nuclear family often have single- parent. The family structure affects the children's cognitive and behavioral development. The family environment within the home has an impact on children. If the adolescents have positive home environment they are able to have a healthy relationship with their peers and other associations becomes wholesome due to them proper attitude and control of behavior. It has been found that the children who do well in life are loved, supported and encouraged by their parents (Kaur and Singh, 2015). Achievements in academics are directly connected to the person's psycho social well-being because it is directly influenced by the demographic and psychological factor (Subasree, 2015).

To prepare the pupils to face the challenges of daily life, life skills education has to be a special subject in school which will respond to the needs of the contemporary world (Mahmodi and Moshayedi, 2012). Life skills education promotes mental well-being in the young people and empowers the adolescents to take more responsibility for their actions. It is not the duty of schools to provide only knowledge and information (Kaur and Kaur, 2016) because the information is available so easily everywhere at this juncture however, it is more important to equip the young people with right information which will help them to make informed decision (Parida, 2015). In India today adolescents are more exposed to information and cultural alternatives than in earlier periods. This provides the adolescent with culturally diverse choices, which cannot be easily exercised due to economic dependence on parents, or prepare them for a global successful adult life of competition and independent functioning which is possible only through enhancing their psychological competencies through life skills training (Vranda and Rao, 2011).

Adolescents (10-19) in India represent almost one-third of the population. The adolescent and youth population determines the present and future human resources of the Nation India, known as the youngest country in the world. This demographic dividend can be utilized as an asset in order to deal with several issues existing today. Investing adequately on their education will transform these resources into human capital.

## 1.5. LIFE SKILLS

### 1.5.1. Concept and Definition

Life Skills Education (LSE) has a long history of supporting child development and health promotion. In 1986, the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion recognized life skills in terms of making better health choices. The 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) linked life skills to education by stating that education should be directed towards the development of the child's fullest potential. The 1990 Jomtien Declaration on 'Education for All' took these vision further and included life skills among essential learning tools for survival, capacity development and quality of life. The 2000 Dakar World Education Conference took a position that all young people and adults have the human right to benefit from 'an education that includes learning to know, to do, to live together and to be', and included life skills.

Life Skills Education is now recognized as a methodology to address a variety of issues of child and youth development and thematic responses in UNGASS (United Nation General Assembly Special Session) on HIV/AIDS (2001), UNGASS on Children (2002), World Youth Report (2003), World Program of Human Rights Education (2004), UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (2005), UN Secretary General's Study on Violence Against Children (2006), 51 Commission on the Status of Women (2007), and the World Development Report (2007), UNESCO Approach paper on Education (2015), etc. In India various policies on children, adolescent and youth categorically mentions the importance and need of life skills development like population policy (1976), women empowerment policy (1990), health policy (1983), skill development policy (2009), youth policy (2014), Draft New Education Policy (2019), etc.

The International Bureau of Education (IBE) derives its understanding from the Dellors' Commission Report (1996) i.e. Four Pillars of Learning - learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together- and defines life skills as 'personnel management and social skills which are necessary for adequate functioning of individuals on an independent basis' (Delors, 1996, P. 22).

The UNICEF defines life skills as 'a behaviour change or behaviour development approach designed to address a balance of three areas, knowledge, attitude and skills' (Draft final report, p. 12).

According to WHO, (1997, p.1) "It is a person's ability to maintain a state of mental well-being and to demonstrate this in adaptive and positive behaviour while interacting with others, in his/her culture and environment" Life skills are defined as the "ability that can be imbibed and improved through practice to translate the knowledge attitude and values into positive behaviour, to deal efficiently with the needs and challenges of everyday life" (W H O 1997a, p.1). WHO (1997) further adds that life skills are the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviours that enable individual to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life.

Life skills are defined in the Targeting Life Skills (TLS) Model (Hendricks, 1996) as "Skills that help an individual to be successful in living a productive and satisfying life."

A skill is a learned ability to do something well. So life skills are the abilities that individuals can develop to live a fruitful life. Life skills are psychosocial abilities that enable individuals to translate knowledge, attitudes and values regarding their concerns into well informed and healthy behaviors. Life skills are accepted as valuable and worthwhile, can effectively influence the development of academic success, peer relationship, family relationship, employment, and extra-curricular, leisure activities and positive attitude towards life (Kaur and Singh, 2015). Life skills have a great role in enhancing adolescents into a fruitful and healthy citizen of tomorrow, helping them to handle challenges and facing the challenges of day to day life in a healthier, programmatic and constructive way. Empowered with such skills, young people are able to take decisions based on a logical process of "what to do, why to do, how to do and when to do". A positive attitude is essential to cope with the rapid changes which happen in the life of a young adolescent in the areas of body, mind and soul. Different values need to be experienced at different levels and internalized through development of appropriate expression. Social skills are needed to use values throughout the day. Young people need to think about them, reflect on

them and carry them into their personal and social lives. They need to be able to see the effect of their behaviour and choices and develop into socially conscious citizens. One can develop Knowledge, Attitudes, Value Enhanced Life-Skills (KAVELS), accurately, objectively and scientifically.

## 1.5.2. Core Life Skills

Core life skills are essential skills that young people need to be fully prepared for to work in a global economy. It sometimes referred to as deep learning. These are the 21st century skills to introduce young people to new ways of working, new ways of thinking and a new ways of living in a global world. These skills are needed in many work environments. Life skills empower young people to take positive action to protect them and promote health and positive social relationships.

Life skill is an ability that makes the difference in everyday living and it helps a person to perceive and respond to effectively and correctly significant events. It gives a person self-direction and protection to lead a satisfactory life and to contribute to the society. It enables a person to function effectively in a changing world. It explores alternatives ways, pros and cons, makes rational decisions in solving each problem or issue as it arises. It is able to establish protective interpersonal relationship with others and education to fight poverty and vulnerability, communicate effectively to say no and to be assertive and decisive in solving problems.

There are numerous skills that can be categorized as life skills and the nature and definition of life skills differs across cultures and settings. But there is a core set of skills that are at the centre of skills-based initiatives for the promotion of the health and well-being of children and adolescents and help in competence development in the youngsters. After long deliberations with various UN agencies, WHO has come out with Ten core Life Skills namely; self-awareness, empathy, creative thinking, critical thinking, decision making, problem solving, effective communication, Interpersonal relationship, coping with stress and coping with emotion.

**Figure 1.5  Graphic representation of core life skills**

SELF AWARENESS

EMPATHY

COPING WITH EMOTION

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

COPING WITH STRESS

**LIFE SKILLS**

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP

PROBLEM SOLVING

CREATIVE THINKING

DECISION MAKING

CRITICAL THINKING
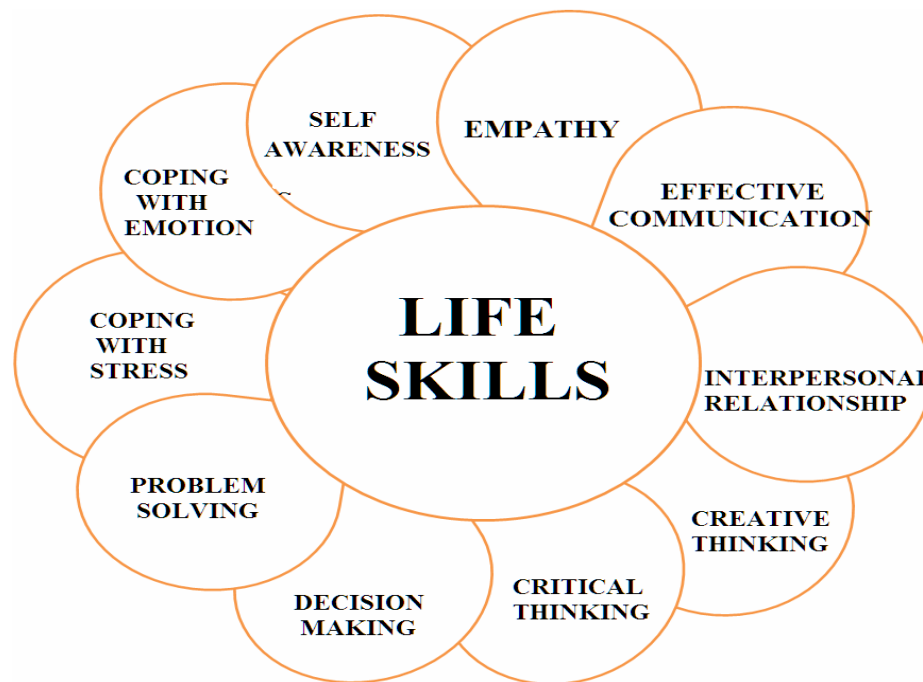
(Source: Self)

### 1.5.2.1.  Self-awareness

Self-awareness means the recognition of 'self' and it is the awareness about oneself (self-consciousness). It makes the students understand their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, in securities likes and dislikes. It helps the students to comprehend his/her self-worth, self-value and develop the confidence to face the challenges of life boldly. Developing self-awareness can help students to recognize their stress or the feeling of being under pressure. It enables one to identify one's weaknesses or negative personality traits and consequently helps the person to work on him/herself and improve oneself.

### 1.5.2.2.  Empathy

It is the ability to understand and accept one's feelings, emotions, problem and difficulties. Empathy is our mental ability to accept others without any prejudices and biases and to imagine what life is like for another person, even in a situation that we may not be familiar with. It enables a person to understand the feelings of others in

distress and helps in reaching out and in providing emotional support to them. Empathy encourages nurturing behaviour for those who need care and assistance. Empathy can help a student to know and accept others. They may be very different and from diverse cultures and origin. It nurtures them to be genuinely interested towards people in need of care and assistance and tolerance.

### 1.5.2.3. Effective Communication

Effective communication is described as the ability to express oneself, both verbally and non-verbally in ways that are appropriate to our cultures and situations. It is the ability to communicate clearly and precisely. It enables an adolescent to express his/her opinion, needs, desire, and fears clearly by using both verbal communication and non-verbal expressions. A person with good communication skills, learn to listen actively to others and is aware of the importance of understanding what others are about conversing.

### 1.5.2.4. Interpersonal Relationship

Interpersonal skill helps to initiate and maintain positive relationship with the other individuals, Relating with others is an important life skills and one of the most important forms of human intelligence and is called as people skill. This provides warmth, care, support and collaboration that give life. Interpersonal relationships teach the students to know the importance of maintaining and sustaining positive relationship with other people. It also enables students to end relationships constructively.

### 1.5.2.5. Creative Thinking

Creative thinking is the ability to generate innovative ideas and translate them from abstract thought into reality. It is novel way of seeing and doing things. It enables the students to be innovative and think out of the box. It consists of ideas, shifting perspective easily, conceiving something new and building on other ideas. Creative thinking is typically used to refer to the act of generating new ideas approaches or actions. It helps an adolescent to respond in a flexible manner to various challenges of life and adapt to change quickly. It enables him /her to explore

the possible available alternatives, to access their consequences and to create original ideas to guide them to look for new perspectives.

### 1.5.2.6. Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is self-directed and self-discipline thinking based on logical reasoning and objectivity. It is the ability to explore the various sources of information to particular problems and to analyze rationally both sides without judging. Critical thinking improves the quality of thinking by taking charge of the structures inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon them. Critical thinking enables a person to analyze information and experiences logically and objectively. It also helps to recognize and assess the factors that influence attitudes and behaviour, such as values, peer pressures and the media. This skill helps in both problem solving and decision making.

### 1.5.2.7. Decision Making

Decision making is the ability to deal constructively with important issues in our lives and take appropriate decisions and actions. It helps to choose the best amongst the various alternatives or opinions in many life situations. It is the skill to analyze the pros and cons of alternatives and to accept responsibility for the consequences of the decision with confidence. It guides students to take decision on the basis of facts and shoulder responsibility to face the consequences.

### 1.5.2.8. Problem Solving

Problem solving ability is to solve problem constructively and to understand that problems are inevitable. This skill assists in resolving a conflict and reaching a solution. It develops the ability to get out of difficult situations and achieve the goal without using anger, coercion, defiance and aggressive behavior. Problem solving is a process that provides an opportunity for a positive act. It enables a student to solve the problem by adopting creative and critical thinking.

### 1.5.2.9. Coping with Emotions

Coping with emotion assists a person to know his own feelings and those of others and respond appropriately to those emotions. The skill makes a person understand that strong feelings are normal and that feelings are neutral. Acceptance of feelings is the first step to control them; this enables a person to learn healthy, positive and safe ways to express their feelings and also increases the ability to identify his or her emotions. It helps students to know the effect of emotions on behaviour and learnt to react to emotion appropriately. Students learn the techniques to control excessive emotions like anger and sorrow. They understand the adverse effect of negative emotions if one does not respond appropriately.

### 1.5.2.10. Coping with Stress

Coping with stress makes a person identify the sources of stress and stressful situations in life. It also enables a person to understand the effects of stress and how to relax before worsening the situation. It helps in gaining the strength to cope with positive or negative stressful situations. It enables a person to deal with accompanying emotions. In looking for the most beneficial solution this skill enables the students to recognize the sources of stress, effective stress, techniques to control stress and overcome it.

### 1.5.3. Classification of Life Skills

**Figure 1.6  Classification of life skills**
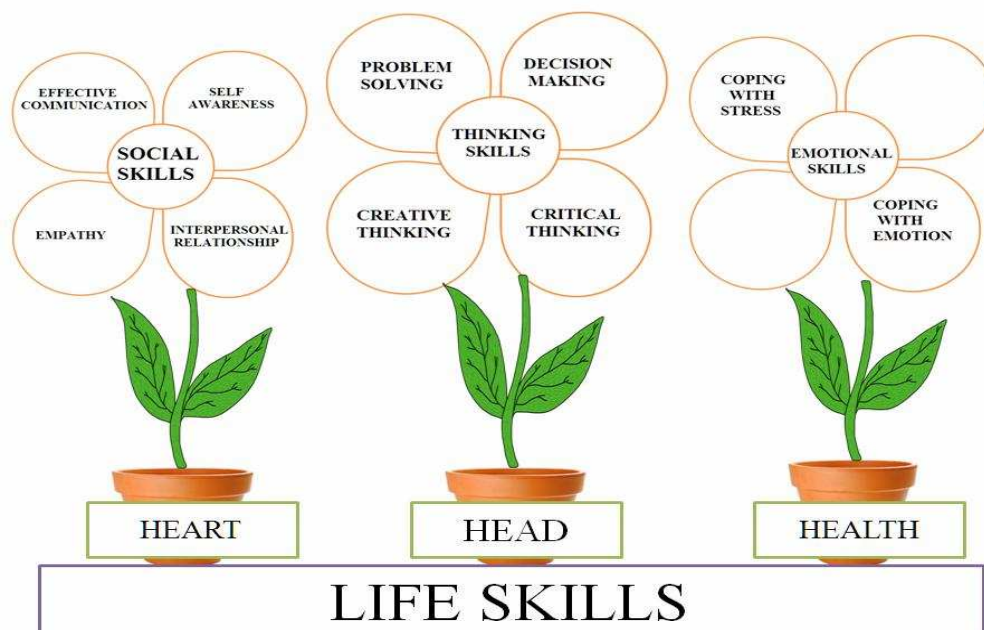


(Source: Self)

### 1.5.3.1.  Social Skills

Self-awareness, empathy, interpersonal relationships, and communication skills are classified as social skills. Adolescents need social skills for building positive and healthy relationships with others including peers of opposite sex. They need to understand the importance of mutual respect and socially defined boundaries of every relationship. Social skills are the skills that we use to interact and communicate with others every day. They include verbal and non-verbal communication, such as speech, gestures, facial expression and body language. Developing social skills is about being aware of how we communicate with others. Social skills facilitate in strengthening relationship by helping adolescents to understand themselves, appreciate the importance of friends and family and helping them to improve their communication skills. Social skills of children are effectively seen when they participate in games, communicate and help each other (Oden and Asher, 1997).

Social skills are crucial in making and sustaining friendships and are vital in enabling an individual to have and maintain positive interactions with others. It is imperative that individuals to have 'empathy' as this allows them to respond in an understanding and caring way to how others are feeling (Masters and Furman, 1981). Social interactions do not always run smoothly and an individual needs to be able to implement appropriate strategies, such as conflict resolutions when difficulties in interactions arise. Human beings are sociable and develop many ways to communicate their messages, thoughts and feeling with others (La Greca & Santogrossi, 1980).

### 1.5.3.2.  Thinking Skills

Thinking skills are decision making and problem solving which include understanding the consequences of the actions, determining the alternative solutions to problems. Evaluating one's perceptions of social norms and beliefs; self-evaluation and values clarification fall under critical thinking. Creative thinking is also one of the most important skills of thinking skills. These skills help in understanding the physical, physiological, mental and emotional changes during puberty, thereby helping adolescents to cope with these changes and help them planning their life.

Thinking skills promotes effective questioning and extend oral responses. Creative thinking has implications on intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. Creative thinking results openness, flexibility, autonomy, playfulness, humor, willingness to take risks, and perseverance. Creative and critical thinking is effective for improving mental, physical, behavioral health and competence among the adolescent (Karger et al., 2013).

### 1.5.3.3. Coping Skills

Coping skills are characteristics or behavioral pattern that enhances person's adaptation. It is a strategy used to manage intense emotional experiences. They don't solve the problem or help to remove the problem instead they help to tolerate or manage the problem. They include managing stress, regulating emotions, skills for increasing internal locus of control (self-management and self-monitoring).

### 1.5.3.4. Negotiation Skills

Negotiation skills help in problem solving, decision making, maintaining positive relationships. It also helps adolescents adopt hygienic practices, improve their nutritional status and choose to eat wisely. These skills include self-awareness, effective verbal communication, listening, interpersonal relationships, reducing misunderstanding, rapport building, problem solving and decision making, being assertive and dealing with difficult situation.

### 1.5.4. Philosophical and Theoretical Underpinnings of Life Skills

The two landmark UNESCO publications, 'Learning to Be' known as 'Faure Report' (1972) and Learning: the Treasuring Within' or 'Delors Report' (1996) recognizes that lifelong learning is integral to a meaningful human life. They have been influential in promoting an integrated and humanistic vision of lifelong learning.

Faure report had stressed firmly establishing, the concept of lifelong education at a time when traditional education systems were being changed (Faure et al., 1972). In this interpretation life skills emphasize both whole-person development and a life-long learning perspective, i.e. learning throughout life. The title learning to be focuses on the human condition and on the role of education for the development of every individual's potential. This report recommends that one no longer tirelessly acquire knowledge once and for all, but learn how to build up a continually evolving body of knowledge all through life-'learning to be'. Lifelong education is the master concept for educational polices. It is not an educational system but the principle in which the overall organization of a system is found.

Life skills are captured in the simplest and deepest way in the four pillars of learning of the Delors report (Delors et al., 1996), with outcomes of education relating to four crucial areas affecting a self-fulfilling life and contribution to societal development. They are (1) learning to know which means to master the instruments of knowledge, (2) learning to do is to apply knowledge in practice, (3) learning to live together and living with others means is to prevent and resolve conflicts, and promote peace and respect for other people, their cultures and spiritual values and (4) learning to be is to ensure all-round development of each individual (Buchert, 2014). Since then there are two additional pillars have been suggested at the first World Forum on Lifelong Learning held in Paris in 2008: learning for change and transformation; and learning to become. Because of the rapid changes which are taking place in countries, regions and the world in general and in the life of individuals throughout their lifetime. It constitutes a continuous process of forming whole beings - their knowledge, aptitudes, the critical faculty and ability to act.

Conceptual analysis forms an important part of this study, as it builds a theoretical foundation upon which the current research is based, by reviewing the relevant literature, relating them and thus fixing the research issue. Also it enables the researcher to be acquainted with the current knowledge of the field in which the research is being carried out. The researcher attempts to define as well as explain the significant concepts and variables with the help of available theoretical schemes and

research studies. This section analyses the theoretical base of life skills. There are several theories relevant to life skills, however most import theories like, child and adolescent development, social learning, problem behaviour, social influence, cognitive problem solving, constructivist psychology theory and multiple intelligences are discussed.

### 1.5.4.1. Child and Adolescent Development Theory

The concept of child and adolescence development was developed by Piaget (1972) and further developed by Vygotsky (1978). These two researchers have made a foundation in developing and understanding the behavioural matrix as well as other developmental aspects extensively.

Learning to realistically evaluate oneself and one's abilities is another important process during childhood (Newman and Newman, 1999). The Piaget believed that adolescent person is able to conceptualize many variables and is able to create a system of laws or rules for problem solving (Piaget, 1972). An adolescent's concerns about appearance can sometimes lead to unhealthy dieting, and premature initiation into sexual intercourse before achieving a level of cognitive or emotional maturity (Eccles, 1999). Self-efficacy is another dimension of the developing self-concept. Self-efficacy can be defined as the "degree to which individuals view themselves as being valuable, as causally important people and are effective in shaping the events and outcomes in their lives" (Tyler, 1991, P. 40). Social interactions become increasingly complicated as children move into adolescence. More time is spent with peers, and interactions with opposite-sex increase. During these critical years, children either learn to be competent or productive or feel inferior, which can lead to long-lasting social, intellectual emotional consequences (Hansen et al., 1998; Csikszentmihalyi and Schneider, 2000). Moral development is an important dimension of human development. It can be defined as the development of values and rules a person uses for balancing or adjudicating the conflicting interests of the self and others (Western, 1996). Kohlberg described the stages of development that moves from a child's preoccupation with the consequences of behaviour on oneself to moral judgments that incorporate the rights of others, and eventually incorporate universal principles of ethics (Newman and Newman 1998; Kohlberg, 1976).

### 1.5.4.2.  Social Learning Theory

This theory, which is also known as the Cognitive-Social Learning Model, is largely based upon the works of Albert Bandura (Bandura, 1977).  His research led him to conclude that children learn to behave through both instructions (i.e., how parents, teachers and other authorities and role models tell them to behave) as well as observations (i.e., how they see adults and peers behaving). Their behaviour is reinforced, or modified, by the consequences of their actions and the responses of others to their behaviour. Children learn to behave through observation and social interaction rather than just through verbal instructions. Bandura also stressed that self-efficacy, defined as confidence in one's abilities to perform appropriate behavior, is important to learning and maintaining behaviour, especially in the face of social pressure to behave differently. Thus skills development not only becomes a question of onward behavior, but of internal qualities (such as self-efficacy) that support those types of behaviour (Bandura, 1977). Social learning theory had two profound influences on the development of life skills and social skills programme. One was the necessity of providing children with methods or skills for coping with internal aspects of their social lives, including stress reduction, self-control and decision making. Most life and social skills programme address these skills. The second was that, to be effective life and social skills programme need to replicate the natural processes by which children learn behavior. According to social learning theory, skills teachings needs to replicate the natural processes by which children learn behavior, modeling, observation and social interaction. It further reinstates that reinforcement is important in learning and shaping behaviour. Positive reinforcement is applied for the correct demonstration of behaviours and skills; negative or corrective reinforcement can be applied for behaviours or skills that need to be adjusted to build more positive actions.

### 1.5.4.3.  Social Influence Theory

Social influence approaches are based upon the work of Bandura as well as the psychological inoculation theory developed by researchers, including McGuire (1964, 1968). Social influence approaches recognize that children and adolescence will come under pressure to engage in risk behaviors, such as tobacco use. Social pressures

include "peer pressure, models of smoking parents, and smoking-related messages in the mass media that feature attractive smokers" (Evans, 1998). This theory was spurred by research demonstrating that programmes that merely provided information on the consequences of risk behaviours (such as smoking), and /or used to fear to try to prevent children from engaging in these behaviours were unsuccessful research into this programme found that, "Fear induced by knowledge of the long-term dangers of smoking appeared to be insufficient to prevent its onset among many young adolescence, when exposed to social pressure to engage in the behavior". This approach was first used by (Evans, 1976) in a smoking prevention programme. By adopting the approach of social learning theory, peer and social pressure to engage in unhealthy behaviours can be controlled by addressing them before the child or adolescent is exposed to the pressures. Thus points towards early prevention rather than later intervention. Teaching children resistance is more effective in reducing behavior problems years than just providing information or provoking fear of the results of the behaviour (WHO, 2003).

### 1.5.4.4. Cognitive Problem Solving

The competence-building model proposed by Shure and Spivack (1980) theorizes the teaching Interpersonal Cognitive Problem Solving (ICPS) skills of children. Young age can reduce and prevent negative, inhibited and impulsive behaviours. Research shows differing levels of interpersonal thinking skills in children displaying positive social behavior versus children displaying early high risk behavior. The defining skills focus on the ability to generate alternative solutions to an interpersonal problem and secondly, the ability to conceptualize the consequences of different behavior. The relationship between these problem solving skills and social adjustment was not only found in the pre-school and kindergarten children, but also in adolescents and adults. An intervention based on his research, the ICPS intervention (also called "I can Problem Solve"), develops interpersonal cognitive problem solving skills starting in preschool, with the ultimate goal of preventing later and more serious problems by addressing the behavioral predictors at early stages in life. The strategy of teaching interpersonal problem-solving skills at early developmental process

(childhood early adolescence) develops a strong foundation for later learning. Further focusing on skills, self-awareness and self-management as in anger management or impulse can reduce or prevent behavioural problems.

## 1.5.4.5. Problem Behaviour Theory

Developed by Richard Jessor, it recognizes that adolescent behaviour (including risk behaviour) cannot be reduced to a single source. It is the product of complex interactions between people and their environment. Problem behaviour theory is concerned with the relationships among three categories of psychosocial variables: (1) the personality system (2) the perceived environmental system and (3) the behavioral system. The personality system includes 'values, expectations, beliefs attitudes and orientations toward self and society.' The perceived environmental system concerns the perceptions of friends and parents' attitudes towards one's behavior. Similar to Bandura, the behavioral system is usually described as a certain set of socially unacceptable behaviour (the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, sexual behaviour by persons below a certain age, delinquency etc). Developing skills such as values clarification (to better understand one's own values and beliefs) and critical thinking (to clarify recognize and analyze the values of the social environment) can have an impact on behavior, and can be even more effective in coordination with programme that affect other variables, such as poverty reduction programme and clinical health services for school dropout prevention. The implication of this approach is in moulding the attitudes of the children. According to this theory, activities are influenced by an individual's values, beliefs and attitudes and by the perceptions of friends and family about these types of behavior. Therefore, skills in critical thinking (including the ability to evaluate oneself and the values of the social environment), effective communication, and negotiation are important aspects of skill-based education and life skills. Building these types of interactions into activities with opportunities to practice the skills is an important part of the learning process (WHO, 2003).

### 1.5.4.6. Multiple Intelligence Theory

The theory of multiple intelligences has important implications for education system. It proposes several other ways in which the material might be presented to facilitate effective learning when a teacher is having difficulty reaching a student in the more traditional linguistic or logical ways of instruction. Gardner (1993) suggested that all human beings are born with eight intelligences that take into account the wide variety of human thinking capacities. These include linguistic, logical/mathematical, musical, spatial bodily / kinesthetic, naturalist interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences. Classroom instruction focuses on linguistic and logical/mathematical abilities but in order to develop the eight multiple intelligence children need to be exposed to effective teaching learning process and broader range of indoor and outdoor activities which will bring out the talents that is hidden in them. Different varieties of activities will stimulate the children to be themselves and express beyond academic. The integration of community service learning into the school curriculum enhances these eight intelligences among the children. Children need to be involved in community oriented activities because the needs and problems of the communities are numerous where they are impelled to use different methods to solve the problems. The involvement of children in active learning methods stimulates the use of musical, spatial, naturalist and other intelligences (Mangrulkar et al., 2001). Multiple intelligence is developed in a different degree in each individual depending on the use of their intelligence in different level.

### 1.5.4.7. Emotional Intelligence

According to Goleman (1997) psychologist defines there are five main elements of emotional intelligence self-awareness, self-realization, motivation, empathy and social skills. Emotional intelligence is the ability to understand and manage emotions in an effective manner. Anyone with higher levels of emotional intelligence is able to manage their emotions and relate to others around them as well as use their emotions to facilitate their thinking and understand the emotions of others. This can help to improve self-motivation, effective communication skill and confident learners.

Community service learning framework is designed based on theory of the emotional intelligence to bring out the life skills especially coping with emotions and coping with stress. When children come in touch with the community they develop social skills as they interact with the community and as they get in deeper into the needs of the community. The children are led into deeper reflection on the injustice structures that prevails in the community, they become aware of themselves and society which enhances to develop their emotional skills. Emotional intelligence is emphasized in community service learning because as the students are constantly working with their peers and with community members. As humans they are relating and interacting and hence they tend to make a mess of their relationships. Reflection which is one of the important components of community service learning helps the students to become aware of themselves, one-self and others.

The meaningful learning theory was founded by David Ansubel. This type of learning is relational and links new information to existing knowledge. It is active, constructive and durable. According to his theory, to learn meaningfully, individuals must relate new knowledge to relevant concepts they already know and the construction of knowledge begins with our observation and recognition of events and objects through concepts we already have. It requires active learning techniques. Teachers need to demonstrate to the students what students do not know. It implies understanding. It helps them to achieve deep learning instead of rote learning. When the facts are meaningful it makes sense to the students and they are able to retain the information a lot better. The most important single factor influencing learning is what the learner already knows. The most crucial element in meaningful learning is how the new information is integrated into the old knowledge structure. Community service learning is integrated into school curriculum to deliver meaningful learning among students as they practise the abstract knowledge, and use meaningfully what they have already learnt in their text. They act accordingly and the new knowledge gained is connected with their previous knowledge.

### 1.5.5. Approaches in Life Skills

An approach means a general philosophy and strategy is a careful plan or method for achieving a particular goal. Life skills approach refers to a good interactive education methodology. It uses a wide variety of participatory and interactive techniques. It is a comprehensive multi strategy approach. The goal of this approach is to promote healthy sociable behaviour and to prevent or reduce risk behaviours as well as make a positive impact on knowledge and attitude. Life skills education should not be looked into as a subject but viewed as a process fitting within the framework of four pillars of education namely learning to know, learning to do, to live together and learning to be.

**Figure 1.7  Diagram showing approaches of life skills education**
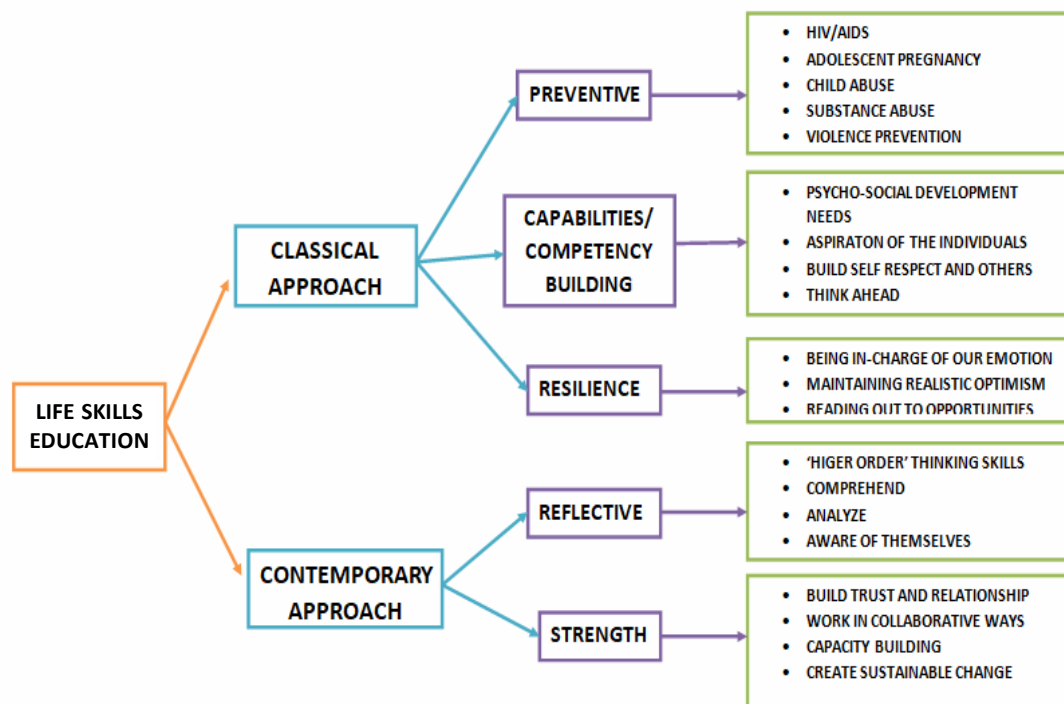


(Source: self)

These approaches can be classified under two broad categories namely the classified approach and contemporary approach. The classified approach that encompasses the preventive approach, the competency approach and the resiliency approach whereas the contemporary approach encompasses reflective thinking

approach and strength based approach. Classical approaches mostly taught by a developed training module, guest lectures, brain storming method, working in small groups and role play to discuss and practice the skills (Gulhane, 2014). Reflective thinking approach and strength based approach can lead to holistic development of a person (Ranjan & Nair, 2015).

### 1.5.6. Life Skills Education and its Importance

Life skills education promotes mental well-being in the young people and empowers the adolescents to take more responsibility for their actions. The pedagogy of life skills education is experiential learning. It influences psychological health, attitudes and values leading to positive behavior and it helps to prevent risk behavior (Nori, 1998). Life skills education is designed to help one to process and structure one's experiences and facilitate the practice and reinforcement of skills

"Life skills education is designed to facilitate the practice and reinforcement of psychological skills in a culturally and developmentally appropriate way. It contributes to the promotion of personal and social development, the prevention of health and social problem, and the protection of human rights" (WHO 1999). Life skills enable the people to deal with challenging situations positively and successfully. It helps to assess oneself and become aware of one's strength and weaknesses. A continuous process of realization challenges to change one's attitude towards family members and neighbors. It develops the social, individual, and reflective skills of the people. Life skills enhance abilities that help to facilitate communication, negotiation, to think critically, solve problems and make independent decisions (Usha Rao, 2016). Life skills education addresses the combination of psychological and social (i.e. psychosocial) factors that contribute to healthy behavior. The implementation of life skills education in schools addresses the needs of all children. The promotion of personal and social skills is important aspect of health promotion interventions that aim to empower the individual to promote his/her own health as well as the health of others and of the community (Prajapati, Sharma and Sharma, 2017). Life skills education introduces learner-centered and interactive teaching methods which can have a positive impact

on the relationships between teachers and pupils, young people's enjoyment of learning, teacher's job satisfaction, rates of drop out and absenteeism from school (Rani and Menka, 2019).

Life skills have an impact on the teaching of academic subjects. There are indications that life skills education can have a positive impact on academic performances. Once the students or pupils feel that they are involved in issues of relevance to their own lives, they participate more and learn more. Life skills education can promote more pro-social behaviour and so result in less delinquency among adolescents. It helps to clarify the needs of young people growing up in modern societies. Life skills education is of particular value to young people growing up in multicultural societies and the skills promoted, appear to be amongst the ones most highly valued by the future employers of young people. Early prevention can be expected to reap maximum rewards in regard to a healthy society, since the health and social problems prevalent today have at their root a component of human behaviour.

The child in the present education system which works like a factory is considered as a product because there is no personal touch. Therefore personal growth and development of the child is overlooked (Kurian, 2015). Inappropriate education and training system does not help young people (Ramanujam, 2015). Since information is available at the click of a button, at this juncture it is very important to equip the young people with right information which will help them to make informed decision (Parida, 2015). Adolescence needs help and guidance in decision making, problem solving, critical thinking, developing interpersonal relationships, self-awareness, coping with stress and coping with emotions. In the fast growing incidents of conflicts and crisis, smoking, drinking, tobacco use and other substance abuse suicides crimes and risk behaviours among the adults is a matter of great concern (Bharath and Kumar, 2008). Life skills are very important in this regard as they enable individuals to translate knowledge and attitudes into actual abilities.

The central goal of life skills education is to empower the adolescents and envision them to attain a meaningful and healthy life (Pujar and Patil, 2016). Life skills education provides an integrated and holistic approach to adolescent development and

it is based on a framework where 'core life skills' include thinking skills, social skills and emotional skills (Parvathy and Pillai, 2015). Life skills education is designed to facilitate the practice and reinforcement of psychological skills in culturally and developmentally appropriate way. It contributes to the promotion of personal and social development, the prevention of health and social problems and the protection of human rights (WHO 1999). The recent researches show that the life skills competencies in the young are not adequate to address the challenges of 21$^{st}$ century (Deffenbacher, Lynch, Crede and Kuncel, 2008; Rao, 2011). To prepare the pupils to face the challenges of daily life, life skills education has to be introduced as a special subject in school due to which they will respond effectively to the needs of contemporary world (Mahmoudi & Moshayedi, 2012). Life skills education promotes mental well-being in the young people and empowers the adolescents to take more responsibility for their actions (Nasheeda, 2019). The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), an autonomous body under Ministry of Human Resource Development Government of India, New Delhi, reinforces life skills, sports and games, co-curricular activities as part of mainstream education and emphasis is laid on the need to include life skills education for co-scholastic assessment of the student. The schools are now mandated to provide and also to assess students on parameters of life skills (Parmar and Katoch, 2015) but in many school the life skills lessons are not handled properly and there are no trained teachers to impart life skills (Daisy and Nair, 2018).

### 1.5.7. Models of Life Skills Training

UNICEF (2003) has classified various models of life skills training in vogue in different countries followed by various agencies. The most commonly used models are:

### 1.5.7.1. Formal

The Formal model is characterized by a school-based programme with a specific curriculum that is designed to be delivered as a subject. The formal primary or secondary school curriculum is facilitated by a teacher trained in the content and methods delivered in schools, with time designated in the schedule for skills-based HIV/AIDS education that may or may not be assessed. This model of life skills

training may be complemented by a guest speaker and an outside resource person with extra-curricular projects and activities.

### 1.5.7.2. Cross-over

The Cross-over model is characterized by a school-linked programme with extra-curricular life skills-based education activities that are affiliated with schools but not necessarily delivered in schools. The participants may be reached through schools, school resources and facilities are often used. This model is facilitated by somebody trained in the content and methods and transmitted usually with the help of the teacher, peer educators, guidance counselors and social workers.

### 1.5.7.3. Non-formal

The Non-formal model is characterized by programme that are delivered through community settings and organizations, such as health centers, drop-in centers, worshiping spaces, street programme, women/young people's groups and clubs (e.g. girl guides/boy scouts). Typically the target is the youth just out of schools. However, the model may include students as educators, counselors or learners. In this model the curriculum is typically developed by NGOs, rather than government agencies.

### 1.5.7.4. Technology / Media

Educational messages, stories and activities are delivered through local or national communication channels, including TV, radio, videos, comic books, storybooks, audiocassettes, posters, the Internet, newspapers, etc. These can supplement all of the above mentioned models.

### 1.5.7.5. Piggy Back

With the Piggy-back model, HIV/AIDS is addressed within a programme designed for another purpose (e.g. livelihood skills building). This is effective when facilitators are experienced in both areas (e.g. livelihoods and HIV/AIDS)

### 1.5.7.6. Involuntary Situations

Involuntary situation programme are delivered within an institution or involuntary setting such as detention centers and transition houses. It includes programme that must be completed as a penalty (e.g. drunk-driving counseling courses). Facilitators experienced in working with the participant group may do the training programme.

### 1.5.7.7. Emergency Situations

In this model the life skills training programme are delivered and participants are reached in a protective environment within the emergency setting such as child-friendly spaces, refugee camps, health centers, or worshiping spaces. Learners include children, young people, women and men, depending on the life skills topic (e.g. landmine awareness, violence prevention, conflict resolution, peace building, HIV/AIDS prevention, health and sanitation). The curriculum in this model is typically developed by international agencies, non-governmental or community-based organizations, rather than government.

### 1.5.8. Life Skills Intervention: Direct and Indirect

Life skills can be taught directly with the purpose of teaching specific skills or indirectly by observation of the experience of the child. Recent studies by Roodbari, Sahdipoor, and Ghale (2013); Puspakumara (2011); Tuttle, Campbell-Heider and David (2006); Smith & et al. (2004) clearly suggest that life skills improves social development, emotional and social adjustment, suggesting an increase in compatibility of children and public health. In Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) the life skills is given as the part of the syllabus. There are many text books especially written and used by many of them. Many researches in the past indicates how life skills can be implemented as a training program, as an intervention approach and its contribution to healthy development of adolescents. According to (Prajapati, Sharma and Sharma, 2017) enormous efforts are made to impart or use different methods and techniques to teach life skills among school students with the help of simple activities in classroom settings. Many of the existing common methods are classroom discussions, debates,

role play, brainstorm, story-telling, songs and dance, case studies, miming, poetry and recitals and question and answers which orient to teach life skills directly. Life skills approach promotes social, cognitive, emotional and behavioral competencies that are critical in reducing negative or high risk behaviors which help the children to acquire 21$^{st}$ century skills (Kibret, 2016).

There are also other ways of imparting life skills to students. They are not told explicitly that they intend to teach life skills. Many studies prove that involving children in extra-curricular activities like physical education help them to gain confidence and self worth (Barker, 2014). Students who are involved in planning and taking active participation in out-door learning become responsible. Students become friendly with each other, they make effort to get to know each other and they enjoy each other's company (Coker, Helser and Taylor, 2016). They learn to work with each other and when the committees place responsibilities on the individuals and groups they carry out to their highest satisfaction because it is their program. The gap that exists between students and teachers has been reduced as they become more interested in each other (Crump, 2002). Keeping this in mind (Craf, 2012) suggests variety of clubs like eco club, interact club, creative writing and debate, science club, photography club, robotics club, yoga club etc. children are encouraged to be part of one or more clubs. All the club activities supplement academics and give the students practical training which they require for day today life. It helps the students to display their talent and gain life skills indirectly (Reeves, 2008).

Like one of these methods, community service learning could be introduced as an indirect method to teach life among the school children.

## 1.5.9. Community Service Learning as an Intervention Method

Though several direct and indirect methods of imparting life skills are in place, community service learning method is not universally practiced as a method for life skills development. Yorio and Ye (2012) suggest community service learning as both in-class experience and as an extracurricular and as a result of the integration of the service experiences in the community. There is an effect of service experience on

teaching and learning process. When high-quality community service learning is implemented it has important effects on youth's engagement. This type of learning is experiential. Learning is not an individual activity but as a communicative process which cannot be separated from experience of its occurrence (Bradshaw, 2016). Community service learning raises the possibility of moving beyond conception of education in terms of the acquisition of skill sets to think about how people co-create situations of usefulness for particular ideas and for way of being or doing (Steinke and Buresh, 2002; Govekar and Rishi, 2007). It provides a unique and important context for teaching and learning for citizenship and all those involved (Cooks and Scharrer, 2006). Community service learning enables the students to apply what they have learned in mathematics, science class and other subjects. Service experience helps the students to learn skills and to gain a sense of community in a variety of ways through experience (Sims, 2010).

Stott and Jackson, 2005 have noted that the youth are isolated and alienated from society because of a lack of bonding of family, school and community. The role of the school is to implement interventions to reconnect youth and help them gain the sense of community. Community service learning provides opportunity to reconstruct and negotiate their identity, promote the students to take ownership and creates in them a sense of empowerment (Chao, 2016). Service programme in the school means to engage the students in experiential learning activities and provide them with an opportunity to address the authentic social issues in the community (Farber and Bishop, 2018). Experiential education covers a broad range of cognitive and affective outcomes for students. It shows significant positive effects in student's intellectual, social, personal, civic, moral, and vocational development. It improves student's psychological, social and intellectual development (Furco, 1996).

By involving students in community service learning activities, they are exposed to the realities and challenges of everyday life (Farber, 2017). This practical exposure may help in the development of life skills in school children. In this sense a structured community service programme may enhance life skills development of the adolescent. The present study focuses on these elements.

### 1.5.10. Strategies in Community Service Learning to Factor in Life Skills Development

Community service learning is one of many teaching strategies that educators use to combine classroom instruction with community service. Students participate in the projects in their local community while applying the concepts that they learned in the classroom (Markus, Howard and King, 1993). It is an experimental practice that students require to apply to their theoretical knowledge. Community service learning is a collaborative teaching and learning strategy designed to promote academic enhancement, personal growth and civic engagement (He and Prater, 2014). The course design which includes critical reflection examines students' experiences critically and articulates specific learning outcomes, thus enhancing the quality of their learning and of their service (Ramsaroop and Ramdhani, 2014). The difference is that the students do more than cleaning the surrounding of the community. It is an intentional learning experience. For example: if the students engage in community service learning they not only clear garbage from a stream, they also provide a valuable service to the community. However, they learn to analyze, and discuss what they found, identify possible sources and share the results with the local population. They analyze the reason for its uncleanliness and how it can be reduced and reflect upon what they experienced. (Jensen, 2006) advocated that community service learning connects deeply to the school curriculum, offering students unique opportunities to acquire new skills as they learn responsibility, experience satisfaction and provide benefit to the wider community (Lowery et al., 2006). It is a highly effective strategy for engaging students' interest in the curriculum and in their community. The service component and the learning component should complement each other and neither should be favored at the expense of the other.

Community service learning is an experiential learning that nurtures social and cognitive skills, improve problem-solving, team-building, leadership, communicative and organizational skills (Demir et al., 2014). Community service learning, as consistently reported by researchers is a heightened sense of social responsibility. It develops a positive attitude towards adults and others, understanding and active exploration of careers, enhancing self-esteem and growth in moral development

(Eyler, 2000). Community service learning experience encourages youth to feel more self-competent to discover commonalities with a broad range of people, and a more encompassing and integrated understanding of social, moral and political issues (Yates and Younnis, 1996). Kackar-Cam and Schmidt (2014, p.84) points out that, "adolescence who are involved in out-of-time activities are more motivated and cognitively engaged in comparison to other contexts of their lives".

In community service learning, students have a chance to experience different type of activities which will help them to shape their career interest later in life (Coetzee, Bloemhoff and Naude, 2011). Most adolescents will be able to come out of their nervousness or shyness and start to interact with people they do not know (Kiely, 2005). One of the most important benefits of community service is that it instills in students a strong feeling of self-worth. Community service learning gives students an experience in expressing their opinions in front of the adults thereby increasing their confidence (Niemi, R.G. et al., 2000). Camara (2012) explains in her research that students would learn more effectively and become better citizens if they are engaged in service to the community and have this service incorporated into their academic curriculum. For learning does not take place in the classroom alone, it takes place after school, on the weekends, on the playing fields, in the music room, and while students are performing community service. She has proved in her research the numerous benefits of community service learning such as growth in self-esteem, future engagement in political and civic interactions, creating a sense of citizenship and above all improvement of academic performance of the students. Community service learning is seen by the various boards of education as an integral part of education (Bettencourt, 2015; Tatebe, 2013).

Community service learning is an exciting topic for developmental research because it directly addresses both theoretical and applied issues. Moreover, researches have proved that community service as part of the school curriculum can eventually enhance meaningful value development (Hedin, 1989). In many Jesuit schools, community service learning are common strategy for ensuring that graduating students who are open to growth, become intellectually competent, religious, loving

and committed to doing justice (O'Keefe, 2015). Students who are involved in social service programme encounter themselves and others and find meaning in life (Su, Yuling and Chen, 2014). The students involved in community service learning activities gain a sense of social responsibility and a deeper understanding of the problem faced by the communities in which they serve (Koh et al., 2014). Students involved in community service learning report that their fears and prejudices diminish with the experience of helping others (Herzberg, 1994).

## 1.6. JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to explore the community service learning in schools and investigate its impact on life skills development among school children. Though there are many studies done on life skills development among school children by using different approaches (Kaur, 2016; Soni, 2016; Mehta and Khamkar, 2015), there are no studies done using community service learning as a method to inculcate life skills among school children in Indian context. It illustrates the utility of community service learning as a framework for the integration across all the subjects. It could be considered as pedagogy to impart life skills (Parker-Gwin and Mabry, 1996). It could be used as a guide to involve children in outdoor activities (Fisher, 2015). It will offer real world experiences and the community as laboratory and all the activities could be connected to the existing syllabus.

Participation in community service learning is an education activity by itself that helps in self-interrogation and enables the students to think more seriously about their lives (Rhoads, 1998). Community service learning may be seen as an "encounter with strangers" and it prepares students to communicate in a culturally diverse world (Radest, 1993). Community service learning may be mandated as part of the core curriculum so that all students will have the opportunity to realize the relationship between community, civic involvement and self-interest (Niemi et al., 2000). The benefits of community-based learning activities are manifold (Koh et al., 2014).

A network of life skills trainers provides life skills training to enhance skilled human capital (Ranjan and Nair, 2015). Not being aware of different approaches,

many are resorting to classical approaches in life skills education. Several methods and strategies can be adopted for life skills education and training. Now-a-days strength based approach is being used on a large scale for life skills education. Newer methods like drama, theater, sports, games, arts etc are used as a medium for life skills education (Vranda and Rao, 2011). Community service learning is one unexplored area to develop life skills. In this study, researcher adopts strength based approach in life skills as the foundation for life skills training and community service learning is the tool for imparting life skills. Therefore, the aim of the researcher is to investigate the possibility of whether community service as pedagogy of learning will effect in bringing out the ten-core life skills among children.

## 1.7. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The school can play a key role in developing life skills by making life skills education a part of the school curriculum because there is a decrease in moral values, high insecurity and negative thoughts in our upcoming generation (Ajith Kumar & Nair, 2015). It is important for students to develop skills for application of knowledge, teamwork and civic engagement in addition to core curriculum knowledge to prepare for the demands of the 21$^{st}$ century workforce. Students would "learn by doing," applying knowledge to experience and develop skills or new ways of thinking (Lewis & Williams, 1994, p. 6).

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2005) reports that the content of life skills programming was not always relevant and appropriate and the methods used were always not effective particularly with different types of learners. Many programmes have not given provisions to support learners in the use of their new life skills outside the classroom, to use with their families or in their communities. To respond to the need of teaching life skills, many studies have been done in the field of life skills education adopting various strategies. Literature review shows that no study has been done in India on community service learning as an intervention to impart life skills.

Here the researcher proposes an experiential learning which focuses on learning to serve and serve to learn. Community service learning is an integrated

programme within the school that can be introduced not as separate activity instead students could apply their knowledge of what they have learnt in classroom for the benefit of the community.

Therefore, the researcher investigated the possibility of whether community service learning as pedagogy of learning will effect in bringing out the ten core life skills among children.

**Figure 1.7  Effect community service learning intervention**
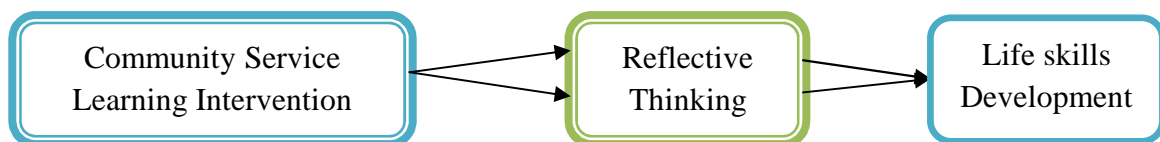


(Source: Self)

## 1.8.  AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the present study is to understand community service learning activities and its impact on life skills development among school children.

## 1.9.  OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.  To determine the life skills of school children studying in $9^{th}$ and $10^{th}$ standard.
2.  To develop a community service module for intervention among high school children.
3.  To assess the impact of community service learning in the development of life skills among school children.

## 1.10.  RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.  Whether regular community service is possible among high school students?
2.  Whether modular approach is relevant for doing community service in the school?
3.  Is there any positive impact of community service among school children in developing their competencies?

4. Is there any variation in the level of life skills on the basis of gender, religion, types of school and family?

5. Is there any attitudinal change among the parents of the school children who participated in community service and the teachers who teach them?

6. Is there a significance difference in life skills of school children between pre and post community service involvement?

## 1.11.  HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. Gender and age have significant influence in the life skills of school children.

2. There is no difference in the life skills among school children on the basis of religion.

3. There is no difference in the life skills among school children on the basis of type of schools and their place of residence.

4. The birth order and number of siblings does not have impact on the life skills of school children.

5. Mother's and father's occupation and family income will have significant influence on the life skills of school children.

6. There is significant difference in the life skills on the basis of caste category.

7. Types of family will not have significant difference in life skills.

8. The educational qualification of mother and father would significantly influence the life skills of school children.

9. Community service learning intervention has significant impact on developing the life skills of school children.

10. Community service learning has significant impact on thinking skills, social skills and coping skills.

11. There is no significant difference on the children's life skills after the community service intervention on basis of gender.

12. There is no significance on children's life skills after the community service learning intervention on the basis of type of school.

13. There is significance in children's life skills after the community service learning intervention on the basis of residence.

14. There is significant difference on children's life skills after the community service learning intervention based on the age of the school children.
15. Community service learning programme has improved the civic values, civic responsibility and study habit of school children.
16. There will be significant relationship between 10 core life skills.

## 1.12. OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

### 1.12.1. Community Service Learning

Community service learning defined as teaching pedagogy which encourages the students to investigate the needs of the community and solve the problem with the community by applying the knowledge which they gained in the classroom which is followed by reflection and evaluation.

### 1.12.2. Life Skills

In the present study life skill is defined as the capacity to effectively handle the problems and challenges of everyday life.

### 1.12.3. School Children (Middle Adolescents)

The children of age group of 14 to 15 years who attend mainstream school in 9$^{th}$ standard.

## 1.13. DELIMITATIONS OF STUDY

- The number of students who participated in community service learning programme were only 97 from two schools. If more children could have been given opportunity to participate the result would have been better.
- The study was restricted only to 9$^{th}$ standard school children. Community service learning programme would have been implemented on school children of middle school.

- It was difficult to get time to do the community service learning programme within the school hours.

- The study was restricted only to one district. This study could have had better results if the researcher could have selected more districts across India

- Community service learning programme were done only for 8 months in one academic year. The result would have more impact if it would have been for a longer period.

- Parents could have been invited to take part in the community service learning.

- The school teachers could have been trained to conduct community service learning programmes along with the children.

- Community agency, NGOs, or other clubs could have been invited to have partnership with school children.

- Community service learning intervention programme was conducted only in one government school and in one private school. The unaided school was not taken for the study.

- The study was only to find out the impact of community service learning on life skills development among school children. The impact pertaining to other aspects like regularity to school and academic achievement was not studied.

## 1.14. CONCLUSION

Adolescents are energetic individuals who learn best by doing rather than talking. In a country like India we need to adopt an unconventional and out of the box thinking approach to promote life skills education. Therefore, the present research would make use of few school hours to conduct an intervention study with structured and planned activities in schools. The aim of this present study is to find if this could make any attitudinal change in children and help to build positive outlook in day-to-day life.