

Life Skills Education Strategy to Prepare Students to Face Global Challenges

***Rusnadi Jakfar¹, Tumin², Mohamad Thaufiq³**

¹Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Tarbiyah Muhammadiyah Bangil, Jl. Raya Raci KM 9,
Bangil Pasuruan 67153, East Java, Indonesia

²Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Jl. Brawijaya, Kasihan, Bantul,
Yogyakarta 55183, Indonesia

³Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Education City, Gate 8, Doha, Qatar

² orcid id: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1705-2363>

*rusnadijakfar2@gmail.com

Keywords:	Abstract
Life Skill Education, Specific Skills, Generic Skills.	<i>This study aims to describe the implementation of life skills education, the integration of teaching and extracurricular activities, the development of specific and generic skills, and efforts to support students' life skills. Data collection methods were conducted through interviews, observations, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted with the head of staff of Kuliyyatul Mu'alimin al-Islamiyah (KMI). The data analysis technique in this study uses three stages, namely, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results showed that this cottage applies two main skills in life skills education, namely specific skills related to certain fields and generic skills that can be used in various aspects of life. The implementation of life skills education is carried out by integrating curricular and extracurricular learning activities, which shows that this education has been systematically organized in the curriculum set by the cottage. In conclusion, the implementation of life skills education at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Campus 5 Darul Muttaqin Banyuwangi runs effectively. It makes a significant contribution to the development of santri skills so that they are ready to face challenges in society. It is expected to be a reference for other educational institutions developing similar academic programs.</i>
Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Life Skill, Kecakapan spesifik, kecakapan generik.	Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan implementasi pendidikan life skill, integrasi kegiatan belajar mengajar dan ekstrakurikuler, pengembangan kecakapan spesifik dan generik, serta upaya-upaya dalam menunjang <i>life skill</i> santri. Metode pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan analisis dokumen. Wawancara dilakukan bersama kepala staf Kuliyyatul Mu'alimin al-Islamiyah (KMI). Teknik analisis data dalam penelitian ini menggunakan 3 tahap yaitu: reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pondok ini menerapkan dua kecakapan utama dalam pendidikan life skill, yaitu kecakapan spesifik yang terkait dengan bidang tertentu dan kecakapan generik yang dapat diterapkan di berbagai aspek kehidupan. Implementasi pendidikan life skill

dilakukan dengan mengintegrasikan kegiatan pembelajaran kurikuler dan ekstrakurikuler, yang menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan ini telah tersusun secara sistematis dalam kurikulum yang ditetapkan oleh pondok. Kesimpulannya, implementasi pendidikan life skill di Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Kampus 5 Darul Muttaqin Banyuwangi berjalan efektif dan memberikan kontribusi signifikan terhadap pengembangan kecakapan santri, sehingga mereka siap menghadapi tantangan di masyarakat, serta diharapkan dapat menjadi referensi bagi lembaga pendidikan lain dalam mengembangkan program pendidikan serupa.

Received: 26 January 2025; Revised: 28 March 2025; Accepted: 29 April 2025



<http://doi.org/10.55080/jpn.v4i1.186>

This is an open-access article under the CC-BY license

1. Introduction

The era of globalization is characterized by rapid changes in various aspects of life; individuals need to be equipped with relevant practical skills in order to adapt and contribute positively to society (Lewandowski et al., 2022). Practical skills are essential in facing the challenges of globalization (Fekih Zguir et al., 2021). The right skills enable individuals to adjust to changes that occur, both in the world of work and in social interactions (Schuck et al., 2024). For example, digital capabilities are becoming one of the most sought-after skills in today's job market, where many companies are turning to technology to improve efficiency and productivity. Soffi et al. (2025) suggest that around 85 million jobs will be lost, but 97 million new jobs will emerge that require new skills (Soffi et al., 2025). It is important for individuals to continuously develop relevant practical skills in order to adapt to change and contribute positively in this increasingly complex society.

Rapid social and economic changes demand the development of education that emphasizes 21st-century skills (Thornhill-Miller et al., 2023). Education should not only focus on theoretical knowledge but also on developing practical and critical competencies (Kannan & Garad, 2021). Redhana (2019) stated that learning that integrates critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication skills will prepare students to face the dynamics of the future world of work (Redhana, 2019). Data shows that individuals who possess these skills have a greater chance of success and contribute significantly in various sectors. Therefore, curriculum changes and learning methods need to be directed at strengthening these skills so that education can meet the demands of globalization and the times.

Education is a major factor that is very important in human life (Zuhdi et al., 2021). This is because education allows a person to choose a path in life and achieve the desired goals. For example, through education, one can develop a character that is faithful, responsible, gentle, and caring towards others. In contrast, without education, one tends to have an attitude of tyranny, irresponsibility, and rudeness. Therefore, reforms in the education system must continue to be made in order to effectively meet the needs and face the challenges of the times.

Effective educational reform must provide a curriculum that not only focuses on academic knowledge but also develops students' life skills (Khasawneh, 2024). This is important because the global challenges faced by today's youth require more than just theoretical knowledge. Students need to be equipped with practical

skills and a strong mentality to be able to adapt and innovate in various situations. Research shows that life skills-oriented education can increase student motivation and help students become more creative individuals who are ready to face challenges (Parmar, 2022). For example, educational programs that integrate practical projects and contextual learning have been shown to increase student engagement and prepare santri for the world of work. Thus, implementing a curriculum that emphasizes the development of life skills will produce learners who are more meaningful and ready for the future, making education a solution to meet the demands of the times.

In achieving a deeper meaning of life, individuals need to have the ability to live a happy life, which is influenced by various elements of life, such as family, neighbours, and society (Sameer et al., 2022). Happiness and meaning in life are not only determined by personal achievements but also by healthy interactions and relationships with the surrounding environment (Gautam et al., 2024). The changes that occur in life require individuals to have adequate skills in order to deal with them well (Yamada et al., 2023). In this context, the implementation of life skills education in schools focuses on two main types of skills, namely generic skills and specific skills (Hvalby et al., 2024). Generic skills include personal skills, such as critical thinking and self-awareness, and social skills, such as empathic communication and cooperation. Meanwhile, specific skills include academic and vocational skills that are relevant to the needs of the world of work. Thus, by developing both types of skills through life skills education, students will be better prepared to face the changes and challenges of life so that they can achieve happiness and deeper meaning in their lives.

The purpose of this study is to explore the effectiveness of life skills education in preparing students to face the challenges of globalization and social change. This research will analyze how the development of practical and social skills can improve students' readiness to adapt to the dynamics of the world of work and social interaction. Focusing on skills such as communication, collaboration and critical thinking, this research aims to provide insights into how education can transform to meet the evolving needs of the times. In addition, the study will also evaluate various teaching methods that have proven effective in integrating life skills into the curriculum, as well as their impact on student motivation and engagement.

Life skills education integrated into the curriculum will produce graduates who are not only academically prepared but also able to contribute positively in a changing society (Isaksen et al., 2025). The novelty of this research lies in the holistic approach that combines practical and social skills in one educational framework, in contrast to previous studies that often separate the two aspects. The research will also explore the specific impact of innovative teaching methods, such as project-based learning and collaborative learning, which have not been widely researched in the context of life skills education. Thus, the results of this research are expected to make new contributions to the development of educational curricula that are more relevant and responsive to the challenges of globalization, as well as provide practical guidance for educators and policymakers in creating a future-ready generation.

2. Methods

This research method uses a qualitative descriptive approach to explain the implementation of life skills education at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Campus 5. This research was conducted at the Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Campus 5 location, with the main participant being Brother Musyaffak Khalil, the head of staff of *Kulliyatul Mu'allimin al-Islamiyyah* (KMI). The data used consists of primary data obtained through in-depth interviews and secondary data taken from observations and documents. Research instruments include interview guides, observation sheets, and related documents. The data collection process was conducted through three methods: interview, observation, and documentation. Data analysis was performed in three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Sugiyono, 2016). Data reduction was done by simplifying the information obtained, data presentation was organized in a structured narrative, and conclusions were drawn through the interpretation of the results. Data validity was strengthened through source and method triangulation, where data were compared from various participants, and the results of interviews, observations, and documentation were combined to reduce bias and increase the credibility of the research.

3. Result and Discussion

According to Evertsen & Brevik (2024), life skills or life skills are the ability to behave adaptively and positively, which makes a person able to master effectively the needs and challenges of everyday life (Evertsen & Brevik, 2024). Then, the concept was adopted into Indonesian as life skills, which is the ability a person has to be willing and brave to face life and life problems naturally without feeling depressed, then proactively and creatively seek and find solutions to overcome these life problems (Junita, 2021). Life skills can be grouped into five aspects: (1) namely skills about self or personal abilities, (2) social skills, (3) rational thinking skills, and (4) academic skills and vocational skills. In daily life, these skills do not function on their own but are integrated into exclusive educational programs for each group. However, some programs put more emphasis on certain skills while still providing the cultivation of other skills.

3.1. *Integration of Teaching and Extracurricular Activities in Life Skill Education*

After the author conducted research, Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Campus 5 implemented life skills education by integrating teaching and learning activities (KBM) with extracurricular activities because what teachers teach students in the classroom they will apply in their daily lives. One proof of its implementation is that they are educated in various activities such as organization. They are required to be able to be anything in any section; of course, it cannot be separated from the guidance and direction of the activity supervising teacher.

"Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Campus 5, life skills activities are closely related to extracurricular activities, where what is taught in class is applied in daily life in the hut. This life skill is clearly seen in the organizational aspect, where santri are educated to play a role in various positions, such as being a secretary, through the guidance provided (KMI chief of staff)."

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Campus 5 implements life skills education by integrating teaching and learning activities (KBM: *Kegiatan Belajar Mengajar*)

with extracurricular activities. This is done so that what is taught by teachers to santri in the classroom can be applied in everyday life. This integration can be seen in various activities, such as organization, where students are educated to play a role in multiple positions, such as being a secretary, through the guidance provided by the supervising teacher.

3.2. *Development of Specific and Generic Skills in Life Skills*

The purpose of life skills education, according to Pondok Modern Gontor Campus 5, is to form students to become human beings who are beneficial to others or others. The output is that students can not only speak theoretically but can do the theory practically so that it can be an example for others. Therefore, santri can directly contribute to real life in society.

Life skills education at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Campus 5 emphasizes the development of academic and vocational skills. Academic skills are important for mastering science, while vocational skills are needed for practical skills in the world of work. Through the development of these two skills, Santri is prepared to compete in the job market and contribute effectively to society. Thus, the integration of academic and vocational skills is key in equipping santri to face the challenges of life after formal education.

The implementation of Life Skill education at Pondok Modern Gontor Campus 5 itself is in accordance with the objectives of national education, namely to educate the nation's life and form human beings who are devoted to God Almighty, virtuous, physically healthy, spiritually healthy, independent, have skills and are responsible for society and nationality. This can be seen from the influence of life skills education on the character of students. With the existence of life skills education, the ability or potential that exists within the students increases.

This is supported by the seriousness of Pondok Modern Gontor Campus 5 in carrying out activities and always striving to improve the quality of education in Pondok Modern Gontor Campus 5. Some of the steps taken are as follows: First, the integration of the educational curriculum between teaching and extracurricular activities. Curriculum activities are handled by Kulliyatul Mu'allimin al-Islamiyyah in the form of a standardized and inviolable syllabus because the syllabus is in contact with the Gontor Center. If the Gontor Center changes, the automation at Pondok Modern Gontor Campus 5 also changes by following the curriculum in the Gontor Center. This is certainly inseparable from the evaluation that is always carried out as material for improvement. In an effort to integrate teaching education with extracurricular activities, KMI works closely with Santri Care staff by collaborating and synchronizing between teaching education and extracurricular activities. Cooperation between KMI and Santri Care is also carried out so that there is no collision between KMI and Santri Care activities.

Second, preparing teachers' human resources carefully, Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor 5 strives to prepare qualified teachers. Some of them are by conducting annual activities, namely upgrading new KMI teachers. This aims to create teachers who are truly ready to teach. Students are taught by making teaching preparations, how to teach, and even watered with advice aimed at becoming teachers who really teach with full sincerity. Furthermore, before the learning process, all teachers are required to make teaching preparations and report to senior teachers who are already on standby in the KMI office. This aims to safeguard and guard students so that what teachers teach students is in

accordance with the curriculum and does not deviate. In addition, for teachers who teach rather difficult material, KMI staff provide facilities in the form of these activities to provide understanding to teachers about a learning material that is directly guided by senior teachers or teachers who are considered experts in the field. When teachers teach the material, they get an understanding and can provide good knowledge to students.

In addition to improving the quality of learning, Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, Campus 5 also facilitates students with various activities and skills to support students' life skills. This is expected so that students are able to answer the challenges of the times and be able to compete in the vocational world. For example, in the field of information technology, PMDG Campus 5 Banyuwangi provides DCC (Darussalam Komputer Center); this is expected so that students are not blind and rigid with technology, at least students master the basic theory of computer science itself, especially in this modern era, information technology plays a big role in various things.

In addition to being introduced to information technology, PMDG Campus 5 Darul Muttaqqin Banyuwangi also provides special activities and skills to students, such as entrepreneurship education, hand skills, artistic activities, sports activities, thinking skills, and leadership skills.

Entrepreneurship education, for example, at PMDG Campus 5 Darul Muttaqqin Banyuwangi teaches students to become entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship in the field of trade, for example, for children who are already in grade 5 KMI and grade 6, santri are given the mandate to handle student cooperatives and student canteens. In it, students are trained to handle money in and out of the section, the needs of cooperatives and canteens, negotiate with the community, maintain trust and make weekly section reports.

Hand skills education is also the same; many efforts have been made by Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Campus 5 to improve the life skills of santri in hand skills activities. For example, Painting, Beautiful, Painting, and Writing (LIMIT) is a community of students who pursue painting, beautiful writing, sketching, Arabic khat, making decorations for various cottage events and so on. A similar activity is *Gagasan Santri Terampil dan Berdaya* (GASTRADA), which is a community of students who pursue hand skills, such as making caricatures, making miniatures and so on. In this activity, santri are not only educated to produce work, but with skilful activities, santri can become human beings who are painstaking, patient, able to work in teams, and earnest.

Likewise with artistic activities, some santri activities such as Jam'iyyatu Qurra', namely the santri community who are members of the Qur'an activities, starting from reading the Qur'an with various kinds of songs or langgam, nasyid, hadrah, and also memorizing the Qur'an. It aims to maintain and preserve the Qur'an as a lifestyle. Other art activities, such as PERBEDA (Persatuan Beladiri Darussalam), are a community of students who pursue martial arts. There are so many educational values that can be taken in pencak silat, such as courage, toughness, physical strength, patience, and of course must remain tawadlu' (humble).

And the next is sports activities. PMDG Campus 5 Darul Muttaqqin provides almost all sports activities needed by students, such as soccer, poly ball, table tennis, futsal, badminton, archery, and so on. In these sports activities, students are educated to become physically healthy human beings, fully concentrated and painstaking, so that they can support the life skills of students in the future.

In processing life skills education at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, Campus 5 has been running well and conducive. This can be seen from the management of class management, and students have been adjusted to the needs and materials. The process of life skills education at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, Campus 5, has also been regulated in the education curriculum set by Pondok. Life skills education at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Campus 5 is also designed as a preparation for students to face their lives in the future.

3.3. *Efforts to support students' life skills*

The efforts of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, Campus 5, in supporting students' life skills. Self-awareness skills, for example, in this skill at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, Campus 5, five daily prayers are applied in the mosque and the dormitory. Each santri gets a schedule to become an imam or muezzin and is even trained to give a custom after each prayer. Furthermore, this awareness skill is expected to be implemented in social life later. By instilling self-awareness skills, students can become members of society who can foster and maintain good relations with other communities. In daily life, this implementation can be seen in the attitude of students toward their fellow friends and their teachers, having self-confidence, and obeying all existing regulations.

As a permanent educational institution, Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Campus 5 is very concerned about the environment; the implementation of life skills that can be seen is that students maintain cleanliness, do not litter, clean the yard and yard of the dormitory, dormitory room, bathroom in turn, and do community service every Friday morning after doing a morning run.

Not only that, Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, Campus 5, also instils thinking skills in students. This is done by giving examples of how to overcome and solve problems simply and on target. This is intended to train students on how to solve and overcome problems with rational, mature and deliberative thinking. Making the best decision in problem-solving is done with the opinion of ideas or by discussing. It is from this activity that students will grow in rational thinking skills.

The implementation of life skills at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, Campus 5, includes curricular and extracurricular activities. Because the implementation of life skills education is organized into one curriculum, it can be said that the implementation of life skills education at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, Campus 5, uses integrative implementation.

In all the processes of teaching and learning activities and extracurricular activities that have been carried out, the results are needed in order to know the extent to which students can receive the learning provided and the extent to which students can develop the knowledge they get. From the results, it can be seen whether the implementation of life skills education can be said to be successful or not in making students able to make these life skills as provisions in education later after graduating from school.

4. Conclusion

The implementation of life skills education at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, Campus 5, has been well implemented through various aspects, namely academic, vocational, self-awareness skills, and personal skills. Integration between curricular and extracurricular activities can be seen from the seriousness

of preparing an integrated curriculum and mature teacher human resources. Vocational aspects are also facilitated by various activities such as entrepreneurship, hand skills, arts, and sports. In addition, efforts to form a person who is faithful, devoted, and able to think rationally are the focus of developing self-awareness and personal skills. Therefore, researchers recommend that teachers at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Campus 5 be more varied in improving the implementation of life skills education through training so that they can become professional and creative educators. Meanwhile, students are expected to develop personal, social, academic, and vocational skills further in order to create a balance between the four, optimize their potential, and prepare strong provisions for the future.

5. References

- Evertsen, I., & Brevik, L. M. (2024). Life skills education in secondary language classrooms: Empathy, communication and interpersonal relations. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 57(2), 164–183. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2024.2436383>
- Fekih Zguir, M., Dubis, S., & Koç, M. (2021). Embedding Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and SDGs values in the curriculum: A comparative review on Qatar, Singapore and New Zealand. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 319(October 2020), 128534. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2021.128534>
- Gautam, S., Jain, A., Chaudhary, J., Gautam, M., Gaur, M., & Grover, S. (2024). Concept of mental health and mental well-being, it's determinants and coping strategies. *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, 66, S231–S244. https://doi.org/10.4103/indianjpsychiatry.indianjpsychiatry_707_23
- Hvalby, L., Guldbrandsen, A., & Fandrem, H. (2024). Life Skills in Compulsory Education: A Systematic Scoping Review. *Education Sciences*, 14(10). <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14101112>
- Isaksen, A. R., Mathé, N. E. H., Brevik, L. M., & Gudmundsdottir, G. B. (2025). Life skills education as a balancing act: Preparing students to handle life challenges in upper secondary English and social science classrooms. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 159(August 2024). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2025.104992>
- Junita, A. (2021). *Leadership di Era Digital-Kepemimpinan Agile 4.0*.
- Kannan, K. S. P. N., & Garad, A. (2021). Competencies of quality professionals in the era of industry 4.0: a case study of electronics manufacturer from Malaysia. *International Journal of Quality and Reliability Management*, 38(3), 839–871. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJQRM-04-2019-0124>
- Khasawneh, M. A. S. (2024). The Efficacy of a Programme Utilizing Digital Learning Technology in Fostering the Life Skills of Students with Learning Disabilities. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 23(4), 18–33. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.23.4.2>
- Lewandowski, P., Park, A., Hardy, W., Du, Y., & Wu, S. (2022). Technology, Skills, and Globalization: Explaining International Differences in Routine and Nonroutine Work Using Survey Data. *World Bank Economic Review*, 36(3), 687–

708. <https://doi.org/10.1093/wber/lhac005>
- Parmar, D. (2022). Life Skills Education: Importance and Strategies. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts (IJCRT)*, 10(10), 208–212. https://www.ijcrt.org/viewfull.php?&p_id=IJCRTU020037
- Redhana, I. W. (2019). Mengembangkan Keterampilan Abad Ke-21 Dalam Pembelajaran Kimia. *Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan Kimia*, 13(1). <https://doi.org/10.15294/jipk.v13i1.17824>
- Sameer, Y., Eid, Y., & Veenhoven, R. (2022). Perceived meaning of life and satisfaction with life: A research synthesis using an online finding archive. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.957235>
- Schuck, R. K., Dwyer, P., Baiden, K. M. P., Williams, Z. J., & Wang, M. (2024). Social Validity of Pivotal Response Treatment for Young Autistic Children: Perspectives of Autistic Adults. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 54(2), 423–441. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-022-05808-4>
- Soffi, D., Hasibuan, F., & Sinuraya, S. Y. (2025). Strategi Pengembangan Kompetensi Karyawan Untuk Menghadapi Era Digitalisasi. *Indonesian Journal of Economics , Management , and Accounting*, 2(1), 82–87. <https://jurnal.intekom.id/index.php/ijema/article/view/1038>
- Sugiyono, D. (2016). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*.
- Thornhill-Miller, B., Camarda, A., Mercier, M., Burkhardt, J. M., Morisseau, T., Bourgeois-Bougrine, S., Vinchon, F., El Hayek, S., Augereau-Landais, M., Mourey, F., Feybesse, C., Sundquist, D., & Lubart, T. (2023). Creativity, Critical Thinking, Communication, and Collaboration: Assessment, Certification, and Promotion of 21st Century Skills for the Future of Work and Education. *Journal of Intelligence*, 11(3). <https://doi.org/10.3390/jintelligence11030054>
- Yamada, Y., Tsuchiya, H., Yamaguchi, K., & Katagami, E. (2023). Moderating role of life skills for stress responses and COVID-19-related perceived stressors among high school student-athletes. *Asian Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 3(3), 147–153. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajsep.2022.12.002>
- Zuhdi, A., Firman, F., & Ahmad, R. (2021). The importance of education for humans. *SCHOULID: Indonesian Journal of School Counseling*, 6(1), 22. <https://doi.org/10.23916/08742011>