

# Curriculum to Enhance Life Skills and Personal Growth among COVID-19 Pandemic Situation

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## Abstract

Life skills and personal growth in education are crucial skills and students' core competencies to learn in this modern world. The objectives of this research were 1) to study the guidelines for developing life skills and personal growth, 2) to develop a curriculum to enhance life skills and personal growth in the situation of the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic 3) to study the results of implementing the curriculum to enhance life skills and personal growth. The participants were 39 primary school students from a small school in Maharakham province. The research tools included the curriculum for enhancing life skills and personal

growth, managing learning, and an observation form on life skills behavior and personal growth. The results of the study showed that 1) guidelines for developing learner competency at the basic education level on life skills and personal growth; 2) a curriculum to enhance life skills and personal growth consists of the background of the curriculum, course objectives, content arrangement, activities, measurement, and evaluation for elementary school students in the situation of the coronavirus disease 2019. The content consists of learning about the pandemic, making alcohol gel, creative problem solving, positive communication, media use, and emotional control; 3) the learners who received training from the curriculum to enhance their life skills and their own prosperity have a level of practice in life skills and personal growth at a high level. It could be stated that enhancing life skills and personal growth should encourage students in their learning development.

**Keywords:** Curriculum, Life skills and personal growth, Pandemic

## 1. Introduction

As the effects of the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic have caused worldwide issues, everyone needs to be aware of the consequences of this phenomenon. It is important to build understanding and knowledge to prepare for and manage subsequent crises that may arise and, in addition, to prepare policies and measures to support the future health and social predicaments caused by the pandemic (Department of Disease Control, 2020). A big challenge may occur in terms of knowledge, solutions, remedies, and practices in all areas. It should be noted the need to understand and manage current conditions and ensuing trends and summarize lessons to prepare for any potential pandemic crisis in the near or distant future (Onyema et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2020).

As of June 19, 2020, more than 8,607,421 people were infected, 456,943 were killed, and 4,557,586 recovered worldwide (Worldometer, 2020). In its report for October 8, 2020, the world saw more than 36,401,583 cases, 1,060,563 deaths and 27,418,538 people recovered. In Thailand, in the report of October 8, 2020, 3,622 cases were accumulated, with 59 deaths, and 3,439 cases of people recovering, according to the Bangkok Insight Editorial Team (2020), who are conducting research in order to develop vaccines for COVID-19.

However, there is currently no effective vaccine for COVID-19 (World Health Organization, 2020). This circumstance showed the need to adapt and create ways in solving a crisis in different contexts. The impact situation and response due to the pandemic crisis is an important lesson. Going forwards, it should be filtered, analyzed, synthesized, and invented continuously (Bond, 2020; Siriburiruk, 2020). Therefore, the researchers looked at the importance of the issue for preparing the youth of today and future generations by improving the performance of life skills and personal growth during the situation of the coronavirus 2019 pandemic. Furthermore, this has been developed as content for educational purposes, including learning, exchanging ideas, training to prepare, revising the presentation of information and knowledge in order to continue to be cooperative at local, national, and global levels and also reduce panic to younger and future generations. Taking everything into account, it is important to realise the changes towards a new way of life that will inevitably follow this crisis (Inthiya, 2016; Cassidy et al., 2018; Panasuna, 2019).

According to the Office of the Education Council (2019), the directions to student development to increase competency-based learning in life skills and personal growth in each department to illustrate the Thai language department can be summarized as follows: first, learn to handle life, be self-reliant, and develop oneself through listening and reading from a variety of knowledgeable sources. Second, transfer knowledge, exchange ideas about life management, and balance self-reliance and self-development through speaking and writing in different ways. Last, perceive and appreciate the value of the Thai language and culture.

The researchers recognized and framed the performance base curriculum to develop the younger generation to be competent in response to today's global changes known as VUCA World: Volatility is easy to change, difficult to predict, uncertain, unclear, complex, ambiguous, vague, and unpredictable. Thus, the framework for life skills and personal growth in pandemic situations guides students' performance in the face of change and difficulties through the process of learning using problems as a base and learning where learners face phenomena. It is a way to develop sustainable education, and the community is involved in learning management (Tongaht, 2018; Thavinpipatkul, 2020).

### *1.1 Research Objectives*

1. To explore how to develop life skills and personal growth.
2. To develop a curriculum to enhance life skills and personal growth during the coronavirus 2019 pandemic.
3. To study the effects of implementing the curriculum to enhance life skills and personal growth in the situation of the coronavirus 2019 pandemic.

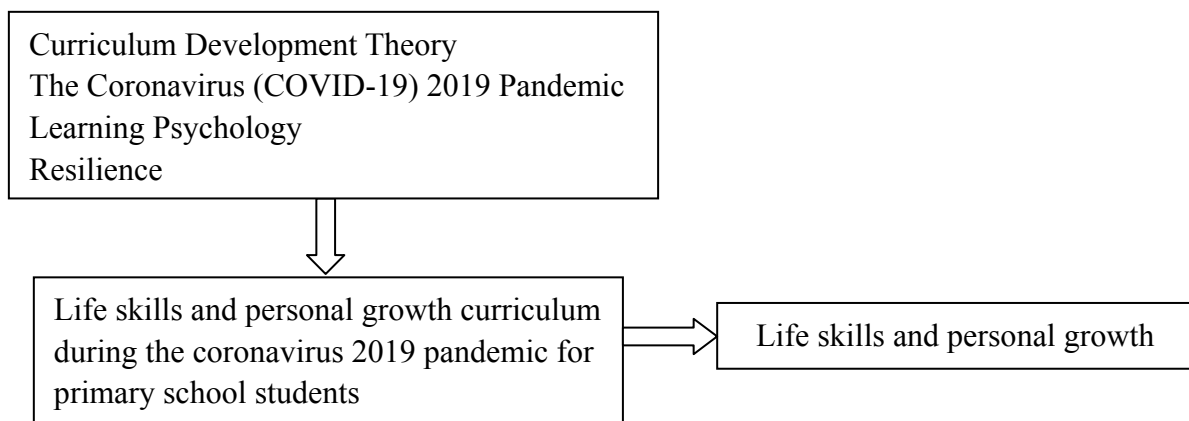


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

## 2. Method

Table 1. Shows the method of conducting research, experimental phases, and processes

<b>Research Phase/Objectives</b>	<b>Methods</b>	<b>Procedures/Target group/Tool and Tool Quality Determination</b>	<b>Results</b>
Phase 1: To examine the context and approach to enhance life skills and personal growth in the situation of a new coronavirus pandemic in 2019.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Studied approach, theory, documents, and related research articles.</li> <li>2. Studied the current context and problem.</li> <li>3. Studied how to enhance life skills and personal growth.</li> </ol>	Synthesis documents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Current contexts and state of the problem.</li> <li>2. An exemplary approach to life skills and personal growth in the situation of a new coronavirus 2019 pandemic.</li> </ol>
Phase 2: To develop the curriculum to enhance life skills and personal growth in the situation of a new coronavirus pandemic in 2019.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Drafted and developed the curriculum to enhance life skills and personal growth.</li> <li>2. Explored the quality of the curriculum.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Drafted the curriculum.</li> <li>2. Five experts evaluated the drafted curriculum.</li> <li>3. Adjusted the curriculum according to the recommendations of the experts.</li> </ol>	The curriculum to enhance life skills and personal growth in the situation of a new coronavirus pandemic in 2019.
Phase 3: To implement the curriculum to enhance life skills and personal growth in the situation of a new coronavirus pandemic in 2019.	Implemented the curriculum by manipulating One group posttest Design research scheme.	Method: Managed learning according to the curriculum framework set by the participatory community and manipulated the One group posttest Design research scheme.  Target group: Primary school students  Tools and Quality Determination: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Life skills and personal growth assessment form.</li> <li>2. The curriculum of life skills and personal growth.</li> <li>3. Learning observation form.</li> </ol>	Innovative curriculum to enhance life skills and personal growth.

## *2.1 Participants*

The participants in this study were selected by using purposive sampling from a small school in Mahasarakham province. All 39 participants were Thai primary school students from primary school 1 to primary school 6.

## *2.2 Instruments*

The instruments used in this research study included life skills and personal growth observation form and life skills and personal growth curriculum.

## **3. Results**

*Phase 1:* The results of the study document the curriculum development to enhance life skills and personal growth. The researchers synthesized the development process and determined the development stages into four steps:

Step 1: To start with, it defined the objectives of the curriculum, set the objectives, studied the information from the school context, and then studied the coronavirus 2019 pandemic and learning psychology. Last but not least, it studied developmental psychology to determine the objectives to be employed to develop the curriculum.

Step 2: Choosing the learning experience students need to learn to achieve the curriculum objective and selecting activities and experiences that require students to perform independently. Likewise, it could be in group work or single work format process and affect the objective of a preset curriculum.

Step 3: Organizing learning experiences in units requires exploring time and content relationships, with criteria for an effective arrangement which were continuity, sequence, and integration.

Step 4: Evaluation assessment methods and procedures must be clearly defined, and the evaluation must be consistent with the intended objectives.

The researchers studied the information and guidelines for improving the performance of students of a basic education level in terms of life skills and personal growth. It is described as self-awareness, self-sufficiency, and living according to the philosophy of a self-sufficiency economy. Moreover, to be able to manage their own matters in a balanced way: including physically, mentally, emotionally, and intelligently, be socially aware, healthy, well disciplined, have Thai personality traits, maintain good relationships with other people and be responsible for their roles to families and society. Furthermore, students need to be ready for change, encounter problems quickly, accept the consequences and recover from problems, and lead themselves to learn, develop and improve their life to be happy, prosperous, and with sustainable progress (Office of the Educational Council, 2019).

*Phase 2:* Curriculum to enhance life skills and personal growth in the situation of a new coronavirus pandemic in 2019.

Based on the study of the basic information in phase 1, the researchers took everything into

account and defined it as an outline, and drafted the training curriculum with the curriculum elements and details, including vision, mission, objectives, curriculum structure, curriculum analysis table, course description, teaching lessons plan, guidelines for teaching and learning activities, evaluation measurement, principles of measurement, practical types of practical measurements, life skills and personal growth curriculum in the coronavirus 2019 pandemic and took the drafted curriculum to check the consistency values by experts, revisions, to find out the possibility of the curriculum being used to organize learning activities. Finally, taking the drafted curriculum to the experts to consider the consistency of the composition of the curriculum and the objectives of developing a training curriculum. The evaluation results appeared as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The average of the opinion levels of experts considers the consistent values of the curriculum to the point of objectives in the development of the school curriculum

Topic	List of Considerations	The Average Opinion Levels of Experts	Meaning
1	Reasons and necessity of the curriculum with the objectives of the curriculum.	0.80	Relevant
2	The aim of the curriculum with the objectives of the course.	0.80	Relevant
3	The objective of the curriculum with the curriculum contents.	0.60	Relevant
4	Curriculum contents and instructional activities according to the learning activities plan.	0.60	Relevant
5	Learning activities and evaluation assessments.	1.00	Relevant
6	Evaluation assessments and the objectives of the curriculum.	0.60	Relevant
7	Evaluation assessments and evaluation assessment instruments.	0.80	Relevant
8	The objectives of the curriculum with learning activities according to the learning management plans.	0.80	Relevant
9	Learning activities with teaching materials.	0.80	Relevant
10	Learning activities with curriculum to enhance life skills and personal growth in the situation of a new coronavirus 2019 pandemic.	1.00	Relevant
Total		0.78	Relevant

From Table 2, experts found that the composition of the curriculum, the curriculum to enhance life skills and personal growth during the coronavirus 2019 pandemic situation was consistent with the objectives of the development of the training curriculum and also was

consistent in all elements and when considering the overall picture, the drafted curriculum was consistent with the objectives of the development of the training curriculum (averaged at the level of 0.60-1.00).

However, experts have provided additional feedback and suggestions, the researchers presenting them in the following order:

In topic 3, the contents of the curriculum should be improved to be more diverse, allowing for the integration of contents across learning materials that are relevant or interconnected.

In topic 4, learning activities should be improved to be diverse. Moreover, there is no need to put thought processes into solving problems in all activities. It should provide flexibility in carrying out activities—emphasis on students to think and act on their own.

In topic 5, the assessments should be improved in each activity; there should be a wide range of assessments and measurements in a variety of individual and group characteristics. As well as clearly define measurement criteria. Assessment methods can be measured in a variety of ways, such as observation, testing, inspection, etc.

In topic 9, teaching materials or learning materials should be used in a variety of media in each learning activity plan. All teaching materials are not required; students may use self-regulated learning methods such as interviews with knowledgeable people, searching for information from ready-made media or the Internet, etc.

In conclusion, the five experts stated that the draft of developing a training curriculum based on the life skills and personal growth during the coronavirus 2019 pandemic developed by the researchers was appropriate to use in research as a way of developing a training curriculum. The researchers adjusted and updated the curriculum draft according to the expert recommendations.

*Phase 3: Results of implementation of curriculum to enhance life skills and personal growth during coronavirus 2019 pandemic.*

Table 3. Summary of the practice level of curriculum implementation to enhance life skills and personal growth

Aspects	Average (X)	Interpretation
1. Know yourself and be able to tell what you can do.	3.84	High
2. Have discipline in compliance with canonical hygiene.	3.69	High
3. Be careful about any harmful things and tell or ask questions to the teacher.	3.51	High
4. Be able to control emotions and adapt to the situation.	4.00	High
5. Be able to follow the rules and agreements.	4.26	High
6. Be able to ignore actions that should not be taken and intend to do good deeds.	3.74	High
7. Participate in recreational activities, admire the nature around and participate in arts and cultural activities.	4.28	High
Total	3.91	High

From Table 3, it could be concluded that students trained by implementing the curriculum to enhance life skills and personal growth program during the situation of the coronavirus 2019 pandemic have a high level of practice in life skills and personal growth.

#### 4. Discussion

The approach of life skills is a person's ability to think, determine, solve problems and adapt to appropriate behavior. It can handle needs, problems, and situations to live properly within a competitive society; life skills are another necessary skill. For living in a complex society in the modern era, skills will support and help reduce the important issues that will threaten the lives of individuals (Office of the Educational Council, 2019).

According to WHO (1997), life skills are the ability to adapt and behave in the right direction. To be able to effectively face the challenges that arise in your day-to-day life and also to be edifying. It is possible to maintain a healthy mental and healthy condition and adapt and behave in the right way. Face pressure or impact on the environment that surrounds you. This ability consists of cognition, attitude, and skills to deal with the problems that surround it in today's society. Another point, similar to what UNICEF (2019) expressed, is that it is the ability to use knowledge, attitudes, and skills that help to support a person's behavior to be able to take responsibility for themselves. For living by creating a good alternative to resisting peer pressure and dealing with life-threatening things.

Besides, it is also skills that will help individuals adapt effectively to the environment. It also helps to strengthen lifestyle in various areas, including personal aspects, family, society, and groups of friends, to be more complete. In addition, it can be stated that life skills are an important performance that learners should achieve in today's society because it is a lifelong



learning outcome that evolves with the changing society and culture (Thanatkarn, Jomhongbhibhat, & Gumjudpai, 2017).

Nowadays, the world has changed greatly and faces a serious problem due to the coronavirus 2019 pandemic all over the world; likewise, learners need to be able to manage the problem and adapt to the situation. Schools, communities, and society should invest in physical, mental, and epidemic health care, including raising awareness, stating the importance of exercise, and choosing clean, hygienic, and beneficial foods. The main thing is that the big change in the behavior of the world and people in society is to wear a mask every time in daily life during the coronavirus pandemic. The mentioned above is a way to enhance modern living skills for learners to realize and value themselves and others.

## 5. Conclusion

The results of the curriculum to enhance life skills and personal growth during the situation of the coronavirus 2019 pandemic, the results summarizing the level of practices, life skills, and personal growth, overall and individual scores were very high. In conclusion, students trained by the life skills and personal growth program during the coronavirus 2019 pandemic had a high level of practice in life skills and their personal growth.

## 6. Suggestions

- (1) Short-term training courses should be developed to strengthen students to achieve other learning abilities, such as healthy self-management performance.
- (2) The scope of life skills and personal growth should be expanded.

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