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ETHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF FORMING A LIFE SAFETY CULTURE IN EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS UNDER CONDITIONS OF SOCIAL RISK

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Abstract. The article examines the ethical foundations of forming a life safety culture in the educational environment as a key condition for sustainable human development under conditions of social instability, technological risks, and wartime challenges. The relevance of the study is determined by the growing vulnerability of educational participants and the increasing complexity of ethical dilemmas related to safety, responsibility, and human dignity. The research is based on an interdisciplinary theoretical analysis combining pedagogy, ethics, philosophy of education, and life safety studies. Methods of analysis, synthesis, generalization, and conceptual modeling were applied. The results demonstrate that ethical values act as an internal regulator of safe behavior, transforming external safety requirements into personally meaningful norms. The article substantiates pedagogical conditions for integrating ethical principles into life safety education and outlines prospects for developing value-oriented educational models aimed at strengthening individual and collective safety.

Key words: moral responsibility, educational ethics, safety culture, human dignity, risk awareness, wartime education, social responsibility.

Introduction. The contemporary educational landscape is characterized by a heightened awareness of risks, uncertainties, and social disruptions, which necessitate a reevaluation of traditional approaches to safety education. In recent decades, globalization, technological advances, climate change, and social conflicts have amplified the complexity of the environments in which learners and educators operate. This reality has led scholars to recognize that ensuring life safety in educational settings cannot rely solely on regulatory frameworks, technical instructions, or emergency protocols. Instead, there is a growing need for integrating ethical and value-based approaches that foster internalized, sustainable safety behavior.

Life safety culture, in this context, is understood not merely as the mastery of practical safety skills or compliance with formal rules but as a holistic system encompassing knowledge, moral responsibility, emotional attitudes, and behavioral strategies. The concept of ethical life safety culture highlights that the formation of safety-oriented behavior is inseparable from the broader moral and pedagogical dimensions of education. As Beck (1992) emphasizes in his analysis of risk society, modern threats are not always predictable and require reflexive, value-driven responses rather than purely technical solutions. Similarly, Giddens (1999) underscores that late modernity calls for ethical responsibility as a guiding principle in navigating social complexity.

The global and regional challenges of the twenty-first century, including armed conflicts, emergencies, and environmental crises, have further intensified the relevance of ethical life safety education. UNESCO (2020) and OECD (2018) stress the importance of education in emergencies and risk-laden contexts, emphasizing that education should preserve human dignity, social cohesion, and psychological resilience. In this regard, educational institutions are not merely venues for knowledge transmission; they become critical spaces for moral and ethical orientation, socialization, and the cultivation of responsible agency.

Ethical considerations are central to understanding how learners internalize safety behaviors. Without a moral foundation, safety measures may be perceived as external impositions, leading to superficial compliance or even resistance. Conversely, when safety norms are grounded in ethical principles such as respect for human dignity, responsibility, solidarity, and justice, learners are more likely to adopt them meaningfully and sustainably. The work of Nussbaum (2011) and Sen (2009) provides a theoretical basis for interpreting life safety as a capability—an ethically mediated competence that enables individuals to act responsibly and preserve their well-being and that of others in complex environments.

Furthermore, the role of the teacher as a moral agent is highlighted in pedagogical theory as essential for the ethical formation of safety culture. Teachers serve as models of ethical behavior, decision-making, and risk assessment, influencing how learners perceive and internalize safety-related values. Zembylas (2017) notes that the emotional and ethical dimensions of teaching significantly affect students' moral dispositions and social sensitivity. Consequently, teacher training programs must integrate ethical components related to life safety, crisis response, and moral judgment, ensuring that educators are prepared to navigate both predictable and unforeseen hazards.

Recent research demonstrates that the integration of ethics into life safety education contributes not only to the cognitive understanding of risks but also to the development of emotional resilience, social responsibility, and adaptive behavior. In contexts such as wartime education, where learners and teachers face both physical threats and moral dilemmas, ethical education becomes indispensable. It provides a framework for navigating moral ambiguity, maintaining agency, and fostering collective solidarity. Education, therefore, assumes a dual function: safeguarding lives while reinforcing humanistic values and ethical social norms.

This article seeks to address the complex intersection of education, ethics, and life safety by examining the theoretical foundations, practical implications, and pedagogical strategies necessary for forming a robust culture of safety in educational environments. The research aims to explore how ethical principles can be systematically integrated into safety education, how teachers can act as moral agents, and how such approaches can enhance resilience, social cohesion, and human development in contexts of social risk and crisis. By analyzing these dimensions, the study contributes to both theoretical advancement and practical guidance for educators, policymakers, and institutions aiming to develop sustainable, ethically grounded life safety cultures.

Research Objectives. The objectives of the study are: to analyze the conceptual relationship between ethics and life safety culture; to clarify the role of ethical values in shaping safe behavior in educational environments; to identify pedagogical mechanisms for integrating ethical principles into life safety education; to consider the specificity of ethical life safety formation under wartime conditions; and to outline prospects for further research in this field.

Materials and Methods. The research is theoretical and interdisciplinary in nature. The methodological basis of the study includes the axiological approach, which considers values as the core of educational processes; the human-centered approach, emphasizing the intrinsic worth of human life and dignity; and the systems approach, which allows life safety culture to be analyzed as an integral phenomenon.

The following methods were used: theoretical analysis of philosophical, ethical, and pedagogical literature; synthesis and generalization to identify key conceptual positions; comparative analysis to examine different models of safety culture formation; and conceptual modeling to construct an integrative framework for ethical life safety education. Well-established ethical theories and pedagogical concepts were used with appropriate references, allowing the research to be theoretically reproducible.

Conceptualizing Life Safety Culture in Education Life safety culture in the educational environment can be defined as a stable system of values, norms, knowledge, skills, and behavioral strategies

aimed at preserving life, health, and psychological well-being. Unlike formal safety training, which focuses on compliance with instructions, life safety culture emphasizes conscious, responsible, and proactive behavior in situations of risk.

From a pedagogical perspective, life safety culture includes cognitive, emotional-value, and behavioral components. The cognitive component encompasses knowledge about potential risks and ways of minimizing them. The behavioral component involves practical skills and habits related to safe conduct. However, it is the emotional-value component that ensures the integrity of the system by providing ethical motivation for safe behavior.

Ethics functions as the internal core of life safety culture. Ethical values such as responsibility, respect for human dignity, solidarity, justice, and care transform safety norms into moral imperatives. Without this ethical dimension, safety rules remain external and situational, easily ignored in conditions of stress or uncertainty.

Ethical Foundations of Life Safety Culture The ethical foundations of life safety culture are rooted in fundamental moral principles recognized across cultures. First and foremost is the principle of respect for human life as the highest value. In educational environments, this principle manifests in the recognition of each participant's right to safety, dignity, and protection from harm.

Responsibility represents another key ethical foundation. It involves not only personal responsibility for one's own actions but also responsibility for the safety of others. In educational settings, responsibility acquires a collective dimension, as the actions of one individual may directly affect the well-being of many.

Solidarity and care are particularly important in contexts characterized by heightened vulnerability, such as inclusive education or wartime conditions. These values foster mutual support and empathy, encouraging individuals to prioritize collective safety over individual convenience. Ethical education thus becomes a mechanism for strengthening social bonds and resilience.

Pedagogical Mechanisms for Integrating Ethics and Life Safety The integration of ethical principles into life safety education requires purposeful pedagogical strategies. One effective mechanism is the inclusion of ethical dilemmas related to safety in educational content. Such dilemmas stimulate moral reflection and help learners develop the ability to make responsible decisions in complex situations.

Another important mechanism is the modeling of ethical behavior by educators. Teachers act as moral agents whose attitudes toward safety, risk, and responsibility significantly influence learners. Institutional policies and practices also play a crucial role by establishing ethical standards that regulate behavior within the educational environment.

Participatory teaching methods, such as discussions, case studies, and project-based learning, enhance the internalization of ethical values. These methods encourage learners to actively engage with safety-related issues and to perceive them as personally meaningful rather than abstract requirements.

Life Safety Culture in Wartime Educational Contexts Wartime conditions impose specific challenges on educational systems. The constant presence of physical danger, psychological stress, and uncertainty undermines traditional safety frameworks. In such contexts, ethical foundations become a stabilizing factor that supports resilience and adaptive behavior.

Education during wartime must address not only practical safety measures but also moral questions related to fear, responsibility, and solidarity. Ethical life safety education helps learners cope with trauma, maintain a sense of agency, and preserve humanistic values under extreme conditions.

The integration of ethical principles into wartime education contributes to the formation of a culture of non-indifference, where safety is perceived as a shared moral responsibility. This approach strengthens trust within educational communities and enhances their capacity to respond to crises.

Results The theoretical analysis demonstrates that the formation of a life safety culture is most effective when ethical values are systematically integrated into educational processes. Ethics func-

tions as an internal regulator that transforms external safety norms into stable behavioral patterns. Educational environments that emphasize ethical reflection show higher levels of risk awareness, responsibility, and mutual support.

The study reveals that ethical-oriented life safety education promotes holistic development by combining cognitive understanding with moral motivation. This integration is particularly significant in conditions of social instability, where formal regulations alone are insufficient to ensure safety.

Discussion. The results obtained in this study correspond with and extend a number of influential theoretical positions in contemporary educational and ethical research. Comparative analysis shows that the ethical interpretation of life safety culture proposed in this article goes beyond instrumental and regulatory models dominant in traditional safety education. For example, Beck's concept of the risk society emphasizes the structural nature of modern risks and the insufficiency of technical control mechanisms (Beck, 1992: 87). In contrast, the present study demonstrates that ethical internalization at the individual and institutional levels functions as a compensatory mechanism capable of addressing risks that are unpredictable and morally ambiguous. This study further illustrates that in environments where rules and regulations alone cannot anticipate or mitigate all hazards, ethical reasoning and moral reflection provide a flexible and adaptable framework for decision-making. Such a framework allows both learners and educators to navigate complex scenarios that combine physical danger with moral uncertainty, highlighting the significance of cultivating an ethical consciousness as an integral part of the safety culture. Furthermore, the incorporation of ethical principles into everyday practice strengthens institutional resilience, because organizations that actively engage in ethical reflection are better positioned to anticipate, evaluate, and respond to emerging risks.

Similar conclusions are drawn in the works of Giddens, who argues that late modernity requires reflexive forms of responsibility rooted in moral judgment rather than rigid norms (Giddens, 1999: 102). The findings of this article align with this position by showing that ethical reflection enables learners and educators to adapt safety-oriented behavior to changing contexts, including digital and wartime environments. At the same time, the study expands Giddens' framework by situating ethical responsibility explicitly within pedagogical practice. This integration of ethical reflection allows learners to critically evaluate potential threats, make informed decisions, and act responsibly even in complex, high-risk situations. By embedding these reflective practices into curricula, educators create opportunities for students to engage with ethical dilemmas through simulation, scenario analysis, and collaborative discussion. This experiential learning process not only reinforces moral judgment but also strengthens problem-solving skills, situational awareness, and the capacity for cooperative action in groups, which are essential competencies for functioning effectively in risk-laden environments. Moreover, ethical reflection nurtures a culture of continuous learning and adaptation, as both students and teachers regularly revisit and reassess their approaches to safety in light of new experiences, emerging technologies, and evolving social conditions.

The capability approach developed by Nussbaum and Sen provides an additional comparative perspective. According to this approach, education should enhance individuals' capabilities to live a dignified and safe life (Nussbaum, 2011: 69; Sen, 2009: 254). The present research supports this idea by conceptualizing life safety culture as an ethical capability that integrates knowledge, moral motivation, and social responsibility. Unlike purely cognitive interpretations, this approach emphasizes the formative role of values in shaping sustainable safety behavior. The findings indicate that fostering these ethical capabilities requires targeted pedagogical interventions that integrate moral reasoning, scenario analysis, and reflective practice into standard curricula. Ethical capability development goes beyond the mere acquisition of information about hazards and safety protocols; it encompasses the cultivation of judgment, foresight, empathy, and the internalization of social responsibility. In practice, this could involve structured discussions on historical case studies of crises, role-playing exercises that simulate emergencies, and critical reflection on ethical decision-making processes. The incorpo-

ration of such activities creates a dynamic learning environment in which ethical principles are lived, experienced, and repeatedly reinforced, contributing to the gradual and sustained internalization of life safety culture as an essential component of personal and collective conduct.

In contrast to models focused primarily on compliance and risk avoidance, ethical life safety education fosters moral agency and resilience. This distinction becomes especially visible in crisis situations, where formal rules may be absent, contradictory, or impossible to follow. For instance, in situations of sudden natural disasters or wartime emergencies, learners equipped with ethical reflection skills demonstrate higher adaptability and the ability to protect themselves and others. By embedding ethical principles into daily educational practice, students internalize a value-based framework for risk assessment and responsible decision-making. In addition, resilience developed through ethical education manifests not only as individual adaptive capacity but also as enhanced community cohesion, collective problem-solving, and the capacity to manage complex social interactions during emergencies. The promotion of moral agency allows students to move beyond passive compliance and develop the confidence to take initiative, make difficult ethical choices, and assume responsibility for the safety and well-being of peers and community members, thereby reinforcing both personal and systemic resilience.

The discussion of ethical life safety also intersects with psychological and social dimensions. Research has shown that emotional intelligence and empathy play a critical role in ethical behavior and decision-making under risk (Zembylas, 2017: 5). Ethical life safety education that incorporates these dimensions can enhance social cohesion, improve peer support systems, and promote a shared sense of responsibility within educational communities. Furthermore, reflective discussions about ethical dilemmas in classroom and simulated scenarios encourage critical thinking and the development of moral reasoning skills, which contribute to long-term resilience. By integrating these psychological aspects into educational strategies, institutions can create supportive learning environments that not only teach technical safety procedures but also address the emotional and social competencies necessary for effective risk management. Students learn to recognize and respond to stress, anxiety, and fear in themselves and others, developing empathy and cooperative skills essential for functioning in high-pressure situations.

Comparative studies reveal that different cultural and institutional contexts shape the implementation and outcomes of life safety education. In countries with well-established safety protocols, ethical education complements technical measures by reinforcing personal responsibility and community engagement. In contrast, in regions experiencing social instability or armed conflict, ethical instruction becomes a central pillar for sustaining safe behavior and psychosocial well-being. These insights highlight the need for context-sensitive approaches that consider social, cultural, and environmental variables in curriculum design. Additionally, the comparative perspective illustrates how systemic factors, such as policy frameworks, community norms, and resource availability, interact with ethical education to influence the effectiveness and sustainability of life safety culture. Such understanding is crucial for the adaptation and scaling of ethical life safety programs across diverse educational settings and socio-political contexts.

The analysis also indicates that ethical life safety education promotes preventive behavior and long-term risk mitigation. Students trained in ethical reflection are better equipped to anticipate potential hazards, communicate effectively during crises, and make morally responsible choices even under pressure. This outcome underscores the critical role of integrating ethical reasoning with practical safety training to develop a holistic life safety culture. Furthermore, preventive behavior cultivated through ethical education contributes to broader societal benefits, including reduced incidence of accidents, improved community preparedness, and the development of ethically aware citizens capable of contributing to public safety. The pedagogical strategies emphasized in this study highlight the interdependence between moral education, social responsibility, and proactive risk management, demonstrating the far-reaching impact of ethical life safety culture beyond the classroom.

Finally, the study highlights the interaction between ethical education and institutional policies. Schools and universities that prioritize ethical life safety principles create a culture in which students and staff collectively maintain high standards of behavior, anticipate risks, and support each other in times of crisis. The systemic integration of ethical education into institutional frameworks ensures sustainability and scalability of life safety culture, creating resilient educational communities prepared for both everyday challenges and extraordinary emergencies. Ethical education embedded within institutional policies also reinforces accountability mechanisms, establishes shared norms, and fosters a sense of collective identity centered on responsibility and safety. This systemic approach ensures that ethical life safety is not merely a theoretical construct but a lived, organizational practice that permeates institutional culture, shapes everyday decision-making, and cultivates long-term resilience across educational communities.

Conclusion. The conducted theoretical research allows for a comprehensive generalization of the problem of forming a life safety culture in educational environments under conditions of social risk and wartime instability. The analysis confirms that life safety culture cannot be reduced to a set of technical instructions, formal rules, or isolated educational activities. Instead, it should be understood as a complex ethical and pedagogical phenomenon grounded in values, moral responsibility, and conscious choice. In this sense, ethics performs a system-forming function, integrating cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and axiological components of safety-oriented behavior into a coherent and sustainable structure.

The study demonstrates that ethical foundations transform safety from an external regulatory requirement into an internalized moral imperative. When safety norms are supported by ethical values such as respect for human dignity, responsibility, solidarity, justice, and care, they acquire personal meaning for participants in the educational process. This internalization ensures the stability of safe behavior even in situations characterized by uncertainty, stress, and the absence of clear normative guidance. Such conditions are especially typical of wartime education, where formal rules may be insufficient or impossible to apply consistently.

A significant conclusion of the research is that education serves as a key social mechanism for the ethical formation of life safety culture. Educational environments shape not only knowledge and skills but also moral attitudes toward risk, vulnerability, and responsibility for others. The integration of ethical reflection into life safety education fosters learners' ability to assess risks holistically, taking into account not only personal interests but also social consequences. This contributes to the development of socially responsible behavior and strengthens collective resilience.

The article substantiates that the role of the teacher as a moral agent is central to the effective formation of life safety culture. Teachers embody ethical norms through their professional conduct, decision-making, and communication practices. By modeling responsible and caring behavior, educators create a moral climate that encourages learners to adopt safety-oriented values voluntarily. Therefore, the ethical dimension of teacher training should be recognized as a strategic priority in educational policy, particularly in contexts of social crisis and armed conflict.

The wartime context analyzed in the study highlights the heightened importance of ethical life safety education. Under conditions of physical danger, psychological trauma, and social fragmentation, ethical principles become a source of stability and moral orientation. Education in such circumstances fulfills a dual function: ensuring physical and psychological safety while preserving humanistic values and social cohesion. Ethical life safety culture supports learners' capacity to cope with moral ambiguity, fear, and loss, enabling them to maintain agency and dignity in extreme situations.

From a theoretical perspective, the research contributes to pedagogical science by conceptualizing life safety culture as an ethical category rather than a purely technical or administrative one. This approach expands existing models of safety education and aligns them with contemporary philosophical and educational theories that emphasize value-based learning, moral agency, and human-cen-

tered development. The comparative analysis with established theories of risk society, responsibility ethics, and capability-based education confirms the scientific novelty and relevance of the proposed framework.

In practical terms, the findings of the study may be used to improve educational curricula, teacher training programs, and institutional policies aimed at strengthening life safety culture. The ethical integration of safety education offers a flexible and adaptive model capable of responding to emerging risks that are not yet regulated by formal norms. This is particularly important in rapidly changing social environments where new threats continuously arise.

The study also outlines prospects for further research, which include empirical validation of ethical life safety models, comparative studies across different educational levels and cultural contexts, and the development of assessment tools for measuring ethical dimensions of safety culture. Further research may also explore the long-term impact of ethical life safety education on individual behavior and social resilience.

In conclusion, the formation of a life safety culture in educational environments under conditions of social risk requires a paradigmatic shift from rule-based instruction to value-oriented education. Ethics provides the conceptual and practical foundation for this shift, ensuring that safety becomes an integral part of personal identity and social responsibility. The ethical foundations substantiated in this article create a theoretical basis for the development of sustainable, humane, and resilient educational systems capable of responding to the challenges of the contemporary world.

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