

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOFTS KILLS AND TEACHING COMPETENCY OF SECONDARY TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

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Abstract

UNESCO (2001) aims to provide global leadership on teachers, their status, their professional training, their management and administration and key policy issues. Hence teacher education has to create a new paradigm based upon the five pillars of education - Learning to know, Learning to do, Learning to live together, Learning to be and Learning to transform oneself and society. National Curriculum Framework (2005) looks at the teacher as an active agent to aid the child in knowledge construction by acting on his/her social and physical environment. The teachers help the students to acquire not only the right knowledge but also values, attitudes, habits and skills that are necessary to cope up with the world of tomorrow with cutting edge knowledge. Teaching-learning, being a process of interaction and interpretation becomes meaningful and successful only in the presence and application of soft skills and teaching competency in the classroom. Hence, a continuous, practice in soft skills and teaching competency during teacher training is essential. The investigator adopted the survey method to study the relationship between the performance in soft skills and teaching competency of secondary teacher education students. The sample consists of 1287 secondary teacher education students. Among them 314 are male students and 973 are female students. The investigators developed two tools for collecting data namely Soft skill inventory and Teaching competency scale (2009). Significant relationship between the performance in soft skills of secondary teacher education students and their teaching competency is found significant.

Keywords : Soft skills, Teaching competency and Teacher education.

Introduction

Education develops desirable habits, skills and attitudes which make an individual a good citizen. It empowers the individual with necessary skills and competence for achieving important personal and social goals and there by contributing to the social development. Education is the most powerful instrument in the hands of teachers whose effective use requires the strength of will, dedicated work and sacrifice.

The purpose of education is to produce teachers who have professional competencies. The role of teacher is no longer confined to teaching alone. They need to be thorough professional, fully acquired with high academic standard, pedagogic and professional skill. To achieve one's goal, he / she has to acquire, update professional skills to lead a happy life in the present democratic society that

encounters a number of challenges in economic, social, political and technological fields. These skills are known as soft skills. Every teacher has to keep these soft skills in his /her mind while creating optimum and challenging learning atmosphere in the classroom situation.

Significance of the Study

The progress of a country depends upon the quality of its teachers as they build the pillars of the nation. Teachers occupy a pivotal role in any nation. They are of high esteem and honour in the society. Their position and role in the society is unique. Teacher is one who imbibes, interprets and disseminates the culture .They are the makers of the future citizens of the society. They are philosophers, guides and men of higher ideas in moulding the society. The teacher is one who sets up the standards, builds desirable attitudes, behaviours and characters among the students.

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Teaching is the noblest profession among all professions. It is a career that shapes the minds of tomorrow. It provides the students with the skills for survival. Teaching is a complex set of task which demands the ability to understand, to communicate, to inspire and to motivate the students, to create patience, values, intelligence, enthusiasm, friendliness, personality, sense of humour and empathy. The concept of teaching has changed from the teacher-centered to learner-centered. They have become a facilitator than the instructor and the source of all knowledge.

In this present situation the teachers require a new type of knowledge, attitude, atmosphere and facility to make his/her task easy, fruitful and confirming according to the demands of the society and the students. So the teachers must be properly equipped with necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to deal with children. The educational institutions have to play significant roles and to make possible the dreams of younger generation. Future teachers have to play bigger and crucial roles to incorporate, sustain and transmit competency-based and skill-based education.

The teacher helps the students to acquire not only the right knowledge but also values, attitudes, habits and skills that are necessary to cope up with the world of tomorrow. Teaching-learning, being a process of interaction and interpretation becomes meaningful and successful only in the presence and application of soft skills and teaching competency in the classroom. It is a high time for teachers to acquire knowledge about the factors and areas that lead and improve teaching competency. Likewise, they should understand their own soft skills that help them to understand students in a better manner. Mitchell et.al (2010) found that soft skills are important components of the educational curriculum. So, through this study, the investigator tries to find out the relationship between teaching competency and soft skills namely oral communication skill, written communication skill, computer skill, stress management skill, organising skill, time management skill, leadership skill, inter personal skill and team building skill of secondary teacher education students.

Objectives

To find out the relationship between teaching competency and the performance in oral communication skill, written communication skill, computer skill, stress management skill, organising skill, time management skill, leadership skill, interpersonal skill, and team building skill of secondary teacher education students.

Null Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in their performance in soft skills.
2. There is no significant difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in their teaching competency and its dimensions.
3. There is no significant relationship between teaching competency and performance in soft skills of secondary teacher education students.

Methodology

The investigator adopted the survey method to study the relationship between teaching competency and the performance in soft skills of secondary teacher education students.

Population for the Study

The accessible population for the present study includes all the secondary teacher education students studying in B.Ed. colleges in Tirunelveli, Tuticorin and Kanyakumari district affiliated to Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University, Chennai.

Sample for the Study

The investigator had used stratified random sampling technique for selecting the sample. The investigators randomly selected 16 B.Ed. Colleges from Tirunelveli, Tuticorin and Kanyakumari district affiliated to Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University.

From each college Tamil, English Maths, Physical Science, Bioscience, History Computer Science, Economics and Commerce optional subject secondary teacher education students were taken by including both male and female students. Stratification was done on the basis of gender, religion, management of college and type of college. The sample consists of 1287 secondary teacher education students. Among them 314 are male students and 973 are female students.

Tools Used

1. Soft skill inventory developed by Sasipriya and Annaraja (2009).
2. Teaching competency scale developed by Sasipriya and Annaraja (2009).

Table -1 : Difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in their soft Skills

Soft skills	Male (N = 314)		Female (N = 973)		Calculated 't' value	Remarks
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		
Oral communication skill	28.04	4.478	26.75	4.861	4.374	S
Written communication skill	27.36	5.060	27.67	4.733	0.963	NS
Computer skill	36.51	8.352	35.42	8.385	2.000	S
Stress management skill	32.61	5.152	31.82	5.609	2.314	S
Organising skill	29.37	5.112	29.62	4.857	0.773	NS
Time management skill	28.78	5.154	29.13	5.126	1.039	NS
Leadership skill	23.25	4.689	22.41	4.784	2.744	S
Interpersonal skill	33.08	4.723	32.73	4.927	1.139	NS
Team building skill	26.64	4.776	25.22	4.463	1.654	NS

(At 5% level of significance the table value of 't' is 1.96)

Table – 2 : Difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in their teaching competency

Dimensions	Male (N = 314)		Female (N = 973)		Calculated 't' value	Remarks
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		
Skill of planning the lesson	19.39	2.950	18.99	3.36	2.026	S
Skill of motivation	20.19	2.969	19.94	2.97	1.328	NS
Skill of subject mastery	20.16	2.971	19.96	3.13	1.009	NS
Skill of presentation	23.19	3.644	22.95	3.66	1.015	NS
Skill of using audio-visual	15.86	2.769	16.01	2.72	0.847	NS
Skill of using relevant	16.31	2.669	16.20	2.53	0.610	NS
Skill of class room	36.28	5.569	36.28	5.66	1.593	NS
Skill of closure of the	16.03	2.565	16.30	2.55	0.821	NS
Skill of evaluation	19.92	3.039	20.09	3.10	0.553	NS
Skill of guidance	37.76	5.217	37.95	5.34	2.026	S
Teaching competency	19.39	2.950	18.99	3.36	1.328	NS

(At 5% level of significance the table value of 't' is 1.96)

Table-3 : Relationship between teaching competency and performance in soft skills of secondary teacher education students

Soft skills	N	Table Value	Calculated value of r	Remarks
Oral communication skill	1287	0.062	0.333	S
Written communication skill			0.406	S
Computer skill			0.313	S
Stress management skill			0.424	S
Organising skill			0.539	S
Time management skill			0.449	S
Leadership skill			0.296	S
Interpersonal skill			0.553	S
Team building skill			0.533	S

(At 5% level of significance the table 'r' value is 0.062)

Findings and Interpretations

Table 1 reveals that there is significant difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in their performance in oral communication skill, computer skill, stress management skill and leadership skill. But there is no significant difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in their performance in written communication skill, organising skill, time management skill, interpersonal skill and team building skill. Male students have better performance in oral communication skill than female students. This may be due to the fact that male students have more social exposure which leads them to interact with their neighbours and community. They get the chance of mingling with their peer group, relatives and society. This contact with society provides them with oral communication skill. And also they have more chances for self-exploration through exposure to the world and they involve themselves more in external activities because of the favourable cultural settings. This finding supports the investigation done by Sasipriya and Annaraja (2008). They found that the boys were better than girls in their oral communication skill. Male students have better performance in computer skill than female students. This may be due to the fact that male students have more inclination to earn more money to settle in life and to acquire wealth. Being aware of the modern blooming reality to mint money in the field of computer industries, male students show more interest in excelling in their computer skill.

Male students have better performance in stress management skill than female students. This may be due to the fact that male students have more chances to mingle with the society more freely by going out of their house and spend time with their friends in the recreational places like parks and play grounds. Male have the tendency to forget the negative happenings and thoughts more easily. They cannot relate it with the past incidents and they are not prejudicial. And this may help them to release their pent up feelings and emotions and are better in stress management skills. And male students have better performance in leadership skill than female students. This may be due to the fact that male students get in touch with the outer world easily. Boys may get more

chances to involve group activities such as activities of the communities and voluntarily organisation and sports groups. This exposure may help them to improve their innate leadership qualities. This finding supports the study conducted by Sasipriya and Annaraja (2008), which revealed that the boys were better than girls in their leadership skill.

Table 2 reveals that there is significant difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in their skill of planning the lesson and skill of guidance. But there is no significant difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in their skill of motivation, skill of subject mastery, skill of presentation, skill of using audio-visual aids, skill of using relevant examples, skill of class room management, skill of closure of the lesson, skill of evaluation and teaching competency. Male students have better skill of planning the lesson than female students. This may be due to the fact that male students get more exposure due to their social responsibilities. They are in the field of administration in the society and in house. Female students have better skill of guidance than male students. This maybe due to the fact that they had acquired the knowledge about the past, present and future. Their memory power and retention power is so high. They retain those things in their mind and provide guidance to the students. Table 3 reveals that there is significant relation between teaching competency and performance in oral communication skill, written communication skill, computer skill, stress management skill, organising skill, time management skill, leadership skill, interpersonal skill and team building skill of secondary teacher education students. This may be due to the fact that teaching competency is not a single skill to be acquired and nurtured. It is an embodiment of many skills. It needs a systematic practice. It is the knowledge to use the right thing at the right time and in a right place. If one acquires and practises soft skills one can excel in teaching competency.

Recommendations

1. Soft skills training should be given to the students in colleges of education.
2. Teaching strategies should be developed by using different dimension of soft skills.
3. Colleges of education should organize workshops and seminars on personality

development programmes in order to enhance the level of soft skills.

4. Workshop on time management and stress management can be conducted.
5. Provisions for team work should be given.
6. Various kinds of soft skills can be developed through continuous training for prospective teachers.
7. Female secondary teacher education students should be given more social exposure through academic activities in their course.
8. Students teaching practice should be more effectively organised and supervised to promote student's development of relevant teaching skills.
9. Information and communication technology must be incorporated in teaching learning process.

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