



Soft Skill, Wellness, and The Academic Achievement of Secondary Grade Teacher Trainees

KEYWORDS

Soft skills, Wellness, Well being, Secondary Grade Teacher Trainees

A. Grace Sophia

Senior Lecturer, DIET Munanjipatti & Research Scholar, M. S. University, Tirunelveli, Tamilnadu.

Dr. C. Ramesh

Assistant Professor (DD&CE) M. S. University, Tirunelveli, Tamilnadu.

ABSTRACT *Soft skills are habits that have been cultivated over time more than they are innate traits. Soft skills play a vital role for professional success. They are otherwise called emotional intelligence skills. Wellness is a state of being well, healthy, and contented. Decision-making is a blend of thinking, deciding and acting. Teacher is a pivot in the society who shapes the students into well-integrated and harmonious persons. The present study focuses on soft skills and wellness, how effective they are on the academic achievement of secondary grade teacher trainees. Survey method has been used in this study. Well being scale developed by Jagsharanbir Singh Sandu and Asha Gupta and soft skill inventory prepared by A. Grace Sophia and Dr. C. Ramesh has been used for collecting the data. Mean, Standard deviation, t-test, Anova, Chi-square test, F test, and correlation have been used for the data analysis. The findings of this study reveals that there is significant difference between first and second year teacher trainees, significant difference between male and female teacher trainees and positive correlation between soft skills, wellness and academic achievement. Further, it revealed that there is significant difference between male and female teacher trainees and positive correlation between wellness and academic achievement. It is emphasized that the teachers have to promote soft skills and wellness in their institute for promoting high academic results.*

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of human life is to be happy and make others happy by one's other centered and benevolent activities. Soft skills are also called human skills and people skill complement the hard skill. They are the interpersonal and human relation skill. Students who possess these skills have the potential of performing well at work while paving the way to good relationship in all areas of their life. According to Maslow (1954), self-actualized people are creative and adaptable in the society in such a manner that they truly enjoy a fine sense of well being. The process of mental growth and development is responsible for the development of an individuals cognitive, mental abilities like sensation, perception, imagination, memory, reasoning, generalisation conceptual ability, problem solving and decision making ability. These abilities are interrelated and inter dependent. This study deals with the soft skill, wellness and the academic achievement of secondary grade teacher trainees studying in the three southern district of Tamil Nadu.

THE MEANING OF SOFT SKILL, WELLNESS, AND DECISION MAKING

Soft skills are "the skills, abilities, and traits that pertain to personality, attitude, and behaviour rather than to formal or technical knowledge". Six soft skills everyone needs are social skill, mental ability and positive emotions, adaptability skill, teamwork and collaboration skill, communication skill and conflict resolution skill. Wellness is the integration of the body, mind and spirit and the appreciation that everything we do think, feel and believe has an impact on our state of health. Shober (1957) and Bremer (1991) opine that wellness implies a sense of balance and ease with the pressures in a person's life. It requires harmony between mind and body. Hartfield and Hartfield (1992) view wellness as the conscious and deliberate process by which people are actively involved in enhancing their overall wellness intellectual, social, emotional, occupational, and spiritual. Decision making itself means that a single thing is to be brought into an action by cutting off many other

things that look alike. Thus, decision-making means choosing one alternative from available many options naturally it is a tough work and this is based on one's mental ability.

RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Soft skills, which include dimensions, like social, mental ability and positive emotion, skill teacher morale, leadership skill, communication skill and achievement motivation. Wellness that includes dimension like physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual wellness. Academic achievement is also a crucial mandate for teacher trainees across the nation to get an appointment as a teacher academic achievement for students occurs within the construct of soft skill and wellness, as there is mutual influence between academic factors and non-academic factors for a student at any level. P.R. Purkait (1987) stressing on the importance of teacher education opines that if a nation wants quality education, it must have quality teachers. In other words, soft skill and wellness of our teacher trainees brings forth the desired fruits in our modern education. Not only does a teacher have to be concerned about the demands of the society, but also has to take responsibility of developing proper values, attitudes and skills in children. Soft skill and wellness are essential for the teacher trainees. The teacher trainee having soft skill and wellness can develop critical thinking and creativity, initiative and self-determination among the pupils. Unless and until they are not tuned with soft skills, wellness and decision-making, they may experience a lot of stress, strain, anxiety that results in restlessness and low performance in academics as well as in teaching competence. Because of these facts, the investigator is strongly convinced that a study on soft skill, wellness and the academic achievement of secondary grade teacher trainees.

OBJECTIVES

- 1 To find out the level of soft skills of the secondary grade Teacher Trainees.
- 2 To find out the level of wellness of the secondary grade Teacher Trainees.

- 3 To find out whether there is any significant difference between male and female secondary grade Teacher Trainees in their soft skills.
- 4 To find out whether there is any significant positive correlation between the soft skills and achievement score of the secondary grade Teacher Trainees.
- 5 To find out whether there is any significant difference between male and female secondary grade Teacher Trainees in their wellness.
- 6 To find out whether there is any significant positive correlation between the wellness and achievement score of the secondary grade Teacher Trainees.

HYPOTHESIS

- 1 There is no significant difference between male and female secondary grade Teacher Trainees in their soft skills.
- 2 There is no significant positive correlation between the soft skills and achievement score of the secondary grade Teacher Trainees.
- 3 There is no significant difference between male and female secondary grade Teacher Trainees in their wellness.
- 4 There is no significant positive correlation between wellness and achievement score of the secondary grade Teacher Trainees.

METHODOLOGY

The investigator has used the survey method to find out the real conditions, which are prevailing among the secondary grade Teacher Trainees.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The population for the study includes the secondary grade teacher trainees in DIET, Aided and self-financed institutions in Tirunelveli, Tutucorin, and Kanyakumari Districts. The sample consists of 116 male and 784 female secondary grade teacher trainees.

TOOLS

Wellness scale developed by Jagsharanbir Singh Sandu and Asha Gupta and soft skill inventory and achievement test prepared by A. Grace Sophia and Dr. C. Ramesh have been used for collecting the data. Statistical Techniques Mean, standard deviation, t-test, Anova, Chi-square test; F test and correlation have been used for the data analysis.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

**TABLE – 1
LEVEL OF SOFT SKILLS OF THE SECONDARY GRADE TEACHER TRAINEES**

Soft skills and its dimensions	High		Moderate		Low	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Social skills	152	16.89	620	68.89	128	14.22
Mental ability and Positive emotions	135	15.00	646	71.78	119	13.22
Teacher morale	153	17.00	613	68.11	134	14.89
Leadership skills	142	15.78	628	69.78	130	14.44
Communication skills	159	17.67	583	64.78	158	17.56
Achievement motivation	148	16.44	607	67.44	145	16.11
Soft skills	161	17.89	597	66.33	142	15.78

It is inferred from the table - 1 that the soft skills of the secondary grade Teacher Trainees is moderate in Total and dimensions.

**TABLE – 2
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE SECONDARY GRADE TEACHER TRAINEES IN THEIR SOFT SKILLS**

Soft skills and its dimension	Cat-egory	N	Mean	S D	Calculated value of 't'	Re-remarks at 5% level
Social skills	M	116	59.09	7.489	-1.490	NS
	F	784	60.21	7.577		
Mental ability and Positive emotions	M	116	59.46	7.281	-1.732	NS
	F	784	60.77	7.647		
Teacher morale	M	116	60.56	7.817	-1.292	NS
	F	784	61.62	8.290		
Leadership skills	M	116	59.30	8.064	-1.010	NS
	F	784	60.14	8.348		
Communication skills	M	116	60.57	7.506	-1.979	S
	F	784	62.11	7.896		
Achievement motivation	M	116	60.52	7.382	-.430	NS
	F	784	60.88	8.726		
Soft skills	M	116	359.49	39.276	-1.500	NS
	F	784	365.73	42.161		

(For 898 df the table value of 't' at 5% level of significance is 1.968)

It is inferred from the table - 2 that the calculated 't' value is less than the table value of 't' (1.968). Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. That is, there is no significant difference between male and female secondary grade Teacher Trainees in their soft skills except in dimension Communication skills.

**TABLE – 3
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND SOFT SKILLS DIMENSIONS OF THE SECONDARY GRADE TEACHER TRAINEES**

Soft Skills and its dimensions	N	Calculated value of 'r'	Table value of 'r'	Remarks at 5% level
Social skills	900	0.262	0.0877	S
Mental ability and Positive emotions	900	0.276	0.0877	S
Teacher morale	900	0.265	0.0877	S
Leadership skills	900	0.213	0.0877	S

Soft Skills and its dimensions	N	Calculated value of 'r'	Table value of 'r'	Remarks at 5% level
Communication skills	900	0.225	0.0877	S
Achievement motivation	900	0.204	0.0877	S
Soft skills	900	0.276	0.0877	S

It is inferred from the table - 3 that the calculated 'r' value is greater than the table value of 'r' (.0877). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. That is, there is significant positive correlation between the soft skills and achievement score of the secondary grade Teacher Trainees.

TABLE - 4
LEVEL OF WELLNESS OF THE SECONDARY GRADE TEACHER TRAINEES

Level of well-ness and its di-mensions	High		Moderate		Low	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Physical	167	18.56	590	65.56	143	15.89
Mental	128	14.22	620	68.89	152	16.89
Social	168	18.67	597	66.33	135	15.00
Emotional	135	15.00	596	66.22	169	18.78
Spiritual	129	14.33	630	70.00	141	15.67
Wellness	128	14.22	638	70.89	134	14.89

It is inferred from the table - 4 that the wellness of the secondary grade Teacher Trainees is average in Total and dimensions.

TABLE - 5
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE SECONDARY GRADE TEACHER TRAINEES IN THEIR WELLNESS

Wellness and its dimensions	Category	N	Mean	S D	Calculated value of 't'	Remarks at 5% level
Physical	M	116	31.03	5.328	-2.955	S
	F	784	32.39	4.548		
Mental	M	116	32.46	5.882	-3.152	S
	F	784	34.36	6.094		
Social	M	116	34.62	5.751	2.745	S
	F	784	33.06	5.705		
Emotional	M	116	29.55	7.984	-3.873	S
	F	784	32.69	8.160		
Spiritual	M	116	35.51	7.738	-2.952	S
	F	784	37.63	7.146		
Wellness	M	116	163.16	19.622	-3.411	S
	F	784	170.13	20.666		

(For 898 df the table value of 't' at 5% level of significance is 1.968)

It is inferred from the table - 5 that the calculated 't' value is greater than the table value of 't' (1.968). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. That is, there is significant difference between male and female secondary grade Teacher Trainees in their wellness.

TABLE - 6
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND WELLNESS DIMENSIONS OF THE SECONDARY GRADE TEACHER TRAINEES

Wellness and its dimensions	N	Calculated value of 'r'	Table value of 'r'	Remarks at 5% level
Physical	900	0.054	0.0877	NS
Mental	900	0.117	0.0877	S
Social	900	0.076	0.0877	NS
Emotional	900	0.016	0.0877	NS
Spiritual	900	0.193	0.0877	S
Wellness	900	0.105	0.0877	S

It is inferred from the table - 6 that the calculated 'r' value is greater than the table value of 'r' (.0877). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. That is, there is significant positive correlation between the wellness and achievement score of the secondary grade Teacher Trainees, except in dimensions physical, social, and emotional.

Findings

- 1 The soft skills of the secondary grade Teacher Trainees is average in Total and dimensions
- 2 There is no significant difference between male and female secondary grade Teacher Trainees in their soft skills except in dimensions Communication skills.
- 3 There is significant positive correlation between the soft skills and achievement score of the secondary grade Teacher Trainees.
- 4 The wellness of the secondary grade Teacher Trainees is average in Total and dimensions.
- 5 There is significant difference between male and female secondary grade Teacher Trainees in their wellness.
- 6 There is significant positive correlation between the wellness and achievement score of the secondary grade Teacher Trainees, except in dimensions physical, social and emotional.

Discussion

Among the male and female secondary teacher trainees, female students are better than the male students in their soft skills and wellness. This may be due to the fact that female students are mentally and emotionally prepared by being exposed to new and novel situations in life. They prefer to work in groups rather than individually. There is significant positive correlation between the soft skills and achievement score of the secondary grade Teacher Trainees. This may be due to the fact that the secondary grade teacher trainee having soft skill can develop critical thinking and creativity, initiative and self-determination among the pupils. This leads a better academic achievement.

Conclusion

"As the teacher, so the taught" is a well-known dictum. Hence a good teacher education curriculum should aim at the development of well-balanced and well-adjusted personalities who are culturally refined, emotionally stable, ethically sound, intellectually alert, socially efficient, spiritually upright and physically strong. Soft skill, decision making and wellness are closely associated and contribute to mental health and good interpersonal relations. "The destiny of India is now being shaped in her classrooms. "It is not the physical structure of the classroom that influences the value formation of our students, but the towering personality of the teachers which has lasting impressions on the lives of the learners. Hence well thought out teacher education programmes should be geared towards making the secondary grade teacher trainees shine gloriously in their teaching profession.

REFERENCE

- 1 Agarwal, J.C. (1996). Theory and Principles of Education. Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi. | 2 Bhatnagar, Suresh (1990). Indian Education Today and Tomorrow. Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi. | 3 Venkataiah, N. (1998). Value Education. APH Publishing Corporation, New Delhi. | 4 Chinnappa Reddy, B. (2002). Values in Education. Education Tracks, vol 1, No.10. | 5 The Hindu: "Well-being." March 12, 2000, www.hindu.com | 6 Chidambaram, (2008). Soft skills in the era of globalization. The Hindu January 21. | 7 Cynthia Pandian, (2008). Impart soft skills to students to make them employable. The Hindu January 23. |