



Soft Skills and Teaching Competency of Teachers at the high school level.

KEYWORDS

Soft Skills, Teaching competency, High School

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ABSTRACT *The problem under the research was “Soft skills and Teaching competency of Teachers at the high school level”. Teaching is considered to be the noblest of all profession and in terms declared as prophetic profession. The research was conducted to explore the relationship between soft skills and teaching competency of the teachers. Soft skills are Personal skills comprising of personal attributes and inter personal abilities that drive one’s potential for sustained growth, enhances an individual’s social interactions, job performances and career prospects. The objectives of the study were: (i) To find out the level of soft skills acquired by the high school teachers.(ii) To find out the level of teaching competency among the high school teachers (iii) To find out the relationship between the acquired soft skills and teaching competency among the high school teachers. Quantitative approach was used in the study. Random sample was drawn from 160 teachers from different high schools. Data were collected through questionnaire. The study reveals that soft skills are positively related to teaching competency of teachers at high school level. The research suggests that quality Soft Skills training should be an integral part of all Pre-service and In-service Teacher Education Programme to strengthen and sustain the competency among the teachers in their teaching profession.*

Introduction:

In this technological era Teacher’s academic and social responsibilities have taken a new dimension and made the task of the teacher quiet difficult and more challenging. Teachers are the designers of the future of their students and thus, the society. They are expected to exhibit the universal values like peace, justice, and equality along with social and civic values as enshrined in Indian constitution. Thus prospective teachers should not only be intellectually competent and technically skilled but also be civilized in their emotional state. To be competent in teaching career, teaches are expected to acquire and develop not only hard skills like technical ability but also the acquisition of soft skills which in other words called as human skills and life skills. The present educational system is in great need of teachers with soft skills so that they are the role model in interpersonal relationship and decision taking. A teacher who plays the role of teacher in the classroom and yet remains an educator outside needs to wear soft skills in his personality and should transmit it in the life of the students. A teacher with some skills may enhance teaching efficiency and progress in quality of education.

Statement of the problem:

The problem under the research was “Soft Skills and Teaching Competency of Teachers at the High School Level”.

Definition of terms:

Soft Skills:

Personal attributes that enhance for career aspects and job performance.

Teaching Competency:

The right way of conveying units of knowledge, application and skills of the teacher towards effectiveness

High School teachers:

Teachers handling from 8th to 10th classes

Objectives of the study:

- (i) To find out the level of Soft Skills acquired by the high school teachers.
- (ii) To find out the level of teaching competency of the high school teachers.
- (iii) To find out the relationship between the soft skills and teaching competency in high school teachers.

Hypotheses:

- a) There is no significant difference on the acquisition of level of soft skills between the male and female high school teachers.
- b) There is no significant difference on teaching competency among the male and female high school teachers.
- c) There is no significant difference in the level of soft skills in relation to the teaching competency.

Soft Skills and its need in teaching:

Roffins and Hunsaker (1996) defined soft skill as “ a system of behaviour that can be applied in a wide range of situations” .Thus “Soft Skills” are “ People Skills” comprising of one’s attributes that drive one’s potential for sustained growth. According to WHO Soft Skills are defined as “Psychological Skills, which insists upon accepting the behaviours of others along with their nature”. It is also defined as “key for success”. Soft Skills are termed as Critical thinking skills, Decision making skills, Problem solving skills, Communication skills, Empathy, Coping with emotions, Handling peer pressure in right direction, and Negotiation Skills. In today’s educational scenario values are deteriorating day by day. Without the educational values the educational institutions are merely a building with laboratories, libraries and classrooms. When schools with the teachers of well equipped soft skills join its hands in imparting the lost Indian values in future then schools will become a place of producing intellectual work, generating habits of systematic thinking, readiness for self exami-

nation. Hence a continuous renewal of soft skills through teaching and training is a must. Sekar Chandra (2007) in his study found that it is possible to develop Soft Skills among the teachers of rural background through specially planned training programme. It is also studied that acquisition of soft skills is the key feature for success in teaching process.

Methodology

The researcher used quantitative approach to achieve the above said objectives. Random sampling method was used to select the sample for the research. Rating scale on Soft skills constructed and validated by Dr.Vijaya Kumari S.N and Vinaya Ann Jacob was used. Self constructed tool for teaching competency was used to check the teaching competency of the teachers. These Questionnaires were used to check the relationship between the acquired soft skills towards teaching competence of the high school teachers. It consists of 60 items. A 5 –point Likert scale with response format was used with response ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Questionnaire was used for data collection and interpretation purpose. These items were quantitatively analyzed.

Sample selection

The sample consists of 160 teachers from high school level .The teachers were randomly selected from different schools in Puducherry region.

Limitations:

Following were the limitations of the study.

1. The study was limited to only 160 high school teachers.
2. The study was limited only to Puducherry region.

Result analysis:

Mean, Standard Deviation,“t” values were computed to trace the significance of soft skills towards teaching competency

Table 1: Mean, S.D, t” value for acquisition of Soft Skills among the high school teachers under the basis of gender.

S.No	Variable name	N	Mean	S.D	t value
1	Male	25	85.40	7.313	1.391**
2	Female	135	81.69	12.957	

**** - Not Significant at 0.05 level**

Table 1 show that there exists no significant difference in acquisition of soft skills under the basis of gender.

Table 2: Mean, S.D,“t” value for the teaching competency among the high school teachers under the basis of gender.

S.No	Variable name	N	Mean	S.D	t value
1	Male	25	82.48	13.196	0.322**
2	Female	135	81.80	10.178	

**** - Not Significant**

Table 2

shows that exists no significant difference in the level of teaching competency under the basis of gender.

Table 3: Correlation between acquired soft skills and Teaching competency among the high school teachers. under the basis of gender.

S.No	Variable name	N	“r”	Significance
1	Soft skills	180	2.16	Sig-nificant at 0.05%
2	Teaching Competency	180		

Table 3 shows that there exists positive correlation between the acquisition of soft skills and teaching competency of the high school teachers.

Suggestion:

Soft skills include skill of communicating effective with the students. Teacher should be fluent in the language, and should have mastery over the subject .The skills are the back bone for teacher’s career and teacher’s personality development. Only through practise they can become excellent and effective. Teachers should always be conscious to build a healthy a trust worthy environment with the students. The teacher should ensure comfortability in his teaching. Though the research shows that there is no significant difference between the male and female teachers in acquisition of Soft Skills, it is advisable for male teachers to practice more for language fluency during their communication. Hence the study suggests that soft skill training should be the part of teacher’s in-service and pre-service training. Teachers should update themselves with soft skills essential for teaching in order to make it effective, meaningful and to shape the future generation with good power of understanding, values, for sustainable development of self.

Conclusion:

Education is the manifestation of human behaviours. Education alone can inculcate and transform the social and moral values, awareness and divine realisation among the students. This happens in teaching and learning process through the help of the teacher. Teachers take the sole responsibility to deliver the quality education to the students. A step forward, a holistic term “Soft Skills “has been gaining importance in the field of education. On the basis of the above findings it can be concluded that Soft skills are very essential to communicate effectively and to build good rapport with the students. The findings also reveal that acquisition of Soft Skills is highly correlated to the teaching competency of the teachers. But very little has been done in concrete terms to plan Soft Skills in teaching career. Hence the study recommends efforts should be taken to enhance soft skills as an inbuilt course in teacher training programme so as to produce quality teachers to the society.

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