

REFLECTIVENESS AND SOFT SKILLS OF SECONDARY TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study is intended to find out the difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in Tirunelveli district in their reflectiveness and soft skills. The investigator used survey method. The sample consisted of 200 secondary teacher education students in Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu. The investigator developed and validated tools for assessing the reflectiveness and soft skills of secondary teacher education students. The study revealed a significant difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in their planning skills. No significant difference was noticed among secondary teacher education students having language, arts, and science as optional subjects in their reflectiveness and soft skills. Significant relationship was observed between reflectiveness and soft skills of secondary teacher education students.

Keywords: Reflectiveness, Planning skills, Presentation Skills, Technology Skills, Time Management Skills, Emotional Skills, Monitoring Skills, Self-evaluation Skills, Soft Skills, and Secondary Teacher Education Students

Introduction

Reflectiveness is the capacity of quick thought or contemplation. To be simple it is the trait of thinking carefully before acting. Actually people learn from reflecting on experience not just from experience. For teachers and prospective teachers reflectiveness is a tool to evaluate the learning process. Reflection makes oneself aware and this self-awareness helps him to be self-regulated.

The teachers who are reflective, reflect before, during and after their teaching. It helps a teacher to achieve his/her goals. By reflectiveness a teacher evaluates his/her own preparation, performance and progress towards achieving his/her aims and objectives. This self-examination helps a teacher to select the soft skills needed for his/her teaching as he comes to know about his/her own strength and weakness. This may lead teachers to select such skills as needed for the progress towards their set goals.

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The word soft skill has become a popular word in the career context. In the career of a teacher, too, soft skills play an important role. There are sixty soft skills listed out by Human Resource Experts (HRE). Soft skills also include employability skills and life skills.

Priya Sasi and Annaraja (2004) in their article on soft skills for prospective teachers assert that prospective teachers who have great responsibility in developing the society with values and good culture need soft skills to transmit the culture to the students. It can be concluded that reflectiveness helps one in his/her proficiency in soft skills.

Significance of the study

Teaching is a demanding and complex profession. Innumerable dedicated, talented teachers teach in schools, colleges and universities aiming at being the caring, competent, and effective teachers that every student expects. Many teachers serve at under-resourced educational institutions and so their profession is extremely challenging and complex. In many ways, the teaching profession can be even more challenging than other professions. Meeting the demands of the teaching profession requires incredible will, ability, and preparation, not to speak of continuous learning and proficiency in soft skills.

The progress of a country depends upon the quality of its teachers as they build the pillars of the nation. Their position and role in the society are special because they give the lead by setting up standards and help to build desirable attitudes and shape the behaviours and characters among the future citizens of the country. So it is essential to prepare teachers who, in turn, will be able to motivate their students to serve the diverse needs of our nation.

But what is actually happening is another question. Of late academic pressures have been mounting high in secondary teacher education programme. The Government has stipulated that one's B.Ed. degree alone would not get him/her a teaching position; he/she would have to get through successfully the CTET (Central Teacher Eligibility Test) and TNTET (Tamil Nadu State Teacher Eligibility Test) in order to be eligible to be employed.

The enhanced performance of a teacher needs thinking. Thinking involves an extraordinarily complex mental process. Reflectiveness is the framework or pattern within which thinking takes place. The reflection done by the teacher on their character, planning and execution helps to select the crucial soft skills needed to pull on their teaching interestingly and meaningfully.

Soft skills play a vital role for professional success in this age of information and knowledge. They help one to excel in the work place and so their importance cannot be

denied in this highly competitive corporate world. Those with good soft-skills can easily stand out in a milieu of routine job seekers with mediocre skill and talent. Needless to add that soft skills are essential for teachers to achieve success in their profession.

The findings of the study will redound to the benefit of the teachers of today as well as prospective teachers. The result of this study will uncover the area of soft skill in which the prospective teachers need to be trained; it will also improve the knowledge and skill of training prospective teachers with appropriate soft skills. That is why the investigator has made an attempt to study the reflectiveness and soft skills of secondary teacher education students.

Objectives

1. To find out if there is any significant difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in their reflectiveness and soft skills.
2. To find out if there is any significant difference among secondary teacher education students having language, arts, and science as optional subjects in their reflectiveness and soft skills.
3. To find out if there is any significant difference the significant relationship between reflectiveness and soft skills of secondary teacher education students.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in their reflectiveness.
2. There is no significant difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in their soft skills.
3. There is no significant difference among secondary teacher education students having language, arts, and science as optional subjects in their reflectiveness.
4. There is no significant difference among secondary teacher education students having language, arts, and science as optional subjects in their soft skills.
5. There is no significant relationship between the reflectiveness and soft skills of secondary teacher education students.

Methodology

The investigator used survey method for data collection.

Tools used for the study

The investigator used the following tools to measure the reflectiveness and soft skills of secondary teacher education students.

1. A scale to measure the Reflectiveness of secondary teacher education students prepared and validated by the Nicholas Jegan and Antonyraj (2017).
2. Soft skills assessment questionnaire for secondary teacher education students prepared and validated by the Nicholas Jegan and Antonyraj (2017).

Population

The population for the present study comprised of the secondary teacher education students studying in teacher education colleges in Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu.

Sample

The sample of this study consisted of 200 secondary teacher education students from teacher education colleges in Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu.

Sampling techniques

The investigator used simple random sampling technique.

Statistical techniques used

The investigator used the following statistical procedures for data analysis:

1. 't' test
2. 'F' test
3. Pearson's product-moment correlation

DATA ANALYSIS

Hypothesis 1. There is no significant difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in their reflectiveness.

Table 1. *Difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in their reflectiveness.*

Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	Calculated 't' Value	'P' value	Remarks
Male	78	234.13	23.762	1.362	0.175	NS
Female	122	238.79	23.479			

It is inferred from the Table above that there is no significant difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in their reflectiveness.

Hypothesis 2. There is no significant difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in their soft skills.

Table 2. *Difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in their soft skills*

Dimensions	Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	Calculated 't' Value	'P' value	Remarks
Planning	Male	78	41.44	4.804	2.720	0.007	S
	Female	122	43.18	4.164			
Presentation	Male	78	37.21	4.145	1.385	0.171	NS
	Female	122	38.05	4.291			
Technology	Male	78	23.86	4.466	1.196	0.246	NS
	Female	122	24.58	3.971			
Time management	Male	78	20.18	2.667	1.314	0.195	NS
	Female	122	20.70	2.790			
Relationship	Male	78	25.85	3.142	0.534	0.598	NS
	Female	122	26.08	2.981			
Emotional	Male	78	29.72	3.295	0.935	0.355	NS
	Female	122	30.16	3.188			
Monitoring	Male	78	34.53	3.709	0.695	0.491	NS
	Female	122	34.89	3.611			
Self-evaluation	Male	78	29.72	3.403	1.532	0.137	NS
	Female	122	30.43	3.045			
Soft skills	Male	78	242.49	22.319	1.753	0.083	NS
	Female	122	248.07	21.711			

It is inferred from the Table above that there is no significant between male and female secondary teacher education students in their presentation skill, technology skill, time management skill, relationship skill, emotional skill, monitoring skill, self-evaluation skill, and soft skills. But there is a significant difference between male and female secondary teacher education students in their planning skill.

While comparing the mean scores of male (mean=41.44) and female (mean=43.18) secondary teacher education students, female are better than male secondary teacher education students in their planning skills.

Hypothesis 3. There is no significant difference among secondary teacher education students having language, arts, and science as optional subjects in their reflectiveness.

Table 3. *Difference among secondary teacher education students having language, arts, and science as optional subjects in their reflectiveness*

Sources of variation	df = 2, 197		Calculated F Value	'P' Value	Remarks
	Sum of squares	Mean square			
Between	1113.258	556.629	0.996	0.371	NS
Within	110096.562	558.866			

It is inferred from the above table that there is no significant difference among secondary teacher education students having language, arts, and science as optional subjects in their reflectiveness.

Hypothesis 4. There is no significant difference among secondary teacher education students having language, arts, and science as optional subjects in their soft skills.

Table 4: *difference among secondary teacher education students having language, arts, and science as optional subjects in their soft skills*

Dimensions	Sources of variation	df = 2, 197		Calculated F Value	'P' Value	Remarks
		Sum of squares	Mean square			
Planning	Between	2.121	1.060	0.052	0.949	NS
	Within	4017.879	20.395			
Presentation	Between	11.225	5.612	0.309	0.734	NS
	Within	3573.095	18.138			
Technology	Between	26.547	13.273	0.760	0.469	NS
	Within	3441.453	17.469			
Time management	Between	2.071	1.036	0.136	0.873	NS
	Within	1499.924	7.614			
Relationship	Between	9.969	4.984	0.537	0.585	NS
	Within	1828.011	9.279			
Emotional	Between	.403	.201	0.019	0.981	NS
	Within	2074.552	10.531			
Monitoring	Between	39.125	19.563	1.480	0.230	NS
	Within	2604.375	13.220			
Self-evaluation	Between	1.782	.891	0.086	0.917	NS
	Within	2035.718	10.334			
Soft skills	Between	42.528	21.264	0.043	0.958	NS
	Within	96829.052	491.518			

It is inferred from the above table that there is no significant difference among secondary teacher education students having language, arts, and science as optional subjects in their planning skill, presentation skill, technology skill, time management skill, relationship skill, emotional skill, monitoring skill, self-evaluation skill and soft skills.

Hypothesis 5. There is no significant relationship between reflectiveness and soft skills of secondary teacher education students.

Table 5. *Relationship between reflectiveness and soft skills of secondary teacher education students*

Reflectiveness Vs Soft skills	df	Calculated ' γ ' value	'P' Value	Remarks
	879	0.802	0.000	S

It is inferred from the Table above there is a significant relationship between reflectiveness and soft skills of secondary teacher education students.

Findings and discussion

1. Statistically no significant difference was observed between male and female secondary teacher education students in their reflectiveness.
2. No significant difference was found between male and female secondary teacher education students in their soft skills except planning skill. Female are better than male in their planning skill. This may be due to the reason that female are strategic planners as the Indian family system teach them directly and indirectly about planning from their early childhood days itself and also by nature they are more intuitive and creative.
3. No significant difference was noticed among secondary teacher education students having language, arts, and science as optional subjects in their reflectiveness and soft skills.
4. A significant relationship was observed between reflectiveness and soft skills of secondary teacher education students. This may be due to the reason that reflectiveness helps prospective teachers to pinpoint essential soft skills needed to improve their professional life.

Conclusion

Soft skills are in demand for teachers as every moment of a teacher in the classroom is based on his soft skills. This study reveals that female teacher education students excel in their planning skill than male. As good planning is half done and so the male secondary teacher education students have to focus on their planning skill. The national effort to achieve excellence in the classroom may be realized by making the teachers more adaptable and flexible for which teachers need to be trained in soft skills. The challenge of the modern

teacher is to deal with the increasing diversity in the classrooms for which a teacher needs to be more reflective. This study reveals a significant relationship between reflectiveness and soft skills. It may be concluded that teacher trainees have to be trained in such a way that they must prefer reflective level of teaching which may pave way for developing number of soft skills required for teaching profession.

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