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Soft Skill Training in Teacher's Education: Provocation and Opportunities

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ABSTRACT

Education must be well-designed and planned for the development of human capital. Educating teachers is therefore essential to meeting the needs and expectations at large. Educators should be taught and trained with different skills and knowledge to boost the education system. Apart from hard skills, the curricular approach of teacher education should give more emphasis on conceptual and soft skills abilities of teachers. This paper aims to explore the role and importance of soft skill training in teachers education. The study is based on secondary sources of information from various published data. At the end, the study concludes that soft skill is a vital skill needed for each and every future teacher for the overall development of students effectively.

Introduction

To meet the challenge of globalisation in the digital economy, a nation's strength relies heavily on its citizens' capacity to be highly intelligent and competent. Human capital development is so necessary since it propels the nation toward its goal and purpose. A nation will be weak if it lacks excellent human capital, as there will be no human component capable of embarking on upcoming ideas and perspectives. A quality education process produces quality human capital. Human capital can only be developed with the help of an education system that is well-designed and well-planned. To meet the need and expectations of many people, teacher education institutes play a crucial role in generating highly educated, highly competent human capital (human capital). In order for future teachers to acquire such information and abilities, the teaching and learning methods at teacher education institutions must be capable of doing so. As well as providing teachers with physical skills, the teacher education curriculum should also provide them with conceptual and soft skills.. The need of the professor is to incorporate soft skills into the curriculum of teacher

education. Unlike hard skills, which are task-specific, soft skills are personal traits that enhance an individual's relationships, work performance, and career prospects. Soft skills may be characterised as personality traits, social elegance, language competence, personal habits, friendliness, and optimism, which vary in degree. Soft skills are in addition to hard skills, which are the technical qualifications for a job. Perhaps it's also a vital aspect of the teacher education system, especially in terms of preparing future teachers in a systematic fashion.

Although "soft skills" cannot be tested proactively, they may be cultivated over time to help educators engage with students, colleagues, and students' parents more effectively.

The fundamental job of a teacher is to educate students and pass on information about a certain subject. It is not merely reciting textbook information, but rather devising techniques to make lessons more enjoyable and engaging for students. Teachers must be able to pivot their lesson plans in order to make them more relevant to students, either by linking them to current events to assist teachings sink in or by adjusting them to different grade levels or learning types.

Objectives of study

The study aims to explore the followings objectives

- To explore the role of soft skills in teachers education
- To find out various importance of soft skills in teachers education

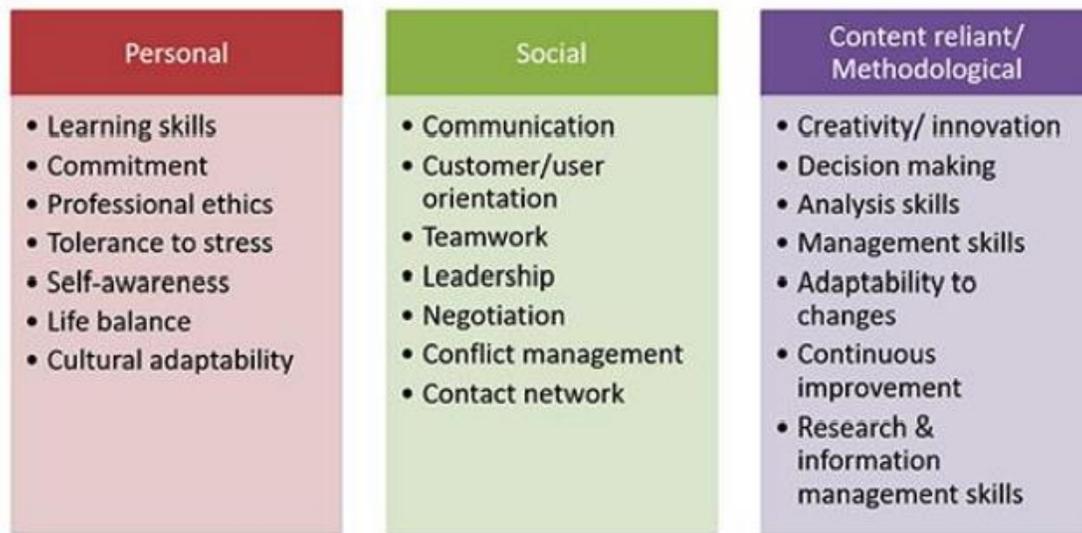
Research Methodology

An intensive search was done based on keywords in different academic journal databases and different reports published in the recent past in order to achieve an analytical study based on the title of the paper. After conducting an intensive study on various secondary sources from selected papers and reports, the researcher presented a clear view on the role of soft skills in teachers education.

What are soft skills?

A person's relationships, professional performance, and career prospects are improved by soft skills. Personality traits, social grace, linguistic competence, personal habits, friendliness, and optimism are all examples of soft skills according to Pachauri and Yadav (2014). It is essential for a teacher education system to work in a high-performance setting so that efficiency may be increased. Individuals with soft skills are considered more proficient, as well as more able to assist community growth and change. School of teacher education officials have found that soft skills are the most effective tools and approaches for assessing future capacities of instructors and pupils. Therefore, curriculum designers have had to grapple with the importance of soft skill development (Hodges & Burchell, 2003). Through the development of abilities that students can utilise, teacher education institutions play an essential role in this.

TAXONOMY OF SOFT SKILLS



(ADAPTED FROM Haselberger, Oberheumer, Perez, Cinque & Capasso as cited in Succi, 2015, pp. 252-254)

Role of Soft skills

Soft skills are defined as non-academic skills that include communication, analytical thinking and problems resolution, teamwork, life-long learning and knowledge, entrepreneurship, ethics and professional morals, and leadership. In order to improve future teacher effectiveness, these seven soft skills should be incorporated into the curriculum of teacher education programmes.

Communication skills

Aspiring teachers are expected to be proficient and competent communicators in both their native tongue and English. They should be able to express themselves clearly and confidently in both written and oral forms. They are also required to be active listeners while responding appropriately. They should also be confident in presenting and utilising technology during presentations.

Critical thinking and problem-solving skills

Future teachers should be able to think critically, creatively, innovatively, and analytically and apply information using this competence. This component requires them to have the capacity to detect and evaluate complicated situations and make reasonable judgments. They should also be able to broaden and enhance their thinking abilities and give suggestions and alternative solutions.

Teamwork

Teamwork abilities indicate the capacity to collaborate and cooperate with students from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds to attain a shared objective. To have a successful working connection with their peers, it is critical that they accept the attitudes, behaviours, and perspectives of others. They will also be required to switch between the roles of leader and member of the group.

Lifelong learning and information management skills

Future teachers must be able to self-regulate their learning while gaining skills and knowledge. They must be able to locate and manage critical information from a number of sources. They must also be open to new ideas and have the ability to cultivate an inquisitive mind.

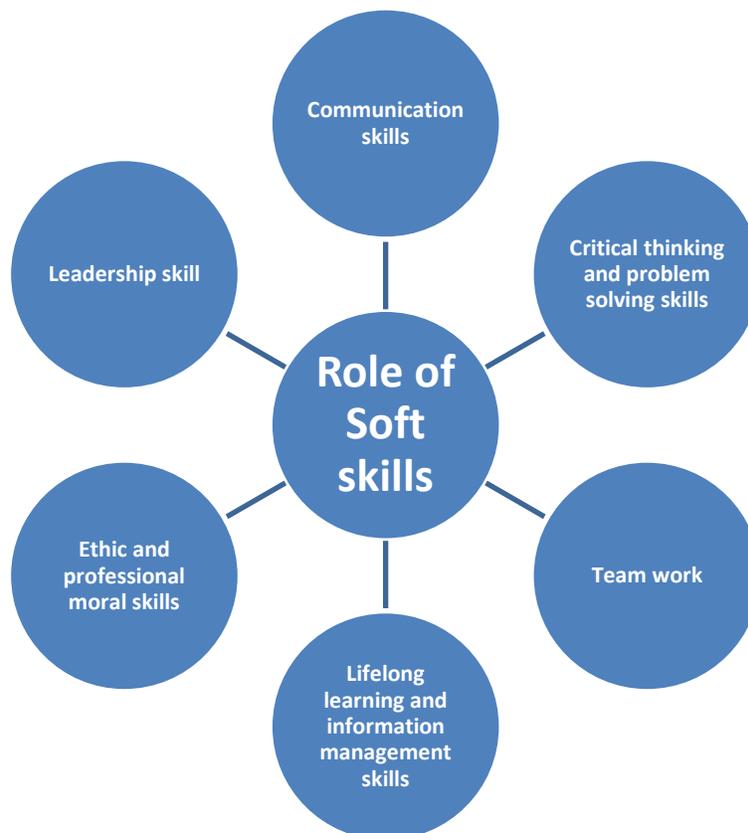
Ethic and professional moral skills

If future teachers possess this ability, they will be able to practise with high moral standards in the proper professional practice. They should also be able to grasp the impact of economic and sociocultural factors on their unique professional activity. They should be able to analyse and make ethical decisions in response to ethical problems. They should be able to practise ethical ethics outside of the job and have a sense of social responsibility.

Leadership skill

Leadership ability refers to a new teacher's ability to lead in a range of tasks. To lead a project, trainee teachers must be conversant with fundamental leadership ideas. It is also important that they comprehend and can alternatively execute the roles of a leader and a member of a group.

Figure 1



Essential Soft Skills for Teachers Training

It's critical for a teacher to know their subject matter, whether it's math, English, science, or history. While an educator's subject-matter expertise may be accessed

through grades, certificates, and examinations, certain intangible characteristics that might help them become better, more successful instructors cannot be measured effectively that is called as soft skill.

Soft Skills for Teachers

Communication is perhaps the largest area of soft skills for teachers and probably the most essential. To accomplish their work effectively, teachers must be great communicators who can communicate with a wide range of individuals. They must be able to interact effectively with both pupils and parents. To be an effective teachers, educators must be able to communicate with their students rather than at them.

As a teacher, your primary responsibility is to educate and enlighten pupils about a certain topic. In addition to regurgitating textbook information, teachers must develop ways to engage pupils and get them interested in the learning process. By relating their lesson plans to current events, teachers may help students better understand them, or by adapting them to different grade levels and learning styles, teachers can make their teachings more accessible.

Teachers must create avenues of communication with their students in addition to teaching them on course materials. In situations when children feel alienated or bullied, teachers should be able to develop trust with their pupils and utilise their communication abilities to assist students in need.

Importance of Soft Skills for Teachers Education

Soft skills are necessary for all trainee instructors, regardless of their subject of study. Soft talents shape people's personalities. Any educator's dream is for graduates, particularly those from tertiary education institutions, to be more than just specialists in their fields and mature individuals with a well-rounded education. This feature, however, is represented in soft talents rather than hard abilities.

The ability to utilise effective soft skills may make or ruin a teacher's and their students' careers. Soft skills are useful in the classroom and when interacting with parents, administrators, and other instructors. A teacher's soft skills translate into their ability to manage these people' demands successfully. Every day, a teacher must utilise her oral and written communication abilities to communicate with her pupils successfully. At every school-wide activity, including faculty meetings, a teacher employs cooperation and collaboration. The teacher can successfully control classroom behaviour or student development by using critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. Such abilities can boost a teacher's efficacy. When an excellent teacher teaches a student, they gravitate toward success. Differences in teacher effectiveness can be the most influential factor influencing student academic achievement.

Encouraging Soft Skills Development in the Classroom

Outside of the classroom, teachers and administrators may promote soft skill development by exploring chances to engage with other educators. This may be accomplished through work shadowing programmes, collaboration across schools within the same district, and teacher conferences. However, the most efficient and realistic approach to acquire soft skills is to dive in and model them. Practising soft skills will improve teamwork and respect for other instructors, students, parents, and

administration. It is possible to learn to communicate effectively and empathetically; ask if it is possible to learn to be prepared and on time. Applying the abilities in real-life circumstances requires some planning and attention, but it is doable.

Designing Curriculum to Promote Soft Skills

Curriculum designers, standards writers, and educators have been looking for methods to include soft skills into teacher education for future students for some years. They are working on strategies to rejuvenate the curriculum and classroom teaching and increase rigour in ways that will prepare trainee teachers for life in the future work environment. However, teacher education leaders' voices indicate a significant skills gap in soft skills, which is a deficit in fundamental abilities rather than a content gap.

Employers Seek out Soft Skills in Graduates

Employers now report a shortage of soft skills among graduates searching for jobs. These are also known as core skills, essential skills, employability skills, or essential competencies. Whatever term is used, pupils lack desired attributes that help them thrive in a range of life circumstances and occupations, such as communication, honesty, politeness, professionalism, teamwork, adaptability, and responsibility.

Educators Must Develop and Model Soft Skills

Educators may improve their soft skills through socialising with others and understanding their attitudes, values, and behaviours. Because relationship-building and socialising are crucial in an adolescent's life, middle school is a good place to start incorporating soft skill development into the curriculum. By including this essential component into classroom objectives as well as instructional strategies, instructors enhance their own soft skills while also preparing their students for success beyond school.

Teachers must also promote the concept that technological abilities, which are more crucial in the digital era, may help a student get a foot in the door. However, interpersonal skills are required for success after being recruited. It boils down to technical ability as well as attitudes, work ethic, communication skills, emotional intelligence, and other human characteristics.

Furthermore, with unemployment at an all-time low, the job market is tightening. Organisations are looking for graduates to fill available positions. While graduates must exhibit technical ability, organisations are also searching for pupils who have basic communication, critical thinking, teamwork, tolerance, presentation skills, organisational skills, perseverance, and leadership qualities.

Conclusion

Soft skills are personal characteristics that improve a teacher's skills, work performance, and career perspectives. To different degrees, soft skills are defined in teacher education as personality qualities, social grace, language proficiency, personal habits, friendliness, and optimism. A competent teacher is supposed to be dedicated to their job and to be self-motivated. Teaching is a multidimensional performance that necessitates a wide variety of knowledge and abilities, including hard and soft skills, to effectively complete classroom duties. Teaching style may be thought of as a collection of actions. As a result, the ability to educate entails more than just passing

on knowledge from teacher to pupils. Instead, it is a complex method that facilitates and influences student learning in the teacher education system.

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