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Editorial

The education sector of India and the entire world is badly affected by COVID-19 pandemic. The spreading pandemic has changed the mode of education. All educational institutions have been shut down and the educational activities are done through digital mode. This is the scenario where virtual learning platforms have risen to a level equivalent to the face-to-face classroom learning. The pandemic has transformed the centuries-old chalk and talk teaching model to technology-oriented teaching.

COVID-19 has forced educational institutions across India and the world indeed to suspend physical classrooms and shift to online classes. The students' physical access to classroom has been stopped and teaching-learning could be imparted only through online mode. Most of the schools and colleges are conducting their classes in online platforms such as Microsoft Team or Google Classroom.

Virtual learning has broadened the horizon of the present education system. Schools and colleges have started a virtual way of teaching through online classes which helps children to achieve a real classroom experience to a certain extent which in no doubt helps students to gain a wider and deeper knowledge about the subjects they learn in a more effective manner by means of audio and video lessons. The tech-enabled education system allows the schools and colleges to reach towards thousands of students. Similar to physical classroom, the students follow a timetable for their virtual classroom, interact with the teacher and also take assignments. The teachers handle lessons through digital presentations and assessment is done through digital means.

The research papers and articles in this issue focus on the areas such as Online Apps for pedagogical transaction, e-learning platforms to promote digital education, blended learning etc. which highlight the importance of virtual education. It is hoped that the readers would be enlightened through these educationally significant articles and research papers that deal with various educational issues in this digital era.

With Regards
Editorial Board

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SOFT SKILLS AND SELF ESTEEM OF B. ED. STUDENTS

Delwin Mary .V
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ABSTRACT

Soft skills are so important for teachers and the attainment of these skills would make a difference in quality of teaching and effective learning. Teaching is a skill which includes both hard and soft skills to successfully manage the demands of the classroom. Since teaching is an additional complex process, novice teachers need to have important soft skills. Self-esteem is the one of the key ingredient that affects the level of proficiency in all fields of endeavour. It has been correlated to job success, school achievement, interpersonal compatibility, and general happiness. The investigators were curious to know if soft skills were a correlate of self esteem of B Ed students. The sample of the study included 300 B.Ed students. The findings revealed that there was a positive, low and significant correlation between soft skills and self esteem of B.Ed. students. The results showed the need to focus on boosting the soft skills and self -esteem of students so as to enhance their confidence and levels of aspirations and their motivation to become competent and professional teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the most important building blocks for a nation, serving as an instrument of economic and social development. The root meaning of education is given as bringing up or leading out or manifest the inherent potentialities in a pupil. That is bringing out of the idea of universal validity which are latent in the minds of man (Chakraborty, 2007). Soft skill is a term which refers to personality traits, social graces, facility with language, personal habits, friendliness and optimism that mark people to varying degrees. Soft skills are a set of behaviours that must be internalized as a natural aspect of a person's repertoire of social skills and character attributes. They are defined as interpersonal and human relations skills; in other words 'people skills'. It means the way an individual interacts with others and manages to achieve the personal relationship and accomplishes the quality of physical products. Some of the soft skills are planning and preparing, organizing, processing, creating, observing, designing, describing, identifying, problem solving attitude, tool development, skills transfer and process

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development (Ramesh, Gopaldaswamy and Ramesh, Mahadevan 2010).

Self-Esteem consists of two words 'Self' and 'Esteem'. Self is the core of personality, otherwise called the ego. It is the sum total of the personal awareness of the person himself. Self-esteem can be defined as an individual's judgment of his or her self-worth (Rosenberg 1965). The interests and values with which he identifies himself along with his social perceptions are central to the self of the person. Thus, self-esteem is the package of belief that carry around in your head, that have accepted to be the trust about yourself, whether it is or not.

B. Ed. students are otherwise known as student teachers or prospective teachers are the candidates who have been admitted to a teacher education course and who are undergoing the same. They are prepared as good teachers by providing them with a sound foundation of the theoretical knowledge, understanding, skills, attitude and interests through the teacher education course (Sherlin, 2013). It enables the prospective teachers to acquire knowledge, skills and techniques for effective teaching and to inculcate in them the desired ideals and behavioural patterns of the society in which we live.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Education, the basic social organization, has established its root widespread in all fields of life and its demand soars high primarily because of knowledge explosion. Our nation is proud of striving and thriving towards achieving the status of a developed nation in the years to come and, no doubt, education has a major say in this mega-effort. Obviously, it is the quality of education that

decides the quality of a nation just as the quality of teachers decides the quality of education. Though we boast of the increase in quantity of education, the question whether the status quo of high quality is maintained remains cloudy and doubtful. While concentrating the quantity, we cannot ignore omit quality. In precise view quality is more important than quantity. The solution for all these problems lies in the hands of skillful teachers. As a social engineer, a teacher should shoulder the responsibility of building the nation building.

Teaching is a skill based profession. Soft skills can enhance the career mobility of a person and increase the chances of success in all level of teaching (Singh, 2011). Teachers must be skillful, and only then, they can perform well in their profession. The study result of Anbuthasan and Balakrishnan (2015) revealed that the teachers working in boys' schools, girls' schools and co-education schools differ significantly in their overall soft skills. So, teachers must develop their skills in various dimensions to meet the educational needs of the students and maintain interest among the students. Teaching and classroom management are not a problem for a skillful teacher. In olden days people considered the skills as hard skills, which were the deciding factors for the success of any profession. But, the study result of Mitchell, Geana (2010) revealed a significant difference between the perceived importance of how specific soft skills affect success in the workforce and the location of school (city, county). The emergence of soft skills lightens the learners and professionals that, there are plenty of skills apart from the Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing (LSRW) skills, which are considered as the essential skills required for learning. The inculcation of essential soft skills produces quality human

capital and thus, develops their knowledge, understanding, and values. All elements of soft skills must be acquired by each and every teacher to perform effectively and comprehensively. Soft skills fall under the affective domain and its importance is unquestionable. Mere possession of soft skills won't help a teacher. To become successful in teaching a teacher must be able to know how to use the soft skills in new and problematic situations.

The self-esteem is the package of belief that are carry around in their head, that they have accepted to be tract about themselves, whether it is or not. Self-esteem has been correlated to: job success, school achievement, interpersonal compatibility, and general happiness (Redenbach, 1991). It plays a vital role in every aspect of life, because it is the perception of his/her own. Good self-esteem induces the level of aspiration and thus the performance will be more. Regan, George and Lawrence, John (2017) found that there was a significant difference between male and female prospective teachers in their self-esteem and female prospective teachers have a higher level of self-esteem than the male prospective teachers. Jaya (2009) found a positive correlation between self-concept and soft skills among undergraduate students. These findings created a curiosity in the mind of the investigator and hence this study. Therefore, the investigator being a teacher educator made an attempt to study the soft skills and self-esteem of B. Ed. students.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The 21st century brings a new face to the skills i.e., soft skills. Hard skills along with soft skills and vice versa are the predictive factors for the success of any profession and teaching has also no exception. Now-a-days the teaching

performance is highly decided by the level of soft skills possessed by the teacher and thus it is considered as one of the important factor that predicts the attainment of teaching objectives. If one person thinks that he is a valuable person, then he can easily achieve his desires and goals, as it is a reflection of this self-esteem. Self-esteem thus promotes the confidence among the individuals and considered as an important cause that effect success. These two variables thus may have an impact on each other, and this thought induced the investigator to find the correlation among these variables. So for this investigation she considered soft skills as an independent variable and self-esteem as the dependent variable and entitled the research problem as, Soft Skills and Self Esteem of B.Ed. Students.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the level of soft skills and self esteem of B. Ed. students.
2. To study the correlation between soft skills and self-esteem of B. Ed. students.

HYPOTHESIS

There exists no significant correlation between soft skills and self-esteem of B. Ed. students.

METHODOLOGY IN BRIEF

Method

The investigator used the survey method for the present study.

Sample

The sample for the present study consisted of B. Ed. Students studying in different colleges of education in Kanyakumari District affiliated to Tamilnadu Teachers Education University. By using simple random sampling technique three hundred (300) B. Ed. students were selected for this study.

Tools used

For the present study the investigator used the following tools to collect the data.

- i. Soft Skills Scale developed by the Investigator (2017)
- ii. Self-Esteem Inventory by Dr. S. Karunanidhi (1996)

Statistical Techniques Used

The investigator has used the following statistical techniques in her research for the purpose of analyzing the data.

- i. Percentage wise analysis
- ii. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1

Percentage wise analysis of soft skills of B.Ed Students

Low		Average		High	
No	%	No	%	No	%
81	27.0	143	47.7	76	25.3

Levels of soft skills of B. Ed. students

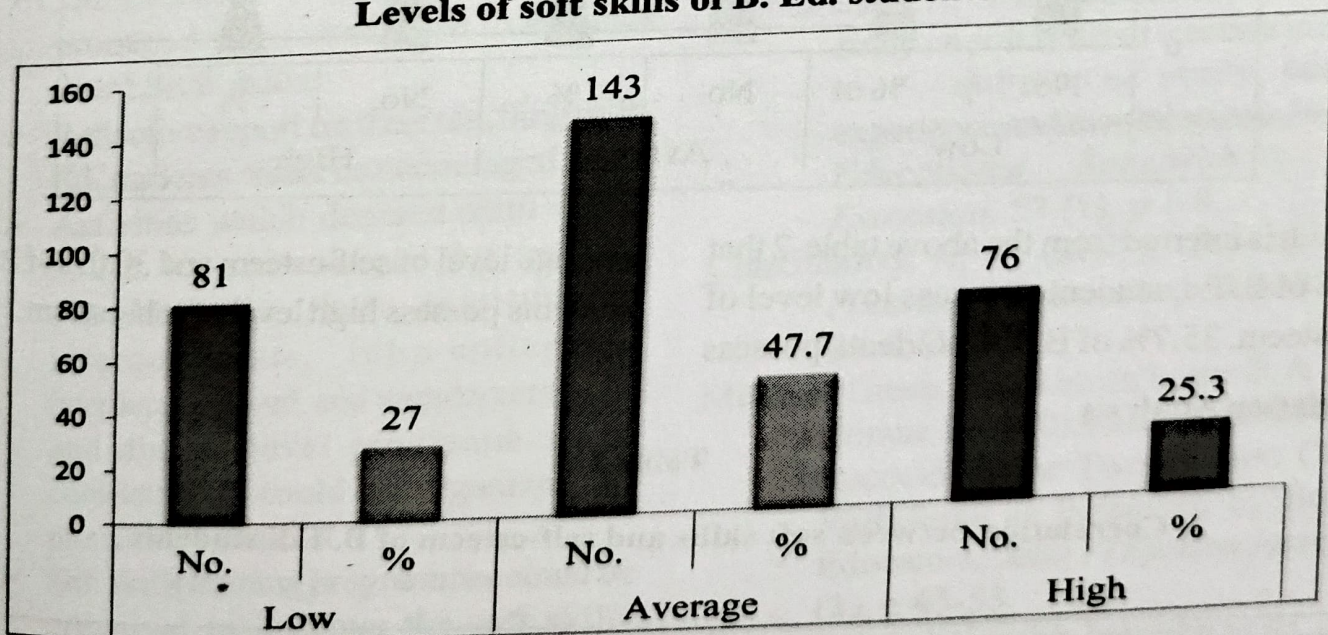


Figure 1

It is inferred from the above table-1 that 27.0% of B. Ed. students possess low level of soft skills, 47.7% of B. Ed. students possess

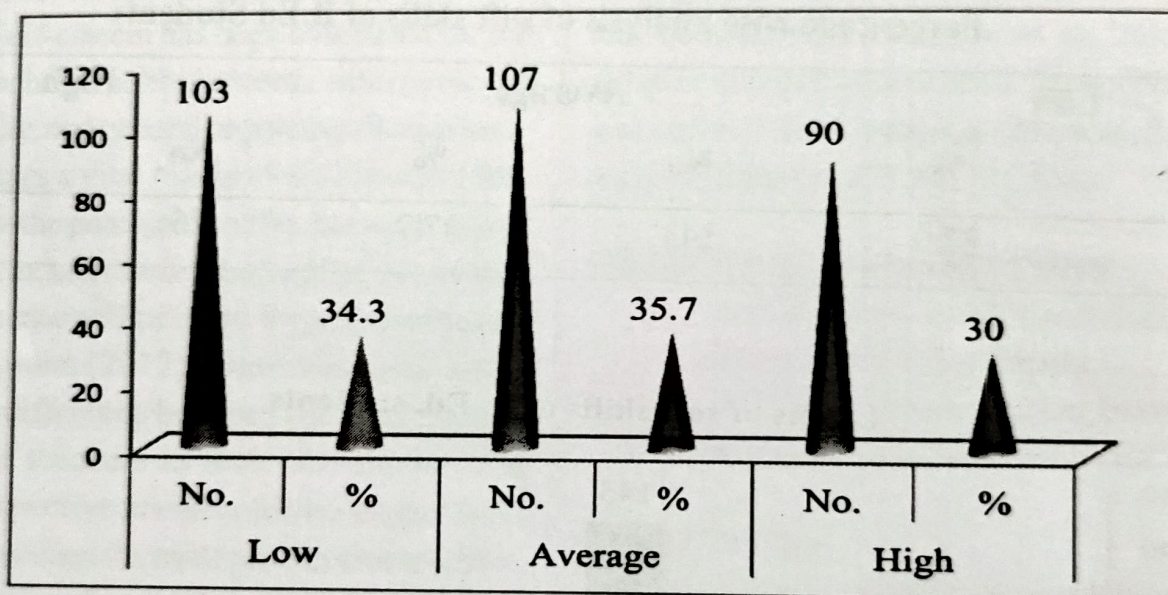
average level of soft skills and 25.3% of B. Ed. students possess high level of soft skills.

Percentage wise analysis of self-esteem of B. Ed. students.

Table 2
Percentage wise analysis of self-esteem of B. Ed. students

Low		Average		High	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
103	34.3	107	35.7	90	30.0

Level of self-esteem of B. Ed. students



It is inferred from the above table-2 that 34.3% of B. Ed. students possess low level of self-esteem, 35.7% of B. Ed. students possess

average level of self-esteem and 30.0% of B. Ed. students possess high level of self-esteem.

Correlation Analysis

Table 3
Correlation between soft skills and self-esteem of B. Ed. students

Variable	No.	Calculate 'r' Value	p Value	Remarks
Soft Skills and Self-Esteem	300	0.375	0.000	S.

From the above table-3, it is inferred that 'r' value is 0.375 and $p < 0.01$. Therefore it is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it can be said that there exists a significant positive low correlation between soft skills and self-esteem of B. Ed. students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the findings, the following recommendations are made by the investigator to the teacher and education system for the betterment of quality in teacher education and for the future teachers.

- Citizenship training camps, special camps, educational clubs and educational tours should be executed as compulsory programmes in teacher education curriculum. All these activities play a vital role in the promotion of interpersonal skills and thus soft skills and self-esteem can be promoted.
- Communicative English classes be promoted to be conducted to enhance their LSRW skills.
- Reflective report on their teaching of B. Ed. students could be encouraged.
- Activities which demand team works could be encouraged by teacher educators in their institutions. Intercollegiate, intra-collegiate, interdepartmental, and intradepartmental and district level programmes and competitions could be organized for promoting soft skills.
- Soft skills training programmes could be organised to improve the soft skills management of B. Ed. students.
- B.Ed students could develop a healthy rapport with the teacher educators, which may help them to develop all the skills and competency required for their

profession. Also, develop a healthy friendship with the peer group, which may contribute much for the professional and personal wellbeing with needed interpersonal skills and self-esteem.

CONCLUSION

This research has confirmed the investigator that, there is significant relationship between soft skills and self-esteem of B. Ed. students. This shows that, soft skills and self-esteem are interrelated and are essential factors that decide the success in their personal and professional life. Besides the current levels of soft skills and self-esteem has revealed, emphasizing their importance in the educational process. Based on the findings, the investigator suggested some of the recommendations for the benefits of teachers and teacher education programme. The investigator thus, believes that this research endeavor would open new ways for the future researchers to focus more on these areas.

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