Boosting Prospects Through Promotion Of Interpersonal Skills Among Aspiring Teachers

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Abstract: Peoples skills that we use throughout our lives to communicate and interact with others are the interpersonal skills. They can be considered as life skills which relate us with others. Interpersonal skills are the resources which help us to success. In the present technology infused world interpersonal skills gain much importance. The present paper throws light on the aspect of interpersonal skills alienated from digital world. The present study is designed to investigate the extent of interpersonal skills among a sample of 300 prospective teachers of Thiruvananthapuram district and also to explore whether there is statistically significant difference in the level of interpersonal skills among student teachers with respect to the demographic variables, nature of institution and residential locality. Psychometric test for interpersonal skill was used as the tool for the study. The reliability and validity of the tool was found and it was pilot tested. The data was analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics t test. The results show significant differences in interpersonal skills of student teachers with regard to residential place and educational existence.

Keywords: Interpersonal skill, aspiring teachers, residential locality, nature of institution

1 INTRODUCTION

Education in the 21st century is becoming increasingly important to ensure that the students have skills in learning and innovation and can work and survive by utilizing life skill. For living in a society one needs survival skills are essential in the present society. Interpersonal skills are one of the important survival skills. They are the Life skills that describe how we interact with others whether in a social or occupational setting. It help us to relate in positive ways when we interact with people. This may mean being able to maintain relationship which is needed to the mental and social well-being of a person. For many jobs in an organization, strong interpersonal skills are a requirement. It may mean keeping good connection with family members which are an important source of social assistance. It may also mean being able to end relationship beneficially. Computer software can be a valuable aid in delivering life skills programme. The young minds are the ones who are benefitted from this. Today technology offers the young generation a means of expressing their views of connecting with the wide community and achieving hard skills. Society has undergone an advancement in economy and technology. Its demand on the workforce has been significant in several ways. Nevertheless, there is increasing demand for specific hard skills and mastery of specific skill sets with an emphasis on digital literacy.

Various traits in Interpersonal skills are,

- **Emotional Intelligence** The skill of one to assess, recognize and control the feelings around him and others.
- **Team Working** The relaxation one gains while working with others.
- **Empathy** Indicates the candidate for the acknowledgment as well as their own of other existing emotional state.
- **Integrity** refers to the beliefs, behavior and truthfulness of one’s honesty.
- **Social Boldness** which incorporates determination, assertiveness and courage in a social context.

**Definition of Key terms**

**Boosting**- To improve or increase something which is already present.

**Interpersonal skill**- The ability to live in person and in communities that we use every day to connect and engage with others.

**Aspiring Teacher**- A graduate or post-graduate teacher in an educational institution who teaches under the supervision of a certified teacher to apply for an educational degree.

2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRESENT STUDY

There is no single facet of our knowledge that these will not be of use, the talents that can transmute and transmit across the continuum of our life. Increasing focus on the use of ICTs in university education and a growing movement towards virtual environment has hindered the growth of interpersonal skills as they are assumed to involve face-to-face contact between peers and students and teachers. The national curriculum for teacher education introduced new norms for improving the quality of teacher education programs. The interpersonal skills become highly relevant in the present backdrop of the draft of National Education Policy 2019. The policy stresses on mounting relevance of skills set among upcoming students. Therefore the responsibility lies on the shoulders of the aspiring teachers to be equipped with the various life skills and impact the same. No doubt majority of teacher trainees...
possess adequate knowledge and professional growth in their teacher training programme. But today’s environment demands more from them. In order to meet the demands of the changing world and face the challenges with confidence it is necessary for the teacher trainees to acquire some life skills. The study sought to determine whether the student teachers in the digital world possess interpersonal skills. Here lies the interest in looking at the student trainees. Building life skills are crucial for them to avoid relapses and gain self-confidence.

3 REVIEW OF RELATED STUDY
Mary Bambacus, Margaret Patrickson (2008) conducted a study on interpersonal communication abilities to strengthen HR managers’ organizational engagement. They observed that senior HR executives were successful in interpersonal communication with an emphasis on the consistency and pace of the message, their ability to listen and collective leadership. Sufiana Khatoon, Malik Qurat Ulain (2012) explored prospective teacher’s awareness about interpersonal skill. They found that prospective teachers of university had higher results on each core characteristics of interpersonal skill than the prospective teachers of Education College.

4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
◆ To find out the extent of Interpersonal Skill among prospective teachers.
◆ To examine the extent of interpersonal skill of student teachers with respect to nature of institution.
◆ To find out the level of Interpersonal skills of student teachers with respect to residential locality.

Hypothesis
To carry out the study the following Null Hypotheses were formed
◆ The interpersonal skills of student teachers with respect to the life of the institution do not differ significantly.
◆ The behavioral skills of the student teachers with respect to the residential space are no significant difference.

Methodology
The study follows Survey design and the method adopted for the study is normative survey.

Sample
The sample of the present study consisted of 300 student teachers of teacher education colleges of Thiruvananthapuram district selected using random sampling method. The investigator used Nature of Institution (Government/Aided and Unaided) and Residential locality (Rural & Urban) as the background variables.

Tool Used
The tool used for the study is online Psychometric test for interpersonal skill (adopted from internet) it is a Likert type scale with 5 points. The tool is used to evaluate listening skills, emotional intelligence, verbal communication and group communication.

Standardization of Tool
The Reliability of interpersonal skill scale was found to be 0.72 using Test-Retest method Content Validity is a process of matching test items with objectives. The content validity was established by 2 experts.

Statistical operation
The major statistical techniques used were percentage analysis, Mean, Standard deviation and Test of significance of mean.

Analysis and interpretation of Data

Table – 1: Number and Percentage of interpersonal skill of Student Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Qualification</th>
<th>Residential Locality</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>168</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above table it is evident that 18.8% of rural student teachers possess high interpersonal skills, and 14.7% of urban student teachers possess high interpersonal skill. The above table also indicates that 21.9% student teachers of Govt./aided institution possess high interpersonal skill and 16% student teachers of unaided institutions possess high interpersonal skill.

Table – 2: There is no significant difference between Urban and rural student teachers in their Interpersonal Skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Residential Locality</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skill</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>187.95</td>
<td>23.69</td>
<td>2.403</td>
<td>0.05 Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skill</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>194.87</td>
<td>26.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
indicate that the rural trainees possess higher interpersonal skills than urban trainees.

Tenability of Hypotheses
From the analyzed data it is clear that urban and rural students differ in their extent of interpersonal skills. Hence Null Hypotheses H(0) is not accepted.

Table -3: There is no significant difference between Govt./aided and unaided student teachers in their Interpersonal Skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Type of management</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skill</td>
<td>Gov/aided</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>201.53</td>
<td>25.53</td>
<td>7.22</td>
<td>0.05 Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skill</td>
<td>Unaided</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>182.13</td>
<td>20.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The t value (t=7.22) obtained between Govt. /Aided and Unaided student teachers for interpersonal skill was significant at 0.05 level. This means there’s a big difference between Govt. /Helped and inexperienced teachers improve their interpersonal skills. Since the t value measured approaches the 1.96 table value at the point of 0.05. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. It shows that the mean score of Govt. /aided student teachers is 201.53 and that of Unaided trainees are 182.13 which indicate that the Govt. /aided trainees possess higher interpersonal skills than unaided trainees.

Tenability of Hypotheses
From the analyzed data it is clear that the services of Govt /Aided and Unided Students are significantly different. Hence Null Hypotheses H(0) is not accepted.

5 DISCUSSIONS
The study findings show that there is a significant difference between rural and urban student trainees that the mean rural student scores were higher than urban ones. This results signifies the different conditions that prevail in the family, natural environment and education they have received might have made a jolt in them. Comparatively the urban students are more oriented towards digital world, hence student trainees of urban areas misses out the human touch of interpersonal skills. The mean score of student trainees from the Govt. /aided shows a higher value than that of unaided this also shows that the Govt. /aided students exhibits more extent of interpersonal skill than the student trainees in the unaided institution .Government initiated programs for additional skill acquisition are being implemented in Govt. /aided institutions because of fund availability and funds utilization for enhancing the various skills among the students. The unaided colleges lack funds, which act as stumbling blocks in their development and lacks opportunity to conduct such programs and the students in those institutions will be in tight schedules doing works of their own and lacks time for group works, and communication among them.

Major Findings
After the analysis of tabulated data the investigator found out the following findings.

1. The study showed that most student teachers have a moderate level of interpersonal competence.
2. There is a considerable difference between urban and rural students in their interpersonal skills. Rural students exhibited greater extent of interpersonal skill than urban student trainees.
3. There is significant difference between Govt. /Aided and unaided student teachers in their interpersonal skills. Gov./Aided student trainees exhibited more interpersonal skill than unaided student trainees.

Educational Implication
Interpersonal skills have become so ingrained that they can be taken for granted by teachers, never caring about how they interact with others. Imprinting on the ability to communicate efficiently may have impaired the positive development of young adults’ relationships. This can potentially affect a range of areas of life such as family relationship, socialization, academic performance, and jobs. Students need to be coached the skills necessary for interacting effectively with others. The stakeholders should be in conformity to impose the various skills necessary. Better assimilation and nearness in the young adults character will drive only through good interpersonal skills.

6 CONCLUSION
In todays compound ecosystem young adults must be prepared to face the situation they undergo. The life problems are complex because of that students must be well prepared to face them. This is easier to establish essential life skills for a good life without the risk of survival. Students are typically viewed to have strong inter-personal skills as fun, polite, loyal, persuasive and often desirable characteristics to others. In the 21st century the educators need to inculcate the skills to enable themselves to apply the survival skills in which prime position is given to interpersonal skills.

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