



# Study of Soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility of Primary School Teachers

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## Abstract:

*Teachers are the catalytic agents of change and focus in any society should be to provide Teacher Education of the highest quality. Quality Teacher Education leads into Quality school Education. 'Soft Skills Mastery' 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. High lighting the need of providing Soft Skills Mastery training for teachers the paper presents the findings of the study conducted on Primary School Teachers. The study reveals that Soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility are associated to each other and suggests having Quality School Education Soft Skills Mastery training should become an integral part of all Pre-services and In-service Teacher Education Programme to strengthen and sustain Soft Skills Mastery of the teachers directly and Responsibility indirectly.*

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**Keywords:** *Soft Skills Mastery, Responsibility, Quality Education, Teacher Education, Soft Skills Mastery and Teacher Responsibility*

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## 1. Introduction

In the modern world the stock of knowledge is far greater and the pace of growth is very quick thus, the Indian society is experiencing social, cultural and economic change. In this context the Teacher's academic and social responsibilities have taken a new dimension and made the task of the teacher quiet difficult and challenging. The main responsibility of shaping the behavior of students is in the hands of teacher.

Teachers in fact, are the designers of the future of their students and thus, the society. They are required to exhibit universal values like world peace, justice, freedom equality and unity along with established social and civic values as enshrined in Indian constitution. Hence the society expects teachers should be honest, sincere, and punctual and should follow the professional ethics. Prospective teacher should not only be intellectually competent and technically skilled but also civilized in his/her emotions and refined in his /her state. In this age of privatization Responsibility should be an important attribute of teacher. Those who pay high fee have right to demand teachers perseverance for quality education of their children. NCTE (1998) has recommended that a teacher in this technological age must have commitment and to achieve human values.

## 2. Need for quality teacher education

The National Council for Teacher Education has defined Teacher Education as 'A programme of education, research and training of persons to teach from pre-primary to higher education level.' It is a programme that is related to the development of Teacher proficiency and competence that would enable and empower the teacher to meet the professional requirements of the profession and face the challenges.

Teacher Education encompasses teaching skills, sound pedagogical theory and professional skills. Teaching skills would include providing training and practice in the different techniques, approaches and strategies that would help the teachers to plan and impart instruction, provide appropriate reinforcement and effective assessment. It includes effective classroom management skills, and use of instructional materials and communication skills.

Thus, Teacher Education is not only responsible for improvement of school education but also for preparing competent, committed and professionally well qualified teachers who can meet the demands of a system. A teacher's content knowledge verbal skills or enthusiasm for learning necessarily constitutes high water mark for high quality teacher. Viewed in this perspective a high quality teacher must imbibe the four pillars of education as mentioned in the Jacques Delor's report, "Learning the Treasure Within" (1996). These four pillars of education are "Learning to Know", "Learning to Do", "Learning to Live Together" and "Learning to be". According to the first pillar 'Learning to Know' the teachers must have an urge for learning to learn. It can be achieved by combining a sufficiently broad general knowledge with the opportunity to work in depth on a small number of subjects the second pillar 'Learning to Do' emphasizes acquisition not only of an occupational skill but also of the competence to deal with many situations and work in teams. "Learning to Live Together" the third pillar requires development of an understanding of other people and an appreciation of interdependence in a spirit of respect for the value of pluralism mutual understanding and peace the last pillar "Learning to be", will support the development of one's personality and ability to act with greater autonomy judgment and personal responsibility. Thus, these four pillars of education can be considered as the founding pillars in the preparation of a high quality teacher.

"Soft Skills Mastery" are "People Skills" comprising of personal attributes that drive one's potential for sustained growth, enhances an individual's social interactions, job performances and career prospects. According to World Health Organization (WHO) "Soft Skills Mastery are nothing but Psychological Skills, which insists upon accepting the behavior of others along with their culture". Fundamental Soft Skills Mastery put forth by WHO are: Self- Awareness-Self Esteem; Critical thinking Skills; Decision Making skills: Problem Solving skills; Interpersonal Skills; Communication Skills; Empathy; Coping with emotions; Handling peer pressure and Negotiation Skills.

### **3. Need for soft skills mastery training for teachers**

Education in human values being acclaimed and accepted as a very new, fascinating and promising programme of education because the values are deteriorating day by day. Educational institutions are the nurseries of the values and ideals of life in every country. Without values and ideas the educational institutions with hundred classrooms, laboratories and well equipped libraries remain unimpressive scaffolding not an edifice of civilization. From a place of transformation of information, the educational institution in the future will make itself a place of producing intellectual work, generating habits of systematic, methodical thinking, readiness for self-examination and self-criticism, making clear the way for the development of a free moral personality. UNESCO in its report, 'Learning to Be' mentioned that in future the educational institutions will work in the form of learning resources centers and characterizes the futuristic methods of teaching based on guidance. Guidance is the means of helping individuals to understand and use wisely the educational, vocational and personal potentialities and opportunities, which they have or can develop. It is a form of systematic assistant where by pupils are aided in their achieving satisfactory adjustment of self and to others in their institutions and life relationship. Thus, teaching will be emotionally a joyous and spiritually an uplifting experience both for the teachers and the learners.

As Fulton (2006) has argued the major determinant in the success of schools is the quality of teachers who teach them and the quality is in turn determined by the quality of the teacher education programme that these teachers undergo as students of teaching.

Review of research studies on Soft Skills Mastery revealed that many researches were conducted in the field of Soft Skills Mastery. However, these researches were mainly centered on business, management, engineering and information Technology field. The studies revealed the fact that Soft Skills Mastery is the key to success in every field. This shows the significance of Soft Skills Mastery in man's life. But very little has been done in the field of Education. The author has given the resume of the studies conducted in the field of Education on Soft Skills Mastery.

Sekhar Chandra (2007) in his study found that it is possible to develop Soft Skills Mastery among students from rural background through specially planned training programme. Lima, Rui M. et al (2007) studied about the extent to which students and teachers are able to acknowledge the strengths and weakness of a shift in the approach to teaching and learning from a traditional, teacher-centered perspective towards project and learner – centered education. The finding of the study suggested that acquisition of Soft Skills Mastery is the key feature of project led education.

Ameeta Pand Purohit Deepti (2005) conducted a study titled “Soft Skills Mastery Training Requirement for a New age Teacher” which compared the curriculum of different universities in India and also analyzed the Soft Skills Mastery Training existing in Andhra Pradesh. The result revealed that existing curriculum of teacher training programme emphasizes more on training in teaching methodology rather than developing Soft Skills Mastery.

By reviewing the studies related to Soft Skills Mastery the author identified a research gap where in no major studies have been undertaken in the area of Soft Skills Mastery of Teachers and its relationship with Teacher Responsibility. The studies reveal the significance of Soft Skills Mastery training for teachers as well as students. Hence the author felt the need of undertaking a study of soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility of Primary School Teachers.

Study of Soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility of Primary School Teachers.

The study investigated the relationship between Soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility of Primary School Teachers. The objectives of the study were:

- 1.To compare the Soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility of Primary School Teachers in terms of gender, age, teaching experience.
- 2.To compare the Responsibility of Primary School Teachers in terms of gender, age, teaching experience.
- 3.To study whether there exists any real association between Soft Skills Master and Responsibility of Primary School Teachers.
- 4.To study whether there exists any real association between Soft Skills Mastery and gender of Primary School Teachers.
- 5.To study whether there exist any real association between Responsibility and gender of Primary School Teachers.

#### **4. Tools used in the study**

- Rating Scale on Soft Skills Mastery : constructed and validated by investigators to measure Soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility of Primary School Teachers.
- Teachers Responsibility Scale adopted version of ‘Teachers’ Responsibility Scale constructed and validated investigators

#### **5. Sample of the study**

200 Primary School Teachers drawn through stratified random sampling technique from the population of Primary School Teachers of Mehsana District.

## 6. Data collection procedure

The data was collected by administering the tools on 200 Primary School Teachers drawn through stratified random sampling technique from the population of Primary School Teachers of Mehsana District.

## 7. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using 't' test to test the significance of difference between the means of scores of male and female Primary School Teachers in terms Soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility, ANOVA to test signification of difference between the means of score of Primary School Teachers belong to different age group and teaching experience in terms of Soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility. Chi-square was used to test the association between Responsibility and Soft Skills Mastery, Responsibility and Gender and Soft Skills Mastery and Gender.

The study revealed that:

1. Male and female Primary School teaches do not differ significantly in their Soft Skills Mastery.
2. The Soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility of Primary School Teachers differ significantly in terms of their age.
3. The Soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility of Primary School Teachers who belong to the age group  $30 < 45$  years are significantly higher than that of the age group below 30 years. • Soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility of Primary School Teachers who belong to group below 30 years and above 45 years. And Soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility of Primary School Teachers who belong to the age group  $30 < 45$  years and above 45 years are equal iii. Primary School teachers possess same level of Soft Skills Mastery irrespective of their teaching experience.
4. Male and female Primary School teachers do not differ in their Responsibility
5. Responsibility of Primary School teachers is equal irrespective of their age and teaching experience.
6. Soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility of Primary School teachers are associated to each other.
7. Soft Skills Mastery and gender of Primary School teachers are independent of each other.

Responsibility and gender of Primary School teachers are independent of each other. The study thus revealed that there is a real association between Soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility of Primary School teachers where as Soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility of Primary School teachers are independent of gender. Soft Skills Mastery differ with respect to age where as Responsibility do not differ with respect to age. Soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility do not differ with respect to gender and teaching experience.

Since the Responsibility of the teachers has a profound influence on the students achievement and the findings reveal that Responsibility is associated with Soft Skills Mastery of the Teachers, hence the study suggest that Soft Skills Mastery Training should become an integral part of all Pre-service and In-service teachers education programmes to enhance and sustain Soft Skills Mastery of the Teachers directly and Responsibility indirectly Study also suggest that performance appraisal has to be encouraged so as to identify the strength and weaknesses of the teachers with regard to Soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility. As a result, the teachers can overcome their weakness and develop the Soft Skills Mastery, which in turn will improve their Responsibility, thus teaching become a Reflective Practice and effective.

## 8. Conclusion

Education is basically a man making process and it implies practicing and ensuring transformation of the humans at various levels of socialization, enculturation, awareness and divine realization. This process of transformation gets stimulated with the help and support of a teacher. It is the responsibility of Teacher Education Institutions to prepare and ensure the constant supply and delivery of quality teachers to the society. In this context Teachers Education should be designed to train teachers to look within for values and look beyond for perspectives The NCTE has been striving hard to achieve a

planned and co-ordinate development of the Teacher Education system throughout the country. In the area of educational research, the importance of affective skills in teaching learning process has been studied. A step further, a more holistic term 'Soft Skills Mastery' has been gaining importance in the field of education also. But very little has been done in concrete terms to plan Soft Skills Mastery training in Teacher Education. The study revealed that positive relationship exists between Soft Skills Mastery and Teacher Responsibility of Primary School Teachers. Hence the study recommends efforts should be made to enhance Soft Skills Mastery and Responsibility of Primary School Teachers through well-structured training programmes. Thus it can be concluded that by providing training in Soft Skills Mastery to teachers as a transfer effect Human Capital can be generated which result in Sustained Development and Growth.

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