A Study On Social Competence Of Teacher Educators

[1] Mrs. V. Delwin Mary, [2] Dr. A. Punitha Mary

[1]Ph. D. Scholar, St. Xavier's College of Education (Autonomous), Palayamkottai – 627002.
[2]Assistant Professor of Education, St. Xavier's College of Education (Autonomous), Palayamkottai – 627002.

Abstract

The present study aimed to find out the level of social competence and to find out whether there is any significant difference in the social competence of teacher educators with regard to gender, designation, subject and qualifications. The study belong to descriptive research as it involved the collection of data to test the hypotheses using survey method. Using stratified random sampling technique 342 teacher educators were selected from Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli, and Thoothukudi districts as samples. The data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The study results revealed only 18.7% of the teacher educators found to have high level of social competence. There is no significant difference between male and female, assistant professors and associate professors, arts and science subjects, M. Ed./M. Phil., M.Ed./M.Phil. with NET/SLET, Ph. D. only and Ph. D. with NET/SLET qualified teacher educators in their social competence.

Introduction

Man is a social animal. As the member of the society he/she is expected to interact and cooperate with everyone. But this is not so easy, as we write. However one who hold social competence can be effectively prosper in this task. As a skill, Social competence is defined as the effectiveness in handling social situations and relationships. It is the condition of having the social, emotional and cognitive behaviours needed to succeed as a member of the society. It refers to display socially suitable behaviours in different situations and according to the social expectations of the environment (Gresham, 1995). Despite of these modest definitions, social competence is considered as a subtle idea, because the skills and behaviours needed for healthy social development may vary with age of an individual and with the demands of the existing situations. Social competence is considered as a multi-faceted concept involving social assertion, frequency of interaction, positive self-concept, social skills, acceptance among the peers, and many more (Coie & Dodge, 1998). In other words, social competence refers to getting along well with others, being able to form and maintain close relationships, and responding in adaptive ways in social settings (Burt, 2008).

Need and Significance of the study

According to the European Parliament (2006), Social competence, one of the eight essential competences for lifelong learning, encompasses all behaviors that enable individuals to engage effectively and constructively in various social and professional environments. It entails the capacity to evaluate social situations, comprehend what is expected or required, identify the emotions and intentions of others, and select the most appropriate behaviors for the given context. But, it is important to note that the requirements for successful social

functioning can differ depending on the situations or setting. During the early years of life, parents serve as the main source of social and emotional support for the children. However, as children grow older, peers gradually take on a more significant role in their social-emotional development. Moreover, peer relationships usually involve more reciprocity compared to relationships with adults, offering opportunities to develop social skills like cooperation and negotiation. In simple words, social competence can be referred to the ability to engage in meaningful interactions with others. Teaching profession demands more interactions, as teachers are dealing with humans i.e., students or learners. So, all the teachers are expected to hold social competence in a greater level in order to excel in their profession. Social competence does not represent some fixed qualities, but can be viewed as a construct that in itself marks development. Society expect more meaningful interactions from the teachers. When the teachers interact purposefully, that will radiate among their students and it will project that the teachers are the owner of impeccable social competence. So, developing social competence is considered as an essential aspect for future functioning of the society and for reducing risk of behavioral and emotional problems among the members of the society. By keeping this view point the investigator decided to conduct a research on the social competence of teacher educators. Since teacher educators are the primary accountable persons, they are the ones who develop, shape, or fabricate teachers. Literally we can say they are the creators (teacher educators) of creators' (teachers). Thus, the present investigation is more significant and meaningful.

1. Title of the Problem

The current inquiry is entitled as "A Study on Social Competence of Teacher Educators".

2. Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the level of social competence and its dimensions of teacher educators.
2. To find out whether there is any significant difference in social competence of teacher educators with respect to gender, designation, subject, and qualifications.

3. Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between male and female teacher educators in their social competence and its dimensions.
2. There is no significant difference between Assistant Professor and Associate Professor in their social competence and its dimensions.
3. There is no significant difference between arts and science subject teacher educators in their social competence and its dimensions.
4. There is no significant difference among teacher educators with M. Ed./M. Phil., M.Ed./M.Phil. with NET/SLET, Ph. D. only and Ph. D. with NET/SLET as educational qualification in their social competence and its dimensions.

4. Methodology

The current study adapted descriptive research as it involved the collection of data to test the hypotheses using the survey method. To collect the data, a tool namely Delwin & Punitha's Social Competence Scale (DPSCS) prepared and validated by the investigator and the research supervisor (2022) with 47 items under three dimensions namely Group Climate (16 items), Team Cohesion (14 items), and Social Skills (17 items), was used. A five point scale with the responses Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree were used with scoring keys 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 for positive items and 1, 2, 3, 4 &

5 for negative items. The sample of the present study consisted of 342 teacher educators from Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli, and Thoothukudi districts selected using stratified random sampling technique.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analysed using the statistical techniques such as percentage analysis, t-test and F-test and the particulars are presented as follows;

Table 1

Level of Social Competence and its Dimensions of Teacher educators

Dimensions	Low		Moderate		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Group Climate	56	16.4	224	65.5	62	18.1
Team Cohesion	58	17.0	234	68.4	50	14.6
Social Skills	66	19.3	222	64.9	54	15.8
Social Competence	68	19.9	210	61.4	64	18.7

It is inferred from the above table that 19.9% of teacher educators have low, 61.4% of them have moderate and 18.7% of them have high level of social competence.

Null Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between male and female teacher educators in their social competence and its dimensions.

Table 2

Difference between Male and Female Teacher Educators in their Social Competence and its Dimensions

Dimensions	Category	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Remarks at 5% level
Group Climate	Male	76	65.03	9.10	0.184	NS
	Female	266	65.24	8.34		
Team Cohesion	Male	76	56.05	8.25	0.184	NS
	Female	266	56.25	7.77		
Social Skills	Male	76	67.37	10.20	0.250	NS
	Female	266	67.70	10.09		
Social Competence	Male	76	188.45	25.41	0.228	NS
	Female	266	189.19	23.14		

(At 5% level of significance the table value of 't' is 1.96)

It is inferred from the above table that there is no significant difference between male and female teacher educators in their social competence and its dimensions namely group climate, team cohesion and social skills as the calculated 't' values are less than the table value. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

Null Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between Assistant Professor and Associate

Professor in their social competence and its dimensions.

Table 3

Difference between Assistant Professor and Associate Professor in their Social Competence and its Dimensions

Dimensions	Category	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Remarks at 5% level
Group Climate	Assistant Professor	319	65.18	8.39	0.077	NS
	Associate Professor	23	65.35	10.14		
Team Cohesion	Assistant Professor	319	56.24	7.82	0.267	NS
	Associate Professor	23	55.74	8.70		
Social Skills	Assistant Professor	319	67.57	10.03	0.360	NS
	Associate Professor	23	68.43	11.24		
Social Competence	Assistant Professor	319	188.99	23.26	0.087	NS
	Associate Professor	23	189.52	28.81		

(At 5% level of significance the table value of 't' is 1.96)

It is inferred from the above table that there is no significant difference between Assistant Professor and Associate Professor in their social competence and its dimensions namely group climate, team cohesion and social skills as the calculated 't' values are less than the table value. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

Null Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference between arts and science subject teacher educators in their social competence and its dimensions.

Table 4

Difference between Arts and Science Subject Teacher Educators in Their Social Competence and Its Dimensions

Dimensions	Category	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Remarks at 5% level
Group Climate	Arts	167	64.23	8.48	2.047	S
	Science	175	66.11	8.45		
Team Cohesion	Arts	167	55.65	7.73	1.284	NS
	Science	175	56.74	7.98		
Social Skills	Arts	167	66.62	9.29	1.807	NS
	Science	175	68.58	10.75		
Social Competence	Arts	167	186.50	22.75	1.938	NS
	Science	175	191.43	24.25		

(At 5% level of significance the table value of 't' is 1.96)

It is inferred from the above table that there is a significant difference between arts and science teacher educators in the dimension of social competence namely group climate as the calculated 't' value is higher than the table value. Hence the null hypothesis is not accepted.

While comparing the mean scores, science subject teacher educators (66.11) are

better than the arts subject teacher educators (64.23) in their group climate.

But there is no significant difference between arts and science subject teacher educators in their social competence and its dimension namely team cohesion and social skills as the calculated 't' values are less than the table value. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted

Null Hypothesis 4

There is no significant difference among teacher educators with M. Ed./M. Phil., M.Ed./M.Phil. with NET/SLET, Ph. D. only and Ph. D. with NET/SLET as educational qualification in their social competence and its dimensions.

Table 5

Difference among Teacher Educators with M. Ed./M. Phil., M.Ed./M.Phil. with NET/SLET, Ph. D. Only and Ph. D. with NET/SLET Qualification in their Social Competence and its Dimensions

Dimensions	Source of variation	df=3,338		Calculated 'F' value	Remark at 5% level
		Sum of squares	Mean square variation		
Group Climate	Between	528.90	176.30	2.469	NS
	Within	24134.37	71.40		
Team Cohesion	Between	181.01	6̶0̶.3̶4̶	0.975	NS
	Within	20910.67	61.87		
Social Skills	Between	195.46	65.16	0.637	NS
	Within	34570.63	102.28		
Social Competence	Between	2479.75	8̶2̶6̶.3̶8̶	1.487	NS
	Within	187838.07	555.73		

(At 5% level of significance the table value of 'F' is 2.62)

It is inferred from the above table that there is no significant difference among teacher educators with M. Ed./ M. Phil., M.Ed./M.Phil. with NET/SLET, Ph. D. only and Ph. D. with NET/SLET as educational qualification in their social competence and its dimension namely group climate, team cohesion and social skills as the calculated 'F' values are less than the table value. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

Findings and Discussion

The research result revealed that most of the teacher educators, i.e., 61.4% of them possess moderate level of social competence and only 18.7% of them have high level social competence. This may be due to the reason that teacher educators may not receive comprehensive training in social competence and social skills during their educational journey. Teacher education programmes may often prioritize academic content and pedagogical knowledge over soft skills and social skills like social competence. Since, social and emotional competencies might not have been emphasized in their professional development and this may result in teacher educators having a moderate grasp of these skills but not mastering them fully.

The results also showed that, there is no significant difference between male and female, assistant professors and associate professors, arts and science subjects (except the dimension group climate), M. Ed./M. Phil., M.Ed./M.Phil. with NET/SLET, Ph. D. only and

Ph. D. with NET/SLET qualified teacher educators in their social competence.

But, there is significant difference between arts and science teacher educators in the dimension of social competence namely group climate. The mean scores, science subject teacher educators (66.11) are better than the arts subject teacher educators (64.23) in their group climate. It may be due to the reason that the science stream faculty members may ready to consult with their colleagues to clarify their doubts and eager to work in collaboration with them for their projects, papers, publications and other institutional as well as professional development activities.

Conclusion

Teacher educators, irrespective of their designation, whether assistant or associate professors, or from arts or science disciplines, are anticipated to unveil a high level of social competence as it helps them in mentoring students, interacting with colleagues and learners, maintaining proper interpersonal and communication skills, working with different categories of peoples in harmony, promoting a culture of inclusivity, respect, and cooperation. So, in order to improve the status of social competence among teacher educators, the pre and in-service teacher education programmes could include more theoretical and training aspects in emotional and social intelligence and interpersonal skills. It is suggested that the policy makers and curriculum designers have to consider this dispute and address with utmost preference and emergency for promoting and fostering a healthy teacher educators' community and which will definitely contribute a balanced and successful society in specific and prosperous nation in general.

References

1. Amanda Crick, (2002) "Emotional Intelligence, Social Competence, and Success in High School Students in Western Kentucky University." http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/theses/649.

2. Antonysamy, K. S. & Chandra, Joseph (2012). Soft Skills and Personality Development. Chennai: Vijay Nicole Imprints Private Limited.

3. Barjees Jeelani, J. (2011). A study on college students attitude towards Indian culture in relation to social intelligence. Unpublished M. Phil., dissertation, Department of Education, Annamalai University, Tamilnadu, India.

4. Burt, K. R, Obradovic, J, Long, J., D., & Masten, A. S. (2008). The interplay of social competence and psychopathology over 20 years: Testing transactional and cascade models. Child Development, 79, 359-374.

5. Coie, J. D., & Dodge, K. A. (1998). Aggression and antisocial behavior. In W. Damon & N. Eisen berg (Eds.), Handbook of child psychology, social, emotional, and personality development. (5th ed., Vol. 3, pp. 779—862). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons Inc.

6. European Parliament (2006). Recommendation 2006/962/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning [Official Journal L 394 of 30.12.2006]. Available at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3Ac11090

7. Glenn M., Calaguas & Carmela S. Dizon, (2011). Development and Initial Validation of the Social Competency Inventory for Tertiary Level Faculty Members. International Journal of Human and Social Sciences, 6 (3).

8. Gresham, F. M. (1995). "Best practices in social skills training," in Best Practices in School Psychology, eds A. Thomas and J. G. Grimes (Washington, DC: National Association   of School Psychologists), 1021–1030.
9. www.https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcn.2020.100861