



Soft skills for business and profession: A substitute in literature

Vishnu Prasad C

Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Pes Degree College, Bangalore, India

Abstract

There is an appalling trend in the contemporary education system in pursuit of keeping pace with global standards and excessive emphasis has been placed on corporate education in general and soft skills in particular, resulting in an encroachment of literature and language sessions in classrooms. In this regard, the present study makes an earnest attempt to underline the natural flair towards inculcating the same in students. There are also various components of the same being listed out at a micro and macro level.

Keywords: global standards, soft skills, contemporary education system, literature

1. Introduction

Globalization of education system has undisputedly opened up an avenue to its followers to enrich their competencies on a much wider scale by way of offering integrated skills in several disciplines of engineering and technology, medicine, commerce and management, each of which are learning to reshape their outlook towards holistic individual development. At the grass root levels, there are mazes of changes which are brought about, ranging from matriculation to shoot levels at the doctoral degrees. The glory and triumph of modern education has been appreciated by many potential employers of the output from these corporatized schools, as they have undoubtedly kept pace with the fast growing demand for a new, unorthodox approach towards job, career, personal and organizational growth.

In developing countries like India, there is still a disharmony regarding uniform acceptability of these standards to a complete extent. Although convergence with the new standards is quite acceptable, many groups and institutions vehemently oppose a complete adoption of modern education.

One essential and interesting factor that jolts an observer is the changing importance of languages both at the macro and the micro levels.

Languages and literature which had once occupied a large chunk of the total elements of learning by a student, has been overhauled by the mainstream elements, which are more linear as regards their relationship and outlook towards procuring a vocation to their candidates.

The need of the hour here is for every educationist to rush forward towards reviewing the needs of languages in the contemporary world, and make doubly sure if there is a right mix of literature and the mainstream, as well as try to incorporate the due changes necessary.

For this reason, essentials of languages are grouped as-

1. Macro level benefits- are the benefits associated at a larger scale involving the entire system from a societal viewpoint and an economic viewpoint, as well as the role played by the elements of education in upholding the versatility and integrity of the country.

2. Micro level benefits-involve benefits at the classroom levels, and focus on student-teacher relationship, and the immediate outcomes of changing the subject-mix in a classroom atmosphere.

2. Review of Literature and Research Design

A. The impact of literature education on students' perceptions of self and others: Exploring personal and social learning experiences in relation to teacher approach-2016-Marloes Schrijvers, Tanja Janssen, Olivia Fialho, Gert Rijlaarsdam- University of Amsterdam

The aim of the study was to find out if and to what degree a representative sample of Dutch upper secondary school students report to experience gains in terms of personal and social insights by way of literature education, and to explore whether this is in any means has been related to their teacher's classroom practice. The paper concluded with an observation that there is certainly a room for widening the scope of personally and socially relevant literature education.

B. Exploring Education and Children's Literature-Xavier Mínguez López-2014

The main aim of this paper was to understand the implications research had in store for children. A few important observations made by the paper were that Children's literature contains an undeniable educational component as any other kind of literature does. The more specific educational component is the development of literary competence that it involves, as children and young people are integral components in the form of citizens in training and they have to acquire the necessary skills to decode and understand literature in a deeper sense.

3. Discussions and Elaboration for Need of Literature As A Replacement of Soft Skills

1. At the Micro-Level

At the classroom levels, there is an absolute necessity to eliminate stress and peer-pressure which are caused by ever increasing pressure from peers, goals and also by way of attempting to

constantly associate oneself with others' identity, as a result of the havoc wrought in by modern and in particular, western education. In this regard, it is note-worthy that literature can actually help one understand the following soft skills demanded by even transnational companies:

- Emotional intelligence- emotional intelligence has been one of the most sought after and challenging trait that is to be inculcated by corporate candidates and in particular, by those at the executive positions. Literature is rich in its repertoire that quote many instances where complex personalities are brought forward and their thoughts are universal in nature.
- Interpersonal relationships- by way of simple instances from history and mythology, grounded complex theories can be simplified and can be imparted to students at a more fundamental and workable pattern.
- Attitudes and behaviour- an individual's behaviour is a reflection of his inbuilt attitude, which in turn accumulates as a result of experience and exposure to situations. Literature helps a person clearly understand those facets of a person's character that are favourable and those detrimental to his overall growth.
- Stress management- let alone a literary work teach stress management; going through a literary article itself is a great stress buster. In classrooms where emphasis is placed exclusively on superficial and mechanical nature of the mainstream subjects.
- Creativity- interesting puzzles and anecdotes are brought together to form a maze of mysterious characters, conflicting characters and conflicts within a character when understood enable students to look at things even from a contrary point of view.

Literature and language content can easily be seen as a replacement for the following components of soft skills.

A. Ethics- in a nation where the scriptures taught and the subjects practiced ethics to the core in the real sense, trying to come up with mere complex principles and abstract examples often makes no sense and only ends up frustrating the candidates with its endless elaboration. Bringing forth mythological episodes would make the understanding both useful and enjoyable.

B. Personality development- admiration and respect is at once brought forth in the minds of the listeners on exploring the nobility of characters and literature enables one marvel at the spontaneity and ease with which any character is presented and gradually absorbs the traits of the character.

2. At the Macro Level

India has been looked upon and sought after for its heritage, glory, culture, spirituality, and finesse in terms of arts and understanding of humanities to their core. Making languages and literature take a backseat brings forth the following disadvantages:

A. lose out edge to the west- the new system with less priority to its core literary components, loses out a great portion of its indispensable essence as regards shaping out the destiny of its future generations, who are supposed to serve as role-models in carving out better and sophisticated culture on their rather, and

rather make them stereotypical in their approach towards life.

B. Loss of quality of education despite materialistic success- any form of learning when driven by a confined set of objectives which are reductionist in nature cannot develop broader thinking beyond the horizon. It is for this reason literature can be taken as a component for understanding oneself, which is the core skill to be imparted to a student.

C. Loss of a meaningful system- a system can be understood as a set of interrelated and interdependent elements working together to achieve a harmonized set of goals. Learning only the art of earning without the art of spending leads to a vacuum created during the plateau stage of the career, defeating the core purpose of happiness from a career.

The various revolutionary components that can be introduced at the classrooms as a substitute to the stereotypical soft skills in a classroom are:

1. Plays- enable analysis of psychology and behaviour of a variety of characters and at the same time depict how a person needs to adapt himself to changes in his environment.
2. Mythological episodes- have been passed on through generations and expose individuals to the core in enhancing their emotional and spiritual strength.
3. Historic fables- can go a long way in building strong traits of patriotism, commitment, dedication, confidence and thoroughly nourish the outlook of an individual towards life itself.
4. Short stories at the elementary levels- inculcate a multitude of virtues necessary for the making of an ideal individual.

4. Summary of Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion

1. Modernization of education to suit the global needs does not come with absolute benefits, but as a trade off with some virtues to be inculcated in an individual.
2. Soft skills are mere abstractions, and complex grounded theories can easily be conveyed using literary pieces.
3. The encroachment of literary sessions with soft skills and other mainstream components is absolutely an undesirable change, and is to be repealed at the grassroots.
4. Literary components can either be epics, plays, historical fables or short stories or a combination of these, each of which has a perfect potential in equipping the learners in multiple spheres of life.
5. Transition from a materialistic to a meaningful life can be possible only if there is adequacy in enriching the overall personality of an individual rather than making him confine to a limited set of objectives.
6. Increasing scope for literature can have its associated benefits both at the macro and the micro levels.
7. To conclude, the destiny of any nation depends not just on the extent of wealth amassed or annexed, but rather and most importantly, on the quality of life led by its subjects in the ordinary course of life. The pupils of the academic system can discover themselves only when a very strong policy advocating increasing importance of languages in individual and group domains is brought forward. The resultant soft skills would then, not be superficial but rather intricate, spontaneous and intrinsic.

5. References

1. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/311517950_The_impact_of_literature_education_on_students'_perceptions_of_self_and_others_Exploring_personal_and_social_learning_experiences_in_relation_to_teacher_approach/link/59f365090f7e9b553eba6b8e/download
2. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Xavier_Minguez_Lopez/publication/260192335_Exploring_Education_and_Children%27s_Literature/links/5762900a08ae5d145f361b48/Exploring-Education-and-Childrens-Literature.pdf?origin=publication_detail