

# SOFT SKILLS OF HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS BASED ON LOCALE AND GENDER

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## ABSTRACT

*Education is the process of modification of the behavior of the pupils in a desirable and useful direction. Soft Skill is an intangible skill set which is all about how people learn and think. They are basically traits, behavior, personality, attitude, preferences, personal integrity, communication style, leadership aptitude and style. The present study is to study the Soft Skills among Higher Secondary Students using Descriptive Survey Method. The sample consists of 400 Higher Secondary Students selected from six Higher Secondary Schools of Kottayam District. The technique used for selecting the sample is Stratified Random Sampling giving due representation to Gender, and Locale. The investigator used a scale- Soft Skills Scale for measuring Soft Skills among Higher Secondary Students. For analysis statistical techniques like Mean, Standard Deviation and Test of Significance of the Difference between Means(t-test) are used. The study reveals that there is no significant difference between the means of scores on Soft Skills among higher secondary students with respect to Gender and Locale. Gender and Locale has no influence on the Soft Skills of Higher Secondary Students.*

**Key Words:** *Soft Skills, Locale, Gender, Rural, Urban, Male, Female, Higher Secondary Students.*

## Introduction

Education in its general sense is a form of learning in which the knowledge, skills and habits of a group of people are transferred from one generation to the next through teaching, training or research. Education is an important human activity. John Dewey says 'Education is the process of living through a continuous reconstruction of experiences. It is the development and fulfils his possibilities.' An educated person has the ability to differentiate between right and wrong or good and evil. The widest road leading to the solution of all our problems is education. Education is not aimed at study and getting good marks. Education is the creation of a sound mind in a sound body. Skill-development and vocational education has added a new feather to the modern system of education. There is something to learn for everyone. Even an infant these days goes to a kindergarten. And a little grown, mentally and physically is promoted to a Montessori. Education is the most important means for the development of skills among individuals.

## Significance of the Study

Soft Skill is one of the most important and useful skills everyone should possess. This skill is essential in every area of life, and though most people get its importance, very few do something to strengthen it. By molding Soft Skills, the student can have the ability to concentrate in studies and it will lead to academic achievement. Student motivation and engagement play an important role in learning and academic achievement. Soft Skills is the ability of students to monitor and control their own behaviors.

People have started acknowledging the importance of Soft Skills. Soft Skills are as important as traditional hard skills regardless of industry. Soft Skills do complement hard skills and needs to be clearly understood. At the same time hard skills cannot be replaced with Soft Skills. Soft Skills play very important role in personal and professional life. Companies observe that they get people with definite hard skills but fail to get people with good Soft Skills. Companies have started understanding and acknowledging the importance of Soft Skills and are investing in training its people on Soft Skills. At workplace, they want to see more people with the various Soft Skill traits. It is very important that everyone learns and upgrade themselves on Soft Skills. Soft Skills should be practiced and improved on a regular basis.

## Objectives of the Study.

The following are the objectives for the present study.

1. To study the Soft Skills among the Higher Secondary Students with regard to Gender.
2. To study the Soft Skills among the Higher Secondary Students with regard to Locale.

## Methodology of the Study

The investigator used Descriptive Survey Method to study the Soft Skills among Higher Secondary Students. The sample consists of 400 Higher Secondary Students selected from six Higher Secondary Schools from Kottayam District using Stratified Random Sampling Technique giving due representation to Gender, and Locale. The investigator used the Soft Skills Scale for measuring Soft Skills selecting five top Soft Skills-Communication Skills, Personal Management Skills, Interpersonal Skills, Problem Solving Skills and Team work Skills. For analysis statistical techniques like Mean, Standard Deviation and Test of Significance of the Difference between Means(t-test) are used.

## Soft Skills of Higher Secondary Students with regard to Gender

The first objective of the study is to study the Soft Skills among the Higher Secondary Students with regard to Gender. The investigator observes that the means of scores on Soft Skills among the Male Higher Secondary Students is 13.96 and the Females is 14.16. For analyzing and interpreting data, the investigator used inferential statistics namely the Test of Significance for large independent sample (two

tailed  $t$ - test). The  $t$ -value set as 1.96 at .05 level of significance with degrees of freedom 398. The investigator presents the data and results of the scores on Soft Skills among the Male and Female Higher Secondary Students in the following Table.1.

**TABLE 1**

**Variable, Number, Mean, Standard Deviation and  $t$ -value of the Soft Skills among the Male and Female Higher Secondary Students**

Variable	Category	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value	Remarks
Soft Skills	Male	204	13.96	17.910	398	1.128	.260	Not Significant at.05 level
	Female	196	14.16	16.504				

From the table the investigator interprets that the obtained  $t$ -value is 1.128 which is less than the table value 1.96 at .05 level of significance and  $p$  value .260 which is greater than .05 with degrees of freedom 398. It shows that means of the scores on Soft Skills among the Higher Secondary Students with regard to Gender do not differ significantly. Therefore, the investigator concludes that Gender has no significant influence of on Soft Skills among the Higher Secondary Students.

**Soft Skills of the Higher Secondary Students with regard to Locale**

The second objective of the study is to study the Soft Skills among the Higher Secondary Students with regard to Locale. The mean score on Soft Skills of Rural students is 14.05 and Urban students is 14.06. For analyzing and interpreting data, the investigator used inferential statistics namely the Test of Significance for large independent sample (two tailed  $t$ ' test) The  $t$ -value set as 1.96 at .05 level of significance with degrees of freedom 398. The investigator presents the data and results of the scores on Soft Skills among the Urban and Rural Higher Secondary Students in the Table 2.

**TABLE 2**

**Number, Mean, Standard Deviation and  $t$ -value of the Soft Skills among the Urban and Rural Higher Secondary Students**

Variable	Category	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value	Remarks
Soft Skills	Urban	188	14.06	9.66	398	.025	.980	Not Significant At. 05 level
	Rural	212	14.05	21.89				

From the above table the investigator interprets that the obtained t-value is .025, which is less than the table value 1.96 at .05 level of significance and p-value .980 which is greater than .05 with degrees of freedom 398. It shows that means of the scores on Soft Skills among the Higher Secondary Students with regard to Locale do not differ significantly. Therefore, the investigator concludes that Locale has no significant influence on Soft Skills among the Higher Secondary Students

### Major Findings of the Study

The major findings of the present study are the following:

- There is no significant difference between the means of scores on Soft Skills among Male (13.96) and Female (14.16) Higher Secondary Students.
- There is no significant difference in the means of scores on Soft Skills among the Urban (14.06) and Rural (14.05) Higher Secondary Students.

### Conclusion

The present study attempts to analyze the Soft Skills among the Higher Secondary Students. The findings of the study shows that there is no significant difference between the means of scores on Soft Skills among the Higher Secondary Students with regard to Gender and Locale Therefore Gender and Locale has no significant influence on Soft Skills among the Higher Secondary Students

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