

The Significance of Soft Skills in Enhancing Human Resource Efficiency and Productivity

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this research is to investigate the degree to which soft skills contribute to the enhancement of the efficiency and effectiveness of human resources (HR). Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is the approach that was used in this study. The purpose of this method is to discover, evaluate, and create research questions about the effect of soft skills on

HR performance and productivity are both high. The selection and development of research questions, which are intended to identify the topic of the study, is the first stage in the systematic literature review (SLR) process. According to the findings of the research, it is possible to draw the conclusion that the development of soft skills has a major impact on the enhancement of human resource performance and productivity. It has been shown that individuals who possess skills such as communication, collaboration, leadership, and time management make significant contributions to the efficiency and effectiveness of their job, which in turn have a favourable influence on the performance of the business. It is for this reason that the cultivation of soft skills needs to be an essential component of the human resource training and development programs in each and every organization. The development of soft skills involves a comprehensive strategy, in which organizations not only give training but also establish a work environment that encourages the use of these talents. This is necessary for effective soft skill development.

Keywords: Soft Skills, Human Resource, Efficiency, Productivity.

I. INTRODUCTION

The capacity to connect, communicate, and collaborate well with others is a key component of what are known as "soft skills," and these abilities are highly valued in the professional world. Good communication, empathy, and listening abilities are necessary to enhance cooperation and decrease conflict in a professional setting, where teamwork is essential to success. Leadership and decision-making also include soft skills; a good leader has technical know-how, but he or she also needs the people skills to inspire, encourage, and direct their team. Being able to adjust to unexpected situations and keep working productively is essential in today's fast-paced world. Individuals may better adjust to shifts in technology and business dynamics if they possess skills like critical thinking, stress management, and adaptability. Productivity and efficiency in the workplace are enhanced when employees are able to effectively manage their time, find solutions to issues, and consistently put in long hours. Soft skills, such as the ability to interact well with others and establish positive working connections, are just as crucial as technical ones when it comes to climbing the corporate ladder. Manifesto Media Intellectual. Therefore, one's level of success in the business sector is largely dependent on their level of soft skills, which are more than merely supplementary abilities. A more cooperative and fruitful workplace is the result of people honing these abilities, which also make them more competitive and adaptable. Consequently, in order to better deal with the difficulties of the working environment, it is essential for both people and companies to keep improving their soft skills (Press, UGM 2021).

Interactions with clients, customers, and business partners are examples of external contacts in which soft skills are useful, in addition to their use internally. Attracting and keeping clients is heavily dependent on a company's skill in negotiation, persuasion, and providing excellent service. On top of that, having good soft skills might help you be more creative and innovative at work. People who work with you should be able to think critically and solve problems; that way, you can stay ahead of the curve (Pradipta, TH 2023). Businesses may foster an inventive, competitive, and future-proof atmosphere with a workforce that excels in soft skills. Human resource (HR) needs are rising in tandem with globalization and technology advancements, particularly in the highly competitive and dynamic workplace. Nowadays, it's not enough for workers to have technical knowledge; they also need strong social and emotional abilities to handle the stresses that come with their jobs. A person's capacity to communicate effectively, lead others, adjust to new situations, and work well in a team are all examples of soft skills that are gaining importance as determinants of peak performance. Despite this, many companies' HR departments continue to disregard the significance of employees' soft skill development. Evidence from a number of research shows that improving one's soft skills may have far-reaching effects on any

given business. Employees with strong communication, teamwork, and time management abilities are more likely to finish assignments quickly and with few mistakes, which has a direct impact on job efficiency. In this way, businesses may improve their operations by wasting less time and money. Also, according to research (Suarjana, AAGM, et al., 2022), soft skills may boost productivity. Workers are more equipped to handle workplace difficulties when they possess leadership, problem-solving, and critical-thinking abilities. They are capable of working without direct supervision, showing initiative, and coming up with creative answers to challenges. Individual and team performance are both enhanced when workers possess soft skills like self-motivation and stress management, which aid in maintaining attention and drive to complete tasks. Improving communication and cooperation between workers is another area where soft skills have an impact. If you want to make your workplace pleasant and effective for everyone, you need to focus on your working relationships. Understanding and controlling one's own emotions as well as other people's is a key component of emotional intelligence, which is a key component of healthy relationships. Workers who score higher on the emotional intelligence scale are more likely to empathize with their colleagues and see things from their points of view. As a result, they are better able to maintain composure under pressure and react rationally and calmly when faced with conflict. Tension and misconceptions are common sources of workplace conflict, and this helps alleviate them. Workers are able to get to know one another and treat one other with more respect when emotional intelligence is high since it helps with communication and empathy. Collaboration within the team improves and morale rises when people are able to express themselves clearly and understand one another. When employees know they have the support of their colleagues, they are more likely to pull together to accomplish objectives. Interpersonal harmony has a multiplicative effect on employee happiness and loyalty, in addition to its effect on conflict reduction. Employees are less likely to experience stress and more likely to be satisfied with their job performance when they have a positive impression of their workplace. A decrease in staff turnover means less money spent on finding and training new employees, which is good for business. Improving one's emotional intelligence and other "soft skills" is crucial for fostering productive interactions at work. Training in conflict management, emotional intelligence, and effective communication are all ways that businesses may foster this. They are more like to put others' needs before their own, show empathy, and establish cordial connections with both peers and bosses. A more pleasant workplace, higher levels of job satisfaction, and higher employee retention rates are all results of a happy work relationship, which helps keep organizations stable. A person's and the company's performance are both affected by the development of soft skills. According to Sundarai et al., many firms are now putting effort into providing workers with soft skill training. This may be done via seminars, internal training, or mentorship programs. The goal is to foster a more harmonious, efficient, and productive workplace.

Workers who excel in soft skills are better equipped to handle pressure and confrontation on the job, collaborate well with others, and adjust to new situations quickly. The organization's overall performance and the quality of work output are undoubtedly impacted by this. The need of honing one's soft skills cannot be overstated, particularly in the current difficult times. Despite the growing recognition of the value of soft skills by many organizations, the exact impact of these abilities on performance and productivity remains debatable. Although some argue that technical abilities are still the most important factor in determining career success, several studies have shown a strong correlation between soft skills and higher levels of work satisfaction. This highlights the need of delving more into how soft skills impact performance and productivity in today's cutthroat business environment. Knowing how to assess, develop, and use soft skills in real-world work scenarios is crucial in this setting. Furthermore, as the world of work undergoes a paradigm shift that places a greater emphasis on cooperation and cross-disciplinary communication, people's capacities to collaborate and adapt will be put to the test in more and more demanding ways. As a result, the study's primary objective is to determine if and how HR performance and productivity may be enhanced via the cultivation of soft skills, and whether and to what extent such an initiative might benefit the company overall.

By the end of the research, we hope to have a better grasp on how soft skills contribute to HR performance and productivity, and we can offer some suggestions on how businesses and other organizations can improve their training programs by focusing on both technical and interpersonal abilities.

II. METHOD

This research used the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) technique to examine the impact of soft skills on enhancing human resource performance and productivity. The first phase in this methodology involves the discovery and elaboration of research questions, designed to establish the study's emphasis. Key inquiries include the function of soft skills in enhancing HR performance, the specific soft skills that substantially influence work productivity, and the methodologies used by firms to cultivate employee soft skills. A literature search method was conducted using several academic databases, including Google Scholar, IEEE Xplore, Scopus, and ScienceDirect. The search keywords include phrases such as "soft skills and employee performance," "soft skills and productivity," and "workplace soft skills and job performance." Following the

identification of the literature, a selection procedure was conducted based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. Articles published during the previous decade, subjected to a peer review procedure, and pertinent to the study topic will be chosen. Conversely, publications that lack relevance, do not use a clear research methodology, or just address hard skills without any relation to soft skills will be eliminated. The subsequent phase is the data extraction process, during which critical information from the chosen literature is gathered, including the research title, methodologies used, principal findings, and suggestions pertaining to soft skills development. The gathered data is further evaluated using a thematic framework to discern the most impactful categories of soft skills, the correlation between proficiency in soft skills and enhancements in performance, and the methodologies used by organizations to cultivate employee soft skills. Furthermore, obstacles to the development of soft skills in the workplace are examined to provide feasible alternatives. The analytical results are collected into a report that summarizes the study's primary findings. The results gained indicate significant implications for corporations, scholars, and workers about the need of soft skills development in enhancing HR productivity and performance. This methodical, evidence-based methodology enables research to provide deeper and more accurate insights into the significance of soft skills in the workplace.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this research demonstrate that soft skills play a crucial role in enhancing employee performance and productivity. One of the primary conclusions is that people with strong communication abilities can articulate ideas and information more effectively, which results for expedited and precise decision-making. This directly influences job efficiency, since less communication mistakes will expedite the work process and minimize time wastage. Conversely, personnel with worse communication skills often encounter challenges in collaboration, hence impeding job completion. Moreover, teamwork and leadership capabilities have been shown to enhance overall performance. In several businesses, team-based projects have more success when each member can contribute efficiently, provide mutual support, and possess a strong sense of responsibility. Employees with strong leadership soft skills are often more adept at guiding their teams, resolving conflicts efficiently, and maintaining elevated team motivation. This positively influences team productivity, since harmonic collaboration expedites the attainment of organizational objectives. Previous research titled "The Influence of the Role of Human Resources Development (HRD) in Increasing Employee Work Productivity at PT. Bakrie Sumatera Plantations Tbk," conducted by Zainarti MM and colleagues, underscores the significance of HRD in enhancing employee soft skills to improve human resource performance and productivity. The study's findings indicate that proficient training and development of soft skills may markedly enhance staff productivity (Alhamidi, EMA 2022).

Moreover, proficient time management is an essential soft talent for enhancing productivity. Employees proficient in time management may accomplish duties more effectively and punctually, therefore alleviating stress and enhancing job quality. A prior study titled "The Impact of Performance Management Systems on Employee Performance," conducted by Saleha S and colleagues, examined how the implementation of a comprehensive performance management system, which includes the enhancement of soft skills, can enhance employee performance. This research highlights that performance assessments using soft skills might enhance staff productivity and effectiveness.

In the contemporary, rapid work environment, the capacity to prioritize activities and concurrently handle various responsibilities is crucial for businesses to function effectively. Problem-solving abilities significantly contribute to enhancing productivity. Employees capable of critical and creative thinking when confronted with obstacles can more readily identify effective solutions. They not only depend on directives from superiors but also possess the capacity to make autonomous judgments after thorough contemplation. This undoubtedly accelerates the settlement of workplace issues, hence enhancing overall performance.

Nonetheless, whereas soft skills significantly enhance performance, the primary problem lies in how organizations may efficiently cultivate these talents. Numerous study participants said that despite the company's provision of soft skills training, its application in practice sometimes falls short of expectations, attributed to insufficient dedication or inconsistency in execution. Consequently, it is essential for organizations to adopt a more cohesive and sustainable approach in cultivating employee soft skills.

Barriers and challenges in developing soft skills in the workplace

Despite the need of soft skills development for enhancing individual and team performance, several impediments and problems persist in its workplace application. A primary difficulty is the insufficient awareness and comprehension of the significance of soft skills. Numerous firms continue to prioritize technical abilities (hard skills) in employee training and development, neglecting critical elements like as communication, leadership, and emotional management, which significantly influence productivity and collaboration. Moreover, constrained time and resources pose significant barriers to the development of soft skills. In a fast-paced work environment, organizations often emphasize meeting business objectives above investing time in training staff

in soft skills. Moreover, the expense associated with soft skills training and development is often seen as a long-term investment that does not provide instant returns, leading firms to hesitate in allocating a budget for the program. A further problem is the diversity in culture and background among personnel inside the business. Every employee has a distinct character and mentality, influencing their communication, collaboration, and conflict resolution methods. A diverse team including people with distinct personalities and beliefs need a more adaptable strategy for cultivating soft skills to ensure their successful use in varied professional contexts (Wibowo, A. 2021). Moreover, developing soft skills demands changes in behaviour and mentality that cannot be accomplished quickly. Employees may be habituated to a certain communication style or work methodology, hindering their ability to adjust to new abilities. Acquiring soft skills need ongoing practice and assistance from supervisors and the workplace to facilitate their use in professional contexts. To surmount these challenges, organizations must use a more deliberate methodology in cultivating soft skills, including the incorporation of training into the organizational culture, offering mentorship and coaching, and fostering an atmosphere conducive to open communication and collaboration. With robust management commitment and employee recognition of the significance of soft skills, these hurdles may be surmounted, enabling firms to attain enhanced productivity and operational efficacy.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This research concludes that soft skills significantly enhance the performance and productivity of human resources. Competencies such as communication, collaboration, leadership, and time management significantly enhance work efficiency and effectiveness, hence influencing organizational success. Consequently, the cultivation of soft skills should be a crucial component of the HR training and development program in all organizations. The development of effective soft skills requires a comprehensive strategy, whereby the organization not only offers training but also fosters a workplace atmosphere conducive to the use of these abilities. Consequently, the corporation may develop a human resources department that is more efficient, adaptable, and prepared to confront more intricate worldwide difficulties. The execution of this soft skills enhancement will augment the organization's competitiveness and foster superior performance in the always developing labor market.

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