The Effect Of Soft Skills Training On Employability Readiness Among Final Year College Students

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Abstract:
In today's competitive job market, academic knowledge alone doesn't secure employment. Employers expect graduates to have strong soft skills like communication, teamwork, leadership, adaptability, and problem-solving. These skills are crucial for improving students' employability readiness and professional performance. This study examines how soft skills training affects employability readiness among final year college students. It looks at how participation in training programs influences students' confidence, communication skills, teamwork, and job preparedness. We gathered primary data from 151 final year students using a structured questionnaire. The findings show that most students who attended soft skills training reported improvements in their communication skills, teamwork abilities, and confidence during job interviews. The study concludes that soft skills training significantly enhances employability readiness and helps students prepare for the job market.

Key Words: Soft Skills Training, Employability Readiness, Communication Skills, Final Year Students, Job Preparedness.

INTRODUCTION
In today's competitive job market, academic knowledge alone is not enough for securing employment. Employers want graduates with both technical knowledge and strong soft skills such as communication, teamwork, leadership, adaptability, time management, and problem-solving. These skills enable individuals to work effectively in their jobs and contribute to organizational success. Colleges are increasingly offering soft skills training programs to prepare students for their careers. These programs aim to improve interpersonal skills, self-confidence, presentation skills, emotional intelligence, and interview readiness. For final year students, this training is especially important as they are about to enter the job market. Employability readiness refers to how prepared students are to find and keep a job. It involves the combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and professional behaviour that employers need. Students who are ready for employment are more confident, adaptable, and better equipped to face workplace challenges. This study focuses on the impact of soft skills training on employability readiness among final year college students.

NEED FOR THE STUDY
This study is important for several reasons:
* To determine if soft skills training improves employability readiness.
* To assess the level of soft skills among final year students.
* To help colleges enhance their training programs.
* To provide recommendations for improving job preparedness among students.
This research will be beneficial for students, faculty, and educational institutions.

OBJECTIVES
To examine how demographic and academic factors influence employability readiness among final year college students.
To evaluate the level of soft skills acquired by final year college students.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Many final year college students have academic knowledge but lack the soft skills that employers require. This skills gap can affect their employability readiness and job opportunities. While colleges offer soft skills training programs, it is unclear how much these programs impact students' confidence, job readiness, and overall employability. Thus, this study aims to analyse whether soft skills training significantly affects employability readiness among final year college students.

Hypothesis

H01 There is no significant relationship between demographic and academic factors and employability readiness among final year college students.

H11There is a significant relationship between demographic and academic factors and employability readiness among final year college students.

H02 There is no significant relationship between soft skills training and the level of soft skills acquired by final year college students.

H12 There is a significant relationship between soft skills training and the level of soft skills acquired by final year college students.

RESEARCH GAP

Although several studies have examined the importance of soft skills in improving students' employability, certain research gaps still remain in this area. Most existing studies focus mainly on general employability skills without specifically analyzing the direct effect of structured soft skill training programs on employment readiness among final-year college students. Many researchers have adopted cross-sectional designs that measure students' perceptions at a single point in time, but there is limited longitudinal research that evaluates the long-term impact of such training on actual job placement and workplace performance.

Furthermore, a majority of studies have been conducted in developed countries or in professional courses such as management and engineering, while there is comparatively less research in the Indian higher education context, particularly among non-professional degree students. Soft skills are often treated as a single combined factor, and there is insufficient analysis of which specific soft skills—such as communication, teamwork, leadership, or problem-solving—contribute most significantly to employment readiness.

In addition, many studies rely only on students' self-assessment and do not incorporate employers' perspectives to validate whether trained students truly meet industry expectations. There is also a lack of comparative research on different methods of soft skill training, such as workshops, online programs, and experiential learning approaches. Therefore, further research is required to address these gaps and to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how soft skill training influences employment readiness among final-year college students.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The present study follows a descriptive research design. A descriptive study is used to describe the characteristics, opinions, and behavior of a particular group without manipulating any variables. In this research, the descriptive design helps to examine and explain the existing level of soft skills training and employability readiness among final year college students.

- It helps in identify the level of soft skills acquired by students
- It measure the level of employability readiness

Primary Data

Primary data refers to the original data collected directly from respondents for the first time. In this study, primary data were collected from 151 final year students through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire included questions related to demographic details, participation in soft skills training, level of soft skills acquired, confidence level, and employability readiness. This direct data collection helps in obtaining first-hand and relevant information from the target respondents.

Area of the Study

The area of the study refers to the geographical and institutional boundary within which the   research was conducted. This study is confined to NGP College, India. The respondents selected for the study are final year undergraduate students of the college.

The research focuses only on students studying in their final year, as they are at the stage of preparing for campus placements and employment opportunities. Limiting the study to NGP College helps in collecting specific, relevant, and manageable data within a defined area.

Sample Size

The sample size of the study consists of 151 final year undergraduate students from NGP College, India. The selection of 151 respondents was considered adequate to represent the target population and to obtain reliable results for analysis.

Sampling Method

The study adopts the convenience sampling method for selecting respondents. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique in which participants are chosen based on their availability and willingness to take part in the study.

In this research, 151 final year undergraduate students of NGP College were selected based on easy accessibility during the data collection period. This method was chosen because it is simple, time-saving, and suitable for academic research conducted within limited time and resources.

Tools Used for Data Analysis

In this study, statistical tools such as percentage analysis, charts, and correlation were used for analysing and interpreting the collected data.

Percentage Analysis

Percentage analysis was used to simplify and present the data in an understandable form. It helps in showing the proportion of responses for each question in terms of percentages. This method makes it easier to compare different responses and understand the distribution of opinions among the respondents.

Research Methodology

Research Design: convenience sampling method research design was used for the study.
Population: Final year undergraduate students.
Sample Size: 151 respondents.
Sampling Method: Convenience sampling method was used.
Data Collection Method: Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire.
Tools for Analysis: Percentage analysis and statistical analysis were used to interpret the data.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Arulraj, N.2017 Observed that students who received communication skills training showed marked improvements in articulation, clarity, and interview confidence.

Bennett, J.2016 Concluded that inclusion of problem-solving modules in soft skills training enhanced analytical and decision-making skills, improving employability assessments.

Khanna, S. 2010 Found that a structured soft skills training program significantly improved communication, leadership, and interview performance among final year engineering students

Pan, W. & Lee, C. 2011 Showed that teamwork-focused training positively affected students' collaborative ability and performance in group tasks.

Patel, S.2019 Noted that the gap between academic learning and industry demands in India is due to lack of formal soft skills development; emphasized training to enhance employability readiness

Reddy, G. & Anuradha, K.2015 Reported that soft skills training in Indian colleges increased resume quality, interview preparedness, and overall employability indicators.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION
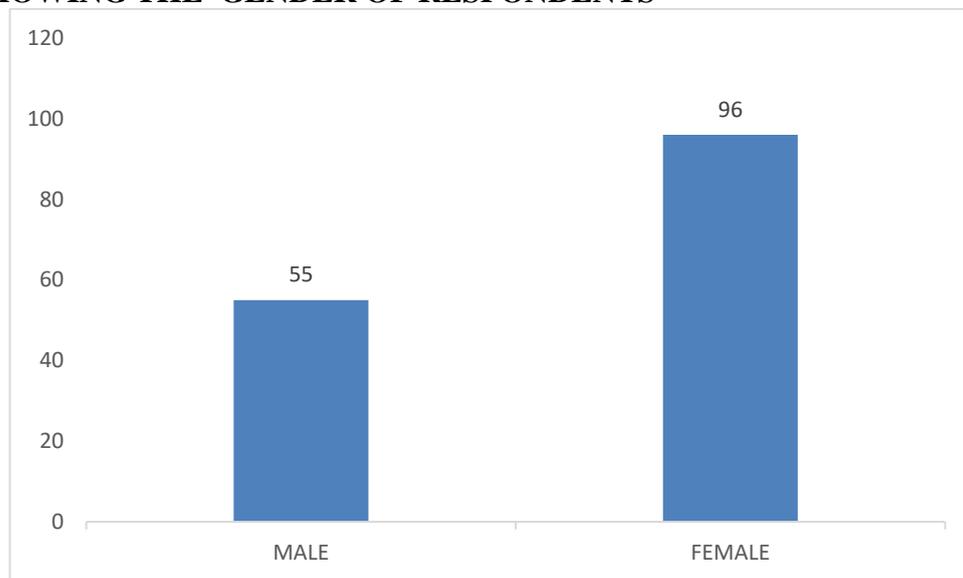
4.1 TABLE GENDER OF RESPONDENTS

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
MALE	55	35.4
FEMALE	96	64.6
TOTAL	151	100

SOURCE DATA :PRIMARY DATA THROUGH QUESTIONNAIRE

INTERPERTATION

The above table shows the gender distribution of the respondents. Out of 151 final year students, 55 respondents (35.4%) are male and 96 respondents (64.6%) are female. It is observed that the majority of the respondents are female students.

4.1 CHART SHOWING THE GENDER OF RESPONDENTS
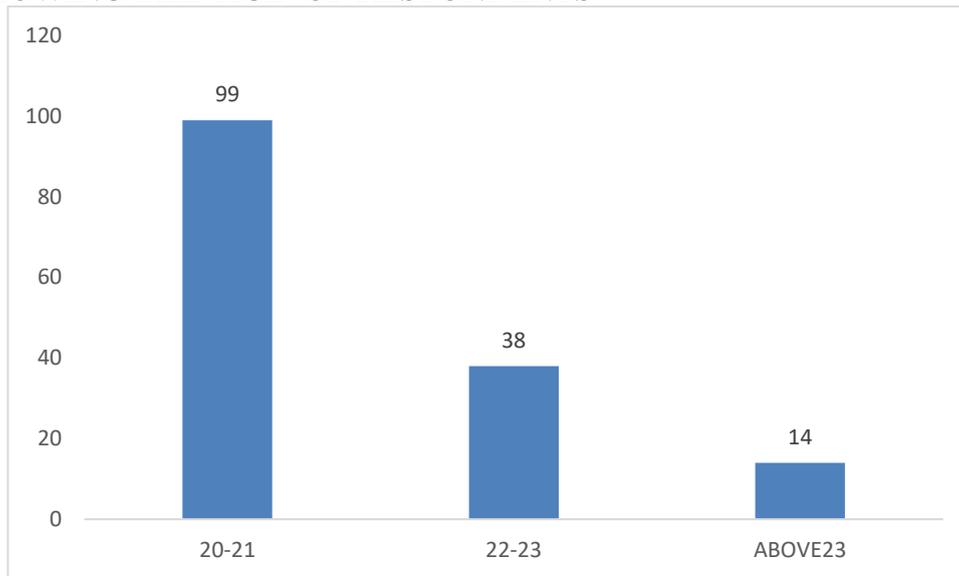

4.2 TABLE AGE OF RESPONDENTS

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
20-21	99	65.8
22-23	38	25.3
ABOVE23	14	9.3
Total	151	100.0

SOURCE DATA : PRIMARY DATA THROUGH QUESTIONNAIRE

INTERPRETATION

The above table shows the age distribution of the respondents. Out of 151 final year students, 99 respondents (65.8%) belong to the age group of 20–21 years, 38 respondents (25.3%) fall under the age group of 22–23 years, and 14 respondents (9.3%) are above 23 years of age.

## 4.2 CHART SHOWING THE AGE OF RESPONDENTS

4.3 TABLE DEGREE OF RESPONDENTS

	Frequency	Percent
B.COM	104	68.9
BBA	11	7.3
B.SC	32	21.2
BA	2	1.3
OTHER	2	1.3
Total	151	100.0

SOURCE DATA :PRIMARY DATA THROUGH QUESTIONNAIRE

Interpretation

The above table shows the course-wise distribution of the respondents. Out of 151 final year students, 104 respondents (68.9%) belong to B.Com, 11 respondents (7.3%) are from BBA, 32 respondents (21.2%) are from B.Sc, 2 respondents (1.3%) are from BA, and 2 respondents (1.3%) belong to other courses.

4.3 CHART SHOWING THE DEGREE OF RESPONDENTS
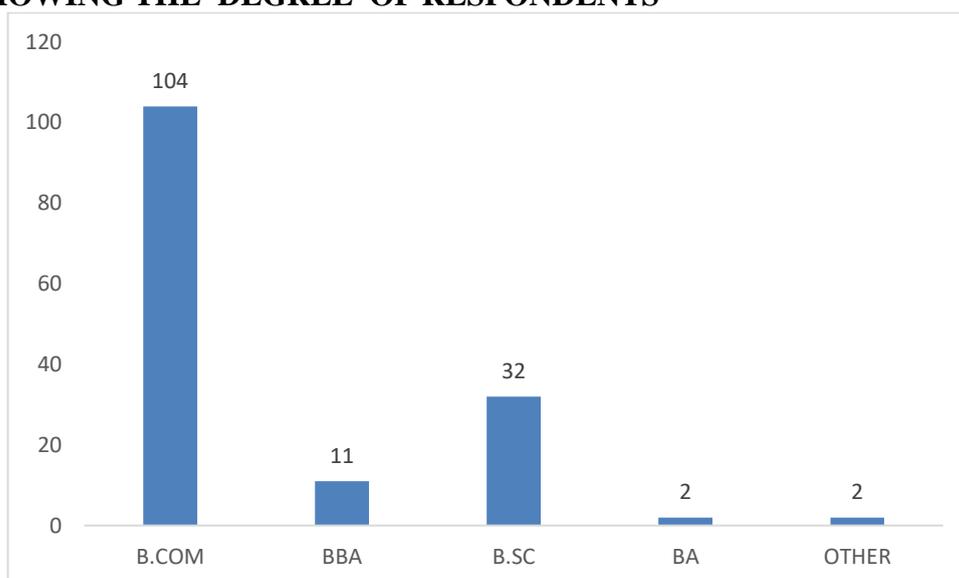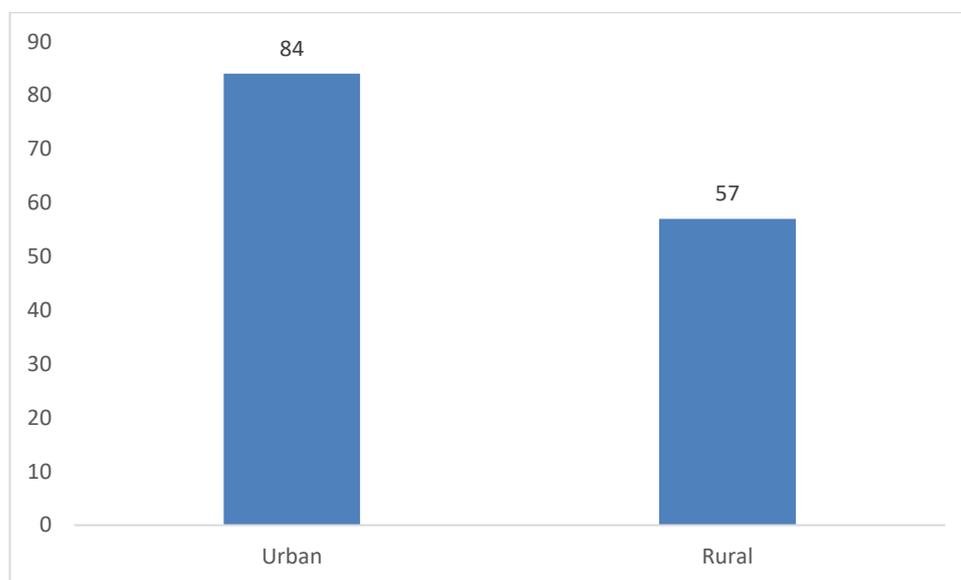
4.4 TABLE OF RESIDENCE OF RESPONDENTS

RESIDENCE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
URBAN	84	55.6
RURAL	57	37.7
TOTAL	151	100.0

SOURCE DATA :PRIMARY DATA THROUGH QUESTIONNAIRE

INTERPRETATION

The above table shows the distribution of respondents based on their academic performance. Out of 151 final year students, 33 respondents (21.2%) have secured below 60%, 45 respondents (29.8%) have scored between 60–70%, 53 respondents (35.3%) fall under the 70–80% category, and 20 respondents (13.2%) have secured above 80%.

4.4 CHART SHOWING RESIDENCE OF RESPONDENT


4.5 TABLE OF ACADEMIC PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS

ACADEMIC	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
BELOW 60%	33	21.2
60-70%	45	29.8
70-80%	53	35.3
ABOVE 80%	20	13.2
Total	151	100.0

SOURCE DATA : PRIMARY DATA THROUGH QUESTIONNAIRE

INTERPERTATION

The above table shows the distribution of respondents based on their academic performance. Out of 151 final year students, 33 respondents (21.2%) have secured below 60%, 45 respondents (29.8%) have scored between 60–70%, 53 respondents (35.3%) fall under the 70–80% category, and 20 respondents (13.2%) have secured above 80%.

4.5 CHART OF ACADEMIC PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
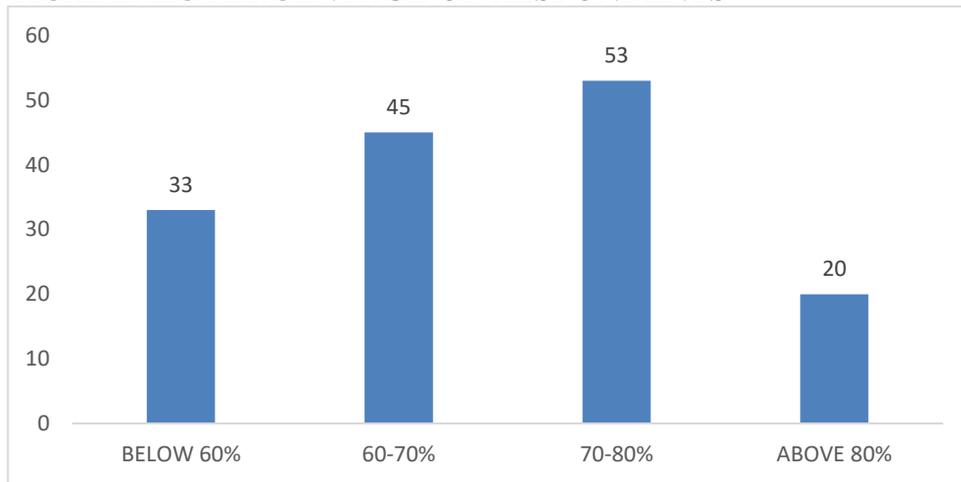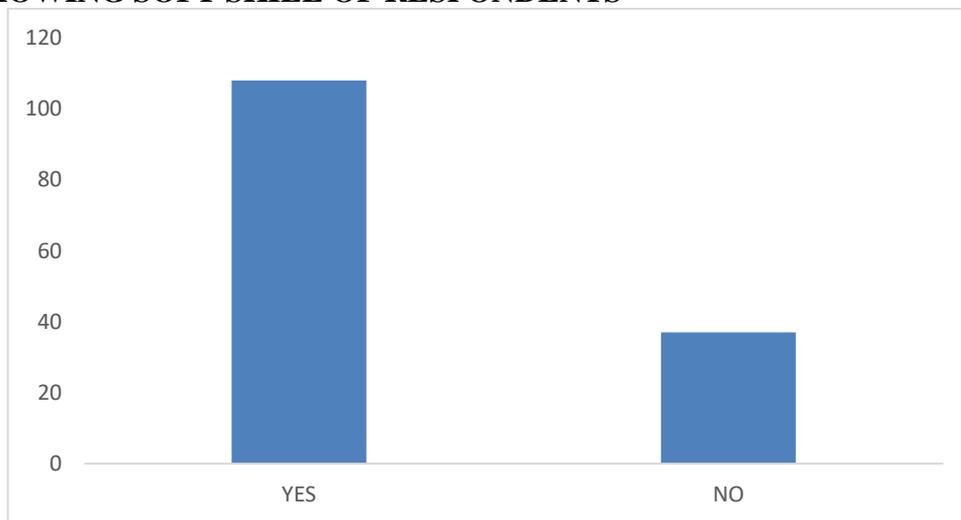

4.7 TABLE OF SOFT SKILL OF RESPONDENTS

SOFT SKILL	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
YES	108	71.5
NO	37	24.5
Total	151	100.0

Source Data :Primary Data through questionnaire

INTERPRETATION

The above table shows the distribution of respondents based on participation in soft skills training. Out of 151 final year students, 108 respondents (71.5%) have attended soft skills training programs, while 37 respondents (24.5%) have not participated in such training.

4.7 CHART SHOWING SOFT SKILL OF RESPONDENTS

4.8 TABLE SHOWING HOW SOFT SKILL HELPS TO THE RESPONDENTS
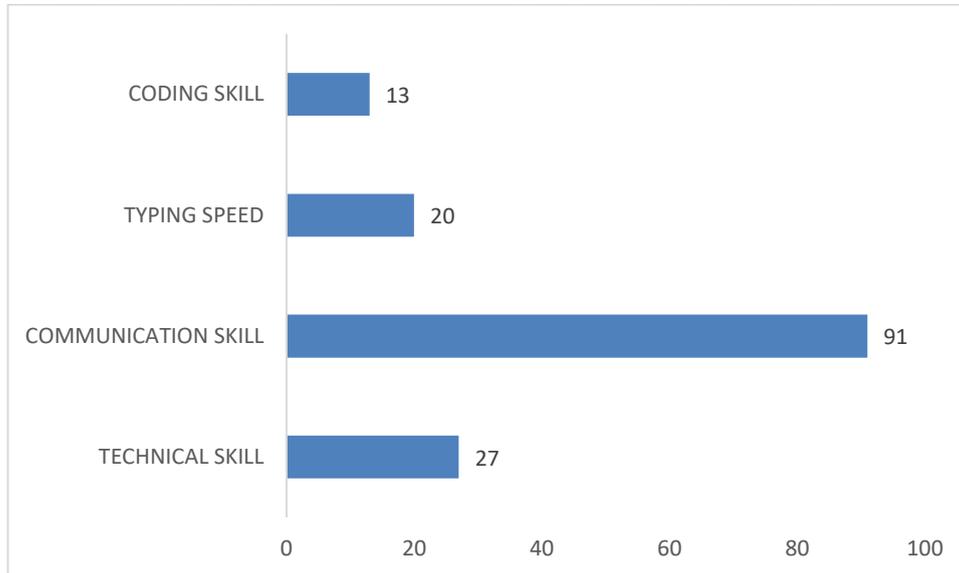
SKILL	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
TECHNICAL SKILL	27	17.8
COMMUNICATION SKILL	91	60.3
TYPING SPEED	20	13.2
CODING SKILL	13	8.6
Total	151	100.0

SOURCE DATA :PRIMARY DATA THROUGH QUESTIONNAIRE

INTERPRETATION

the above table shows the distribution of respondents based on the type of skill developed. Out of 151 final year students, 27 respondents (17.8%) reported technical skills, 91 respondents (60.3%) reported communication skills, 20 respondents (13.2%) indicated typing speed, and 13 respondents (8.6%) reported coding skills.

4.8 CHART SHOWING HOW SOFT SKILL HELPS TO RESPONDANTS

## 4.9 TABLE SHOWING ABILITY WORK COOPERATIVELY OF RESPONDANTS

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
LEADERSHIP	23	15.2
TIME MANAGEMENT	50	33.1
TEAMWORK	63	41.7
DECISION MAKING	15	9.9
Total	151	100.0

SOURCE DATA :PRIMARY DATA THROUGH QUESTIONNAIRE

INTERPRETATION

The above table shows the distribution of respondents based on the type of soft skill improved. Out of 151 final year students, 23 respondents (15.2%) reported improvement in leadership skills, 50 respondents (33.1%) in time management skills, 63 respondents (41.7%) in teamwork skills, and 15 respondents (9.9%) in decision-making skills.

4.9 CHART SHOWING ABILITY WORK COOPERATIVELY OF RESPONDANTS
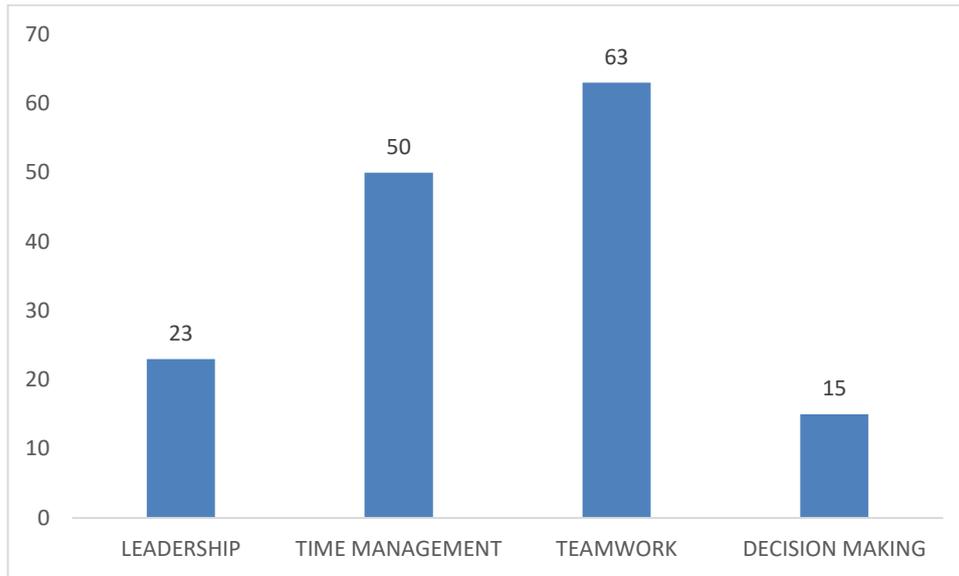
4.10 TABLE SHOWING MANAGING TASK OF RESPONDENTS

TASK	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
PROBLEM SOLVING SKILL	41	27.2
COMMUNICATION SKILL	57	37.7
TIME MANAGEMENT SKILL	40	26.5
CREATIVITY	13	8.6
Total	151	100.0

SOURCE DATA :PRIMARY DATA THROUGH QUESTIONNAIRE

INTDERPRETATION

The above table shows the distribution of respondents based on the skills that help them in performing tasks effectively. Out of 151 final year students, 41 respondents (27.2%) reported problem-solving skill, 57 respondents (37.7%) reported communication skill, 40 respondents (26.5%) reported time management skill, and 13 respondents (8.6%) reported creativity.

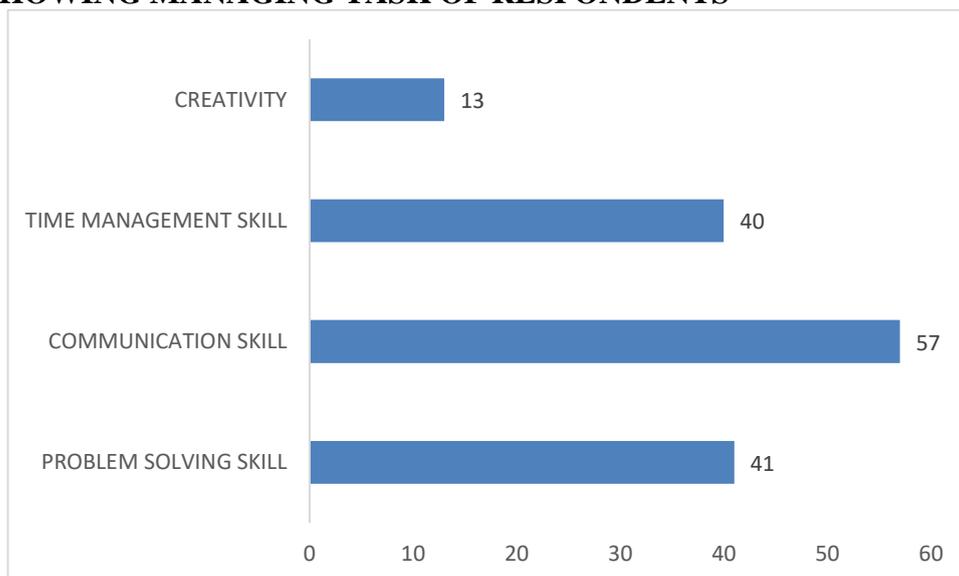## 4.10 CHART SHOWING MANAGING TASK OF RESPONDENTS

Table 4.19 CORRELATION OF RESPONDENTS

		Soft skill	Managing task
Soft skill	Pearson correlation	1	-.053
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.516
	N	151	151
Managing task	Pearson correlation	-.053	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.516	
	N	151	151

Correlation Is Not Significant At The 0.05 Level(2-Tailed)

INTERPERTATION

The Pearson correlation coefficient between Soft Skill and Managing Task is -0.053, which indicates a very weak negative relationship between the two variables. This means that changes in soft skills are not significantly associated with changes in task management ability .Further, the significance value (p = 0.516) is greater than 0.05, indicating that the relationship between soft skills and managing tasks is not statistically significant .There is no significant relationship between soft skills and managing tasks among the respondents in this study.

Table 4.20 CHI -SQUARE TESTS

	Cases vaild	Percent	Missing	Percent	Total	Percent
Soft skill and i feel ready to attend job interviews	151	100.0%	0	0.0%	151	100.0%

Soft skill and i feel ready to attend job interviews

Soft skill	Yes	Count						Total
		% within soft skill	1	2	3	4	5	
	No	Count	36	3	33	25	11	108
		% within soft skill	33.3%	2.8%	30.6%	23.1%	10.2%	100.0%
Total		Count		0	0	2	0	1	3
		% within soft Skill		0.0%	0.0%	66.7%	0.0%	33.3%	100.0%

	Value	Df	Asymptotic significance (2-sided)
Pearson chi-square	18.082[a]	12	.113
Likelihood ratio	13.433	12	.338
Linear-by-linear association	.040	1	.842
N of valid cases	151		

13 cells (65.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .08.

Table 4.21 MEAN AND DEVATION

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I understand what employers expect from fresh graduates	151	1.00	5.00	3.0199	.95548
I feel ready to attend job interviews.	151	1.00	5.00	2.7285	1.39491
I have clarity about my career goals.	151	1.00	5.00	3.4901	.95825
I believe i possess skills required by employers	151	1.00	5.00	3.3642	1.21920
I am confident competing in the job market.	151	1.00	5.00	4.1788	.93157
Valid n (listwise)	151				

INTERPERTATION

The above table presents the descriptive statistics of respondents' perceptions regarding their employability readiness. The total number of respondents considered for the study is 151.The statement "I am confident competing in the job market" recorded the highest mean score of 4.1788, indicating that most respondents strongly feel confident about competing in the job market. The statement "I have clarity about my career goals" shows a mean value of 3.4901, suggesting that respondents moderately agree that they have clear career goals. Similarly, the statement "I believe I possess skills required by employers" has a mean score of 3.3642, which indicates that respondents generally believe they have the necessary skills required by employers. The statement "I understand what employers expect from fresh graduates" recorded a mean value of 3.0199, reflecting a moderate level of understanding among respondents.

INTERPRETATION

The Chi-square analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between soft skills training and readiness to attend job interviews among the respondents. The Pearson Chi-square value is 18.082 with a significance value of 0.113, which is greater than 0.05. This indicates that there is no statistically significant association between soft skills and respondents' readiness to attend job interviews.

FINDINGS, SUGGESTION, CONCLUSION
FINDING

- The majority of the respondents are female students (64.6%).
- Most students belong to the 20–21 years age group (65.8%).
- A large proportion of respondents are from B.Com (68.9%).
- The majority reside in urban areas (55.6%).
- Most students have secured 70–80% marks (35.3%), indicating average to good academic performance.
- A significant majority have completed internships (71.5%).
- Most students have participated in soft skills training (71.5%).
- The majority reported improvement in communication skills (60.3%).
- Teamwork (41.7%) and time management (33.1%) are the most improved soft skills.
- Communication skill (37.7%) is considered the most helpful skill in performing tasks.
- A large majority believe soft skills training improves real-world work understanding (63.6%).
- Most students expect soft skills training to prepare them effectively for jobs (44.4%).
- Employability readiness (51.1%) is identified as the main factor affecting job opportunities.
- A very high percentage (78.8%) are confident in expressing ideas clearly in presentations.

- Majority of the respondents (36%) strongly agree that they are confident speaking in front of a group, showing a moderate level of communication confidence among students.
- Majority of the respondents (34%) agree that they can work effectively in a team, indicating that many students possess teamwork ability.
- Majority of the respondents (39%) remain neutral about whether soft skills training improved their self-confidence, suggesting that the impact of training on confidence is not clearly recognized.
- Majority of the respondents (42%) agree that soft skills training improved their resume writing skills, showing that training programs help students in job preparation.
- Majority of the respondents (41%) agree that soft skills training helped them prepare for job interviews, improving their employability readiness.

Majority of the respondents (35%) strongly agree that soft skills training increased their awareness of workplace expectations.
- Majority of the respondents (36%) consider communication skills as the most useful, highlighting the importance of communication for employment opportunities.
- Majority of the respondents (36%) rate teamwork skills as very useful, indicating that teamwork is valued for workplace success.
- Majority of the respondents (38%) rate problem-solving skills as moderately useful, showing that students recognize its importance.
- Majority of the respondents (41%) rate time management skills as less useful, compared to other soft skills.

SUGGESTION
- Soft skills training should be made mandatory from the first year instead of only in the final year.
- Colleges should provide more practical exposure and real-time simulations.
- Special focus should be given to students who lack confidence in group discussions.
- Training programs should emphasize leadership and decision-making skills, as these areas show comparatively lower percentages.
- Regular mock interviews and industry interaction sessions should be conducted.
- Awareness programs should be organized to correct misconceptions about soft skills training.

CONCLUSION
From the majority responses, it can be concluded that soft skills training has a significant positive impact on employability readiness among final year college students. Most students who participated in training reported improvement in communication, teamwork, and real-world work understanding.
The study clearly indicates that soft skills training enhances confidence, interview preparedness, and overall job readiness. Therefore, soft skills development plays a crucial role in bridging the gap between academic learning and professional employment.

REFERENCES:
1. Arulraj, N.2017 Observed that students who received communication skills training showed marked improvements in articulation, clarity, and interview confidence.
2. Bennett, J.2016 Concluded that inclusion of problem-solving modules in soft skills training enhanced analytical and decision-making skills, improving employability assessments.
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4. Pan, W. & Lee, C. 2011 Showed that teamwork-focused training positively affected students' collaborative ability and performance in group tasks.
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