

Impact of Key Soft Skills on Career Success of Management Graduates: A Study at Rajarata University of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Soft skills have become determining factors in career success in addition to technical competencies in the current employment market. The research examines the impact of soft skills on the career of graduates of the Faculty of Management Studies of the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka. The primary objective is to unveil the degree to which some soft skills communication, time management, problem-solving and critical thinking, leadership, analytical, and networking skills define graduates' career success. A quantitative research approach was adopted, and primary data were collected from a random sample of 265 management graduates through the collection of a structured questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale. The data collected were analysed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS), applying descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis to determine the relationship between the soft skill variables and career success. The results showed that communication, problem-solving and critical thinking, analytical, and time management skills all have a very positive relationship with career success, whereas leadership and networking skills showed a less significant relationship. The model explained an R^2 of 0.840, meaning that 84% of the variation in career success can be explained by the selected soft skills. The findings highlight the necessity to incorporate formal soft skills training in university studies to enhance graduates' employability and long-term career progression. The study concludes that soft skills play a vital role in shaping professional success, and greater emphasis on these competencies will enable graduates to navigate the competitive labour market more effectively.

Keywords: analytical skill, career successes, communication skills, leadership skill, soft skills