
Abstract
Tourism is a service industry where requirement of soft skills increasing day by day. High level of soft skills are required in tourism as per the increasing size of the market. Individuals who have good and effective soft skills are highly absorbed by the service industry. The objectives of this study were to find out the requirement of soft skills for tourism management students. Major soft skills components such as oral and spoken communication, teamwork, self-motivation etc that can be enhanced by providing effective soft skills training. Primary source of information has been used and data was collected via structured questionnaire using 5 point likert scale to record the responses. The data was collected from the students pursuing graduation in tourism management from university where soft skills training is given to them. It has been found that all the soft skills variable taken are very important and we receive a positive response for the requirement of soft skills in both male and female students pursuing tourism education and found that they their level of soft skills were increased after undergoing the training.

Key words: Soft skills, Tourism, Education.

Introduction
Soft skills are the personal character traits or qualities each of us has. They make us who we are, generally encompassing our attitudes, habits and how we interact with other people. They refer to abilities that make people better employees and open doors for many opportunities that are not directly related to the subject matter of their jobs. In other words, soft skills refer to a person’s ability to relate to others, to get him/her and others organised, to communicate in written, spoken or other forms. (Manmohan,2017) Soft skills are also known as People Skills. These are desirable qualities for certain forms of employment that do not depend on acquired knowledge, rather they include common sense, the ability to deal with people, and a positive flexible attitude.

Soft skills have been defined by the World Health Organisation as follows:

UNICEF defines these skills (called life skills) as Soft skills include psychosocial abilities and interpersonal skills that help people make decisions, solve problems, think critically, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, demonstrate qualities of leadership and team building, manage time effectively, and cope with the stress and strain of life in a healthy and productive manner.

“Soft skills are the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal with the demands and challenges of everyday life.”

“A behaviour change or behaviour development approach designed to address a balance of three areas: knowledge, attitude and skills.”

Soft skills helps people to perform work effectively and efficiently using technical skills and knowledge. It also helps in improving the way we interact with the society (our bosses, co-workers and customers/clients etc.). They allow us to get our work done on time and influence how one can feel about their jobs and how others perceive them. Due to constant and rapid change in the work environment, customer-driven market, information-based technology and globalization leads to change in demand and reliance of soft skills. The development of soft skills in the tourism industry is very important as there is a huge competition for many available opportunities. The ability of individuals to develop and use soft skills can make the difference between the achiever and the non-achiever.
In Earlier times management was focused on ‘hard’ skills. The emphasis was on the technical skills which were considered necessary to perform the task effectively. Hard skills are closely related to the actual task being performed. Now every single occupation demands specific soft skills. The most important thing is that soft skills are transferable between jobs or one can go back to studies to learn new technical skills if you change careers, whereas one can always take their soft skills with themselves as they are valued in a variety of fields.

Tourism industry are required people with efficient soft skills. These are key skills to effective performance across all types of job. With the changes occurring in the world, and the nature of work has also been changed, the skill set required for managers and other executives has changed with changing time.

Tourism is all about people. It is about communication, relationships and about presenting yourself, your company and your ideas in the most positive and impactful way to the tourist. Human element is as important as the skills mentioned above. That is why a strong set of soft skills is considered to be very important.

**Literature review**

**Melvin etal. (2009)** identify and investigate the competencies needed by hospitality managers since the 1980s. he found that in hospitality management essential competencies are skills that can be classified as soft skills. The study focused on the industry professionals especially entry-level hospitality management positions and their rating on the importance of soft skills.

**Daniela & Kevin (2011)** identifies the competencies perceived as essential for hospitality industry leaders and offers some reflections upon hospitality management higher education of Portuguese undergraduate degrees and discussed whether the current educational offer matches specific industry demand. soft skills are consistently rated as being the most important to effective performance in the field and Students show deficit in soft skills. He proposes the adoption and tutelage of student by industry managers.

**Sisson & Adam (2013)** investigate the competencies which are essential for graduates to possess and revise the curriculum to meet these soft skills. They also determine the differences exist between competencies needed by managers in lodging, food and beverage, and meeting and event management in their different functional work areas. They found that programs should stress teaching hospitality students soft competencies in favor of hard competencies.

**Wushe et.al. (2014)** examine the effect of business soft skills on service delivery in the hospitality industry in Harare. The research was focused on establishing the knowledge levels of business soft skills, the impact of training on business professional skills and identify the extent to which business soft skills have enhanced service delivery in the hospitality industry. He found the soft skills such as interpersonal skills, communication skills, strong work ethic and team work skills were highly required and seen difficulties in leadership and decision making skills. He also finds that business soft skills were low among all the types of employees. soft skills are very important in showcasing hard skills.

**Luka (2015)** Studied the importance of employability skills and competences. The study demonstrates the significance of such employability skills as problem solving, teamwork, leadership, communication in foreign languages. they conducted the study within the framework of Erasmus+ project “Key Skills for European Union Hotel Staff”, is to analyze the industry needs and language teachers’ perceptions on teaching languages for tourism and hospitality industry. They found the significance of communication skills, collaboration skills and team work, intercultural competence which is the specific needs of each partner country.

**Manigandan (2018)** investigate how to improve the traveller enchant through delicate abilities preparing in the nation and its time get profited from India’s magnificence of Nature and after that there are lofty landmarks, the wonders of artisanship and age old customs of cooking and garments-delights that can take into account the visitor of each taste. India's profound prevalence over the West as said by Swami Vivekananda.

**Scarlett C. Wesley (2017)** studied how students rank the importance of soft skills and compare the ranking in faculties of tourism and management. He conducted the cross-sectional survey of students, faculty of tourism and retail management and industry leaders. He found Variations in the importance of soft skills were reported between the three groups. Variations in the importance of the soft skills characteristics were also identified between the students, faculty, and industry leaders. communication was identified as the most important soft skills by all three sample groups, experiences was the least important for students and leadership was the least important for faculty and industry leaders.
Anjana Singh and Prashnati Jaykumar (2019), identify soft skills competencies that are required for a diverse group of entry-level employees and then to identify gaps by exploring the hospitality programme and internships. They also study an increasing gap between the soft skills that companies expect from their entry-level employees and the skills that young people possess. To bridge this gap, Academics and employers, industry leaders and researchers indicate the need for more soft skills training.

Ozlem Bak, Christine Jordan and James Midgley (2019) explore the soft skills demand in supply chain management arena as supply chains expanding in scope and scale globally. The adoption of soft skills in supply chain via understanding its current role in supply chain management skills. They observed that supply chain literature geared towards hard skills including functional and technical skill sets with limited discussion on soft skills.

Mansura Nusrat and Nafia Sultana (2019), studied the Soft skills for sustainable employment for business graduates of Bangladesh. they examine whether soft skill requirements found in employer job postings (advertisements) within different roles of business are similar to the soft skills practically needed in the workplace and the perception of faculties at schools of business in Bangladesh.

Clement Cabral and Rajib Lochan Dhar (2019) conduct an in-depth analysis of the literature and provide new insights on skill development research in India. The Objectives is to conduct descriptive analysis in terms of structural dimensions such as geographical context, focus on skill development, research methods, economic sector, type of training and origin of the study and thematic analysis on the importance of skill development, institutional and regulatory mechanisms, skill development as an antecedent for technology adoption, role of skill development in women empowerment, integrating skill development with secondary education and labour market reforms for skill development.

The Study
This paper aims to find out the significant improvement that soft skills training can bring forth in the life of a tourism management student. The nature of impact of soft skills training on management students was measured by comparing their soft skills levels before and after the intervention.

Objectives of the Study
1. To find out the requirement of the soft skills for tourism students.
2. To find out the major soft skills components that can be improved after the exposure to soft skills training.

Hypothesis 1. Soft skills training is highly required by tourism students.
Hypothesis 2. Soft skills training will significantly improve the soft skills of management students.

Methodology of the Study

Data Collection
The study was focused on the primary source. The secondary sources of data included relevant books and journals. The study collected most of the data from primary source through structured questionnaire. The Likert-type five (05) point’s scale was used to know about executives’ opinions regarding different relevant study issues. In this five (05) point’s scale 5 indicates ‘highly required’; 4 indicates ‘very much required’; 3 indicates ‘required’; 2 indicates ‘less required’ and 1 indicates ‘very less required’.

Selection of Sample
The study selects random sample of student pursuing final year of tourism graduation as a regular student in institute. The study took a sample of 200 students in which 100 are male and 100 are female. All the students were responded and data was collected from them via structured questionnaire. Questionnaire consisted of questions related to soft skills required in tourism.
Analysis of the Data

The collected data have been analysed using percentage method.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents. The gender distribution of the respondents was 50% male and 50% female. In terms of level of education, all of the respondents are pursuing final year of graduation. They have also gone through the 6 weeks of industrial training in tour and travel companies in one of their semesters during the course work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soft Skills Component</th>
<th>Very Less Required</th>
<th>Less Required</th>
<th>Required</th>
<th>Very much Required</th>
<th>Highly Required</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication skills</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork/collaboration skills</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-motivation/initiative</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk-taking skills</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working under pressure</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioning skills</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Influencing skills</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research skills</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>51</td>
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<tr>
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<td>22</td>
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<td>Multicultural skills</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer skills</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic/learning skills</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detail orientation</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quantitative skills</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching/training skills</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time management skills</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>33</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Communication skills: Oral and spoken communication skills are required in tourism. Both one-on-one and in groups (e.g., presentations). They don’t just listen but they have to speak in front of the people also. 43.33% student said that the communication skills are very much required in tourism followed by 18.67% of the students said that its required. The %age of highly required is 20% and less required is 18%.

Teamwork skills: Work with others to accomplish tasks in tourism. We ask students do they think that working with people in 26 groups wastes your time or encourages your work. The study indicates that 16.67% of the students said that teamwork is very much required followed by 30.67% who said that its required. 22.67% said its highly required and 24% said it is less required. Very less required is 6%.

Self-motivation: Doing things without needing to be told or persuaded. We ask students that are their Assignments always due last day, or do they complete it on day one only. Majority of the students i.e. 14.67% responded that it is very much required and 31.33% said its required followed by 23.33% who said that its highly required. Some of the students i.e. 21.33% also responded that self-motivation is less required and 9.33% said that it is very less required.

Critical thinking: Challenging things when appropriate and proposing alternatives to consider. We ask students that do they think everything you see or hear is true or do they think deeply and then give decision. 34% of the respondents said that it is required followed by 22.67% said it is Highly Required. As per the 20% of the respondents said it is less required. The percentage of Very much Required and Very Less Required are 16% & 7.33% respectively.

Risk-taking skills: Taking a considerable chance on something new, different or unknown. We ask students that Do they think taking risks is too risky. They responded that it is very much required i.e. 14% and 30.67% of the students said its required followed by 26% said it is Highly Required. 10.67% and 15.33% said it is Very Less Required and Less Required respectively.

Adaptability: Going with the flow and adjusting with unforeseen circumstances. We ask the students that Do they keep the rulebook on their bedside table or they are an easy going person, who do work according to the situation. 12.67% and 26% of the students said that it is very much required and highly required respectively. Whereas 35.33% of the students said that it is required and 18.67% of the students said that it is less required. whereas 7.33% of the students said that it is very less required.

Interpersonal skills: Relating with other people and communicating with them in everyday interactions. Students were asked Do they like to be alone, or do they wish to be with other people. 23.33% said that it is highly required and 13.33% said that it is very much required. 37.33% student said that its required. Some of the student i.e. 15.33% and 10.67% also responded that it is very less required and less required respectively.

Working under pressure: Handling the stress that accompanies deadlines and other limitations or constraints. Students were asked that can they handle deadlines by ignoring them or by doing their most creative work under any kind of pressure. The responses shows that working under pressure is highly required (14.67%), very much required (32.58%) and required is 34%. 24% respondent also said that it is less required. Very less required is 3.33%.

Questioning skills: Asking questions in order to learn or clarify something. We ask students that Do they already know all the answers, or they really want to know the answer of ask question. 32.67% said it is required followed by 23.33% said it is Less Required. Whereas 22.67% & 16% said it is Highly Required and Very much Required respectively. 5.33% said it is Very Less Required.

Creativity: Having the imagination to come up with new or off-the-beaten-path ideas. We ask students that do they perform the same task with similar way of others or they perform the task with creativity. 36.67% of the respondents said it is required followed by 26.67% said it is Highly Required. Whereas 19.33% & 13.33% of the respondents said it is Less Required and Very much Required respectively. 4% said it is Very Less Required.
Influencing skills: Persuading others to think about or adopt a different point of view. We asked the respondents that Are they influenced by the other people or they take their own decisions. 12% of the respondents said that it is very much required, 24% of the respondents said that it is highly required and 39.33% said it is required. 21.33% of the respondents said it is less required. Very less required is 3.33%.

Research skills: Gathering information in order to study or answer questions. We ask students that they just copy the content while making their assignments or search for the answers themselves on Google or in books if they find any doubt in a question. The respondent percentage of required and Highly Required are 34% and 28.67%. 21.33% & 10.67% of the respondents said Less Required and Very much Required respectively. 5.33% said it is Very Less Required.

Organizational skills: Being organized and methodical, especially in work-related situations. We ask respondent that Do they organise their things themselves or depend on others to organise them for you. Respondent said that it is required (34%) and Very much Required (17.33%) followed by 24.67% said it is Highly Required. Some of the respondent 14.67% and 9.33% said that it is Less Required and Very Less Required respectively.

Problem-solving skills: Analysing the potential causes of a problem and coming up with a solution. We ask students that do they usually know the reason of this problem and then solve it themselves or they ask others for suggestions on how to solve it. 14% of the students said that problem solving skills are very much required and 37.33% said it is required followed by 14% said it is highly required. 19.33% & 4.67% said it is less required and very less required respectively.

Multicultural skills: Understanding and relating to people who are different from you, perhaps by using a second language. We ask students that all your friends are just like you, or when someone says, "hello" do you reply in their language. 11.33% of the students said that multicultural skills were very much required followed by 22.67% said its highly required. Student said required were 43.33% and 14% of the students said that it is Less Required. 8.67% said it is Very Less Required.

Computer skills: Using basic word-processing, spreadsheet and presentation software as well as the Internet. We ask students that they always get someone to help them, or they are the one providing the help and advice to others. 35.33% of the students said it is Required followed by 27.33% of Highly Required responses. 20.67% and 12% of the respondents said that it is Less Required and Very much Required respectively. 4.67% said it is Very Less Required.

Academic/learning skills: Learning new things quickly and thoroughly, and being willing to learn continuously. We ask students that they are usually willing to learn new things or they just satisfied with the knowledge is given to them. 33.33% of the respondents said it is Required and 26.67% said Highly Required. 21.33% & 12.67% of the respondents said it is Less Required and Very much Required respectively. 6% said it is Very Less Required.

Detail orientation: Making sure that even the little things are done and done correctly. We ask students that are they specialize in big-picture thinking, or they friends ask you to plan their events. The percentage of Required 35.33% of the students responded that detail orientation is required followed by 22.67% said it is highly required. The responses of Less Required and Very much Required are 21.33% and 15.33% respectively. 5.33% said it is Very Less Required.

Quantitative skills: Compiling and using numbers to study an issue or answer a question. We ask students that they follow "Numbers are for geeks," or "Metrics are my life". 37.33% of the respondents said it is required. 21.33% of the respondents said it is Very much Required. 20.67% of the student respondent that it is highly required. The percentage of Less Required and Very Less Required are 16.67% and 4% respectively.

Teaching/ training skills: Showing other people how to do something in a way that allows them to learn quickly and thoroughly. We ask students that they think everyone should figure things out for themselves, or they get asked to help teach their friends. 38% of the respondents said it is required. 22% of the respondents said it is Very much Required. 20% of the student respondent that it is highly required. The percentage of Less Required and Very Less Required are 14% and 6% respectively.
Time management skills: Using your time wisely and consistently staying on schedule and meeting deadlines. 22% of the students said that they highly required the time management skill followed by 16.67% very much required. 40.67% said it is required. 14% & 6.67% were said that it is less required and very less required respectively.

5. Findings of the Study

- Both Oral and spoken communication skills are required in tourism.
- Teamwork skills to Work with others to accomplish tasks in tourism is required.
- Self-motivation to Do things without needing to be told or persuaded is required.
- Critical thinking to Challenge things when appropriate and proposing alternatives to consider is required.
- Risk-taking skills to Take a considerable chance on something new, different or unknown is required.
- Adaptability to Go with the flow and adjusting with unforeseen circumstances is required.
- Interpersonal skills to Relate with other people and communicating with them in everyday interactions is required.
- Working under pressure to Handle the stress that accompanies deadlines and other limitations or constraints is required.
- Questioning skills to Ask questions in order to learn or clarify something is required.
- Creativity to Have the imagination to come up with new or off-the-beaten-path ideas is required.
- Influencing skills to Persuade others to think about or adopt a different point of view is required.
- Research skills to Gather information in order to study or answer questions is Required.
- Organizational skills to Be organized and methodical, especially in work-related situations is required.
- Problem-solving skills to Analyse the potential causes of a problem and coming up with a solution is required.
- Multicultural skills to Understand and relate to people who are different from you, perhaps by using a second language is Required.
- Computer skills to Use basic word-processing, spreadsheet and presentation software as well as the Internet is Required.
- Academic/learning skills: Learn new things quickly and thoroughly, and being willing to learn continuously is Required.
- Detail orientation to Make sure that even the little things are done and done correctly is Required.
- Quantitative skills: Compiling and using numbers to study an issue or answer a question is Required.
- Teaching/training skills to Show other people how to do something in a way that allows them to learn quickly and thoroughly is required.
- Time management skills to Use time wisely and consistently staying on schedule and meeting deadlines are required.

6. Conclusion

On the basis of above analyse we received a very much positive response on the requirement of soft skill in tourism. On the basis of both male and female students studying tourism education we can say that the majority of the students are agreed that they require soft skills to work in tourism industry. Oral and spoken communication skills are required in tourism communication skills are 43.33% very much required in tourism. Work with others to accomplish tasks in tourism is 30.67% required as teamwork skills. Doing things without needing to be told or persuaded is 31.33% required as Self-motivation. Challenging things when appropriate and proposing alternatives to consider is 34% required as Critical thinking. Taking a considerable chance on something new, different or unknown is 30.67% required as Risk-taking skills. Going with the flow and adjusting with unforeseen circumstances is 35.33% required as Adaptability. Relating with other people and communicating with them in everyday interactions is 37.33% required as Interpersonal skills. Handling the stress that accompanies deadlines and other limitations or constraints is 34% required as Working under pressure. Asking questions in order to learn or clarify something is 32.67% required as Questioning skills. Having the imagination to come up with new or off-the-beaten-path ideas is 36.67% required as Creativity. Persuading others to think about or adopt a different point of view is 39.33% required as Influencing skills. Gathering information in order to study or answer questions is 34% Highly Required as Research skills. Being organized and methodical, especially in work-related situations is 34% required as Organizational skills. Analysing the potential causes of a problem and coming up with a solution is 37.33% required as Problem-solving skills. Understanding and relating to people who are different from you, perhaps by using a second language is 43.33% required as Multicultural skills. Using basic word-processing, spreadsheet and presentation software as well as the Internet is 35.33% required as Computer skills. Learning new things quickly and thoroughly, and being
willing to learn continuously is **33.33%** required as **Academic/learning skills**. Making sure that even the little things are done and done correctly is **35.33%** required as **Detail orientation**. Compiling and using numbers to study an issue or answer a question is **37.33%** required as **Quantitative skills**. Showing other people how to do something in a way that allows them to learn quickly and thoroughly is **38%** required as **Teaching/training skills**. Using your time wisely and consistently staying on schedule and meeting deadlines is **40.67%** required as **Time management skills**.

**References:**


Daniela Wilks and Kevin Hemsworth (2011)"Soft skills as key competencies in hospitality higher education” Tourism and management, No. 7, International english edition, pp. 131 - 139.


