The Competency Quest: Exploring Skill Expectations for Management Graduates in Bangalore

ABSTRACT

This study explores the competency skill expectations from management graduates in Bangalore, with a focus on both technical and soft skills. As the demand for job-ready graduates rises, a significant gap exists between the competencies taught in academic institutions and those required by employers. The research aims to evaluate the impact of technical skills and examine the influence of soft skills on the job readiness of graduates. A descriptive research design was used, with purposive sampling selecting 145 management graduates as respondents. Data was gathered through structured questionnaires and analyzed using tools like ANOVA, correlation analysis, and multiple regression. The results indicate that soft skills, particularly teamwork and time management, play a more crucial role in job readiness compared to technical skills. Additionally, educational qualifications and work experience were found to have a notable effect on the development of soft skills and job readiness. While technical competencies are important, they have a lesser impact on job preparedness. The study recommends that educational institutions integrate soft skill development alongside technical training through practical experiences such as internships. Enhanced collaboration between academia and industry is also suggested to better align graduate skills with employer needs. Overall, the study highlights the importance of a comprehensive approach in preparing management graduates, ensuring a balance between technical knowledge and essential soft skills for greater job readiness and career success.

Keywords: Technical Competencies, Soft Skills, Job Readiness, Management Graduates, Employer Expectations, Competency Gaps, Bangalore Workforce, Skills Development

1. INTRODUCTION

In the dynamic business environment, management graduates are increasingly expected to possess a blend of technical and soft skills that cater to the evolving needs of employers. This expectation has heightened in a global context, where technological advancements and global market shifts demand more from graduates than ever before. A recent survey conducted by the Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC) indicates that skills such as artificial intelligence (AI), strategic thinking, leadership, and problem-solving are emerging as key competencies that management graduates need to master in order to thrive in modern organizations (Gohain, 2024). Furthermore, while AI skills are currently not a critical requirement for many employers, the forecast suggests that the demand for these skills will escalate significantly in the coming years, especially in regions such as Central and

South Asia (Gohain, 2024). The ability to adapt to such technological shifts is crucial for management graduates, especially those aiming to secure positions in sectors like technology and finance.

In Bangalore, one of India's prominent business hubs, the expectations from management graduates are rapidly shifting. Employers in the region are not just looking for individuals with domain-specific technical knowledge but also for those who can effectively manage people, communicate across cultures, and demonstrate leadership in complex environments. Gohain (2023) emphasizes that Fortune 500 companies now prioritize skills such as cross-cultural competence and multilingualism, alongside traditional competencies like data analysis and communication. This is particularly relevant in the Bangalore context, where companies are globally connected and require graduates who can navigate multicultural teams and global operations. The rise of new technologies, such as Web3 and blockchain, also adds a layer of complexity to the competency expectations from management graduates. Employers are increasingly seeking individuals who can leverage these technologies for business innovation, indicating a shift towards tech-centric business processes (Gohain, 2023).

One of the critical challenges that management graduates face is the gap between the skills they acquire through formal education and the competencies required in the workplace. According to Spotlight Wire (2024), many corporate houses are looking for graduates who possess not only technical competence but also behavioral competencies such as adaptability, problem-solving, time management, and teamwork. The need for educational institutions to integrate these competencies into their curricula is more pressing than ever. In response to this, institutions like GNIOT Institute of Management Studies (GIMS) have developed training programs that bifurcate technical and behavioral competencies, ensuring that students are well-rounded and job-ready. GIMS has incorporated co-curricular activities, industry talks, and real-world simulations to enhance both technical and soft skills among students (Spotlight Wire, 2024). These efforts reflect the broader industry demand for management graduates who are not just technically adept but also proficient in interpersonal and leadership skills.

The significance of soft skills in management education is further highlighted by Khanna (2022), who points out that the role of a manager goes beyond mere technical execution. Management, at its core, involves setting directions, coordinating efforts across various functions, and ensuring that organizational goals are met. As such, skills like leadership, decision-making, and communication become indispensable for management

graduates looking to excel in their careers. Khanna (2022) argues that while technical competencies are essential, they must be complemented by soft skills to truly prepare graduates for the diverse and complex challenges they will face in their roles. This aligns with the findings of Gohain (2023), who noted that 62% of employers consider interpersonal skills crucial for graduate management education (GME) graduates, with communication and strategic thinking also ranking high on the list of required competencies.

The growing emphasis on technical and soft skills has significant implications for educational institutions, employers, and graduates alike. As Gohain (2024) notes, the confidence in graduate management education (GME) is increasing, partly due to the ability of business schools to adapt their curricula to meet the changing demands of the labor market. However, this confidence is also coupled with the need for continuous improvement in how management graduates are trained. Employers now expect graduates to be equipped with skills that go beyond traditional management theory and include the ability to manage remote teams, leverage AI for business processes, and lead cross-functional teams effectively. In Bangalore, where industries are diverse and interconnected, these expectations are particularly pronounced, with employers seeking graduates who can contribute to business innovation and growth from day one.

The competency expectations from management graduates in Bangalore reflect a broader global trend towards the integration of technical and soft skills. As businesses continue to evolve and adapt to technological advancements and globalization, management graduates must be prepared to meet these challenges head-on. Institutions play a critical role in bridging the gap between academic training and industry requirements by ensuring that students are not only proficient in domain-specific knowledge but also adept at navigating the complex interpersonal and strategic challenges of modern business environments. As Gohain (2024) and Khanna (2022) suggest, a holistic approach to management education—one that emphasizes both technical competence and soft skills—will be key to preparing the next generation of leaders for success in the ever-changing corporate world. The focus on AI, leadership, cross-cultural communication, and problem-solving will continue to shape the competency landscape, and graduates who possess these skills will be well-positioned to meet the demands of employers in Bangalore and beyond.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the ever-evolving corporate landscape, the expectations from management graduates have grown substantially, with a focus on a combination of technical and soft skills. SnehaAdavia et al. (2019) emphasized the increasing importance of essential

competencies for management students to ensure employability. Their study explored how students could transition smoothly from academic learning to corporate settings through a blend of knowledge, skills, and abilities. This trio forms the foundation of employability, where competencies directly influence a graduate's ability to be recruited by organizations. The study highlighted the mismatch between the skills provided by academic institutions and those demanded by employers, especially in the context of the Indian job market. With the rise of technology, the expectations from employers have increased, necessitating students to refine their skills to become more desirable and employable. The employability rate of management graduates in India is notably low, as indicated by reports from the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry in India (ASSOCHAM), which show that only 7% of graduates from Indian business schools are considered employable.Shukla, Prasad, and Itam (2021) further extended this conversation by identifying the critical competencies that are necessary in Indian management education. Their study, based on an explanatory research design, concluded that competencies could be grouped into three clusters: behavioral, functional, and strategic. These competencies are vital for producing a workforce that meets the needs of both academia and business sectors. The paper underscores the need for a collaborative approach between educational institutions and industry to ensure that management graduates possess the relevant skills. This collaboration is necessary to create a job-ready workforce that can bridge the gap between academic learning and industry requirements.

ArulselvamAsirvatham et al. (2017) focused on the employability skills required for management graduates to meet industry needs. In today’s globalized market, adaptability, flexibility, and an entrepreneurial mindset are considered critical attributes for MBA graduates. However, there is still a significant gap between the skills taught in educational institutions and the competencies needed by multinational corporations. Their study emphasized the importance of enhancing employability skills within management education to equip graduates with the necessary tools to succeed in the global labor market. Similarly, Nawaz and Krishna (2013) highlighted the challenges faced by management graduates in adapting to the fast-paced, dynamic corporate world. They pointed out that universities and colleges must focus on honing both subject-specific and interpersonal skills to make graduates employable.Dinu Raj (2024) explored the broader landscape surrounding the employability of MBA graduates in India, particularly in Bangalore. His critical review shed light on the multifaceted factors that influence the employability of management graduates, including communication skills, practical knowledge, and the ability to handle interviews

effectively. Raj's literature review underscored the importance of aligning management education with the demands of the job market. He further explored how traditional roles in fields such as finance, marketing, and human resources are now complemented by emerging fields like entrepreneurship and technology management. Raj's work highlights the necessity for educational institutions to adapt to market trends and provide management graduates with both the technical and soft skills needed to thrive.

Murali and Rajaram (2015) contributed to this discussion by focusing on corporate expectations from engineering graduates, drawing parallels to management education. Their study showed how human resource professionals play a significant role in shaping the strategic planning of organizations. Graduates need to bring new skill sets to the table, and human resource professionals are key in ensuring that these competencies align with organizational needs. Murali and Rajaram's study underscores the importance of technical competencies in management, particularly in sectors such as engineering, where practical knowledge and soft skills converge to meet corporate expectations.The importance of soft skills in management education is a recurring theme in the literature. Sanjivkumar and Shivashankar (2021) addressed the gap between employability skills and management education, particularly in tier-2 and tier-3 cities of Karnataka. Their study revealed that while technical skills are important, employers place a higher emphasis on soft skills such as teamwork, leadership, and interpersonal communication. Their research indicated that a large percentage of MBA graduates from smaller cities in India lack these soft skills, leading to lower employability rates. This gap in soft skills, combined with the lack of practical training, is a significant concern for employers and educational institutions alike.

Czerwińska-Lubszczyk, Grebski, and Jagoda-Sobalak (2022) added to the literature by examining industry expectations concerning the competencies of graduates, particularly in engineering programs. Their findings align with the general consensus that soft competencies, such as communication and teamwork, are just as important as technical knowledge. The study also highlighted the need for educational institutions to continuously update their curricula to meet the changing demands of industries, ensuring that graduates are equipped with the necessary skills to excel in their careers.Bhatnagar (2020) provided a comprehensive review of the skill gap among MBA graduates in India, focusing on both technical and non-technical skills. His study identified key attributes such as communication, emotional intelligence, and critical thinking as essential components of employability. Bhatnagar emphasized the importance of incorporating soft skills into MBA programs, urging educational institutions to reform their curricula to make graduates more industry-ready.

Sharma et al. (2019) investigated the factors that contribute to competency development in business education. Their study found that knowledge and skill development were the primary areas of growth for students, while attitude development lagged. This finding suggests that educational institutions need to place more emphasis on developing not only the technical competencies of management graduates but also their attitudes toward leadership, adaptability, and collaboration.The review of literature demonstrates that both technical and soft skills are critical for management graduates to meet employer expectations. While technical competencies such as domain knowledge and analytical skills are important, soft skills like communication, teamwork, and leadership play a more significant role in ensuring job readiness. The literature highlights the need for a balanced approach to management education, where technical training is complemented by soft skill development, allowing graduates to navigate the complexities of the modern corporate world successfully.

2.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In today's highly competitive job market, employers are increasingly seeking management graduates who not only possess strong technical knowledge but also demonstrate essential soft skills required for dynamic workplace environments. The mismatch between the skills graduates acquire during their academic journey and the expectations of employers is becoming a growing concern. As industries in Bangalore, a thriving economic hub, continue to evolve with technological advancements and global business dynamics, the competencies required to succeed in management roles are shifting. This gap in competencies, particularly in technical and soft skills, raises questions about the job readiness of fresh graduates entering the workforce.

Despite the focus on education and training, many management graduates struggle to meet employer expectations, leading to a high rate of underemployment or extended periods of job searching. Employers demand graduates who are not only proficient in technical areas like domain-specific knowledge and analytical abilities but also exhibit strong interpersonal, communication, and leadership skills to thrive in collaborative environments. Addressing this skill gap is crucial to enhancing the employability of management graduates and ensuring that they are adequately prepared to contribute effectively in their roles. This study seeks to explore these competency expectations and assess how well management graduates in Bangalore are equipped to meet them.

2.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyze the impact of technical competencies on the job readiness of management graduates in Bangalore.
2. To assess the influence of soft skills competencies on the job readiness of management graduates in Bangalore.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology for this study is designed to examine the competency gaps and employer expectations among management graduates in Bangalore. It focuses on analyzing the impact of technical and soft skills competencies on the job readiness of these graduates. This section outlines the approach used to collect, analyze, and interpret the data to fulfill the research objectives.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study adopts a Descriptive Research Design, which is appropriate for systematically exploring and describing the relationship between technical competencies, soft skills, and job readiness among management graduates. The design helps to understand how different competencies influence graduates' preparedness to meet employer expectations in a detailed and structured manner.

3.2 SAMPLING DESIGN AND TECHNIQUE

The research employs a Non-Probability Sampling method, specifically Purposive Sampling, which is selected to ensure that relevant data is gathered from management graduates who are directly involved in the subject matter. This sampling technique ensures that the sample is representative of graduates who are expected to meet specific employer expectations in terms of technical and soft skills competencies.

3.3 SAMPLE SIZE

The sample size for this study consists of 145 management graduates from Bangalore. This sample size is considered adequate to provide reliable and valid results, allowing for meaningful statistical analysis of how technical and soft skills competencies impact job readiness and align with employer expectations.

3.4 TOOLS USED

To analyze the data, several statistical tools are utilized, including Simple Percentage Analysis, Descriptive Statistics, ANOVA (Analysis of Variance), Correlation Analysis, and Multiple Linear Regression Analysis. These tools are chosen to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between technical competencies, soft skills competencies,

and job readiness, as well as to assess the influence of age, education, and work experience on these variables.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

Primary data is collected directly from the respondents through structured questionnaires designed to gather insights on their technical and soft skills competencies and how these skills influence their job readiness. The questionnaire is structured to address the key aspects of the study, ensuring that the data aligns with the objectives and allows for relevant conclusions to be drawn.

4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table No.1: Demographic Profile of the respondents

Demographic Factor	Options	No. of respondents	Percent	Total Percent
Age Group	18–22 years	39	26.9	100.0
	23–27 years	52	35.9	
	28–32 years	30	20.7	
	Above 32 years	24	16.6	
Educational Level	Under Graduate	28	19.3	100.0
	Post Graduate	56	38.6	
	Doctorate	44	30.3	
	Professional Certification	17	11.7	
Work Experience	Less than 1 year	13	9.0	100.0
	1–3 years	27	18.6	
	4–6 years	51	35.2	
	7–10 years	31	21.4	
	More than 10 years	23	15.9	

Source : Computed from Primary data

INTERPRETATION: Table No. 1 presents the demographic profile of respondents. The majority (35.9%) are aged 23–27 years, followed by 26.9% aged 18–22 years, showing a predominantly young sample. In terms of education, 38.6% hold postgraduate degrees, and 30.3% have doctorates, indicating a highly educated group. The largest segment of respondents (35.2%) has 4–6 years of work experience, while 21.4% have 7–10 years of experience, and 18.6% have 1–3 years of experience.

Table No.2: Technical Competencies

Factors	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am proficient in domain-specific knowledge	3.476	1.25
I can effectively apply analytical skills	3.255	1.36
I am skilled in data analysis and interpretation	2.993	1.42

I am competent in using relevant software tools	3.186	1.33
I can effectively use advanced technology	3.193	1.45
I am capable of solving technical problems	2.952	1.44
I have a solid understanding of industry-specific regulations	2.910	1.43
I can quickly learn and adapt to new technologies	3.145	1.34
I understand how to use project management tools	3.055	1.41
I am skilled at writing technical reports	3.021	1.38
I am knowledgeable in data security and privacy concerns	3.048	1.41
I can work with large datasets and databases effectively	2.966	1.42
I am proficient in programming languages or coding	2.979	1.48
I am able to develop effective technical solutions	2.897	1.40
I am knowledgeable in quality assurance techniques	2.986	1.42

Source : Computed from Primary data

INFERENCE : From Table no.2, the technical competencies are ranked as follows: 'Proficient in domain-specific knowledge' (3.476), 'Effectively apply analytical skills' (3.255), 'Use advanced technology' (3.193), 'Competent in relevant software tools' (3.186), 'Quickly learn and adapt to new technologies' (3.145), 'Understand project management tools' (3.055), 'Knowledgeable in data security and privacy concerns' (3.048), 'Skilled at writing technical reports' (3.021), 'Skilled in data analysis and interpretation' (2.993), 'Knowledgeable in quality assurance techniques' (2.986), 'Proficient in programming languages or coding' (2.979), 'Work with large datasets and databases' (2.966), 'Capable of solving technical problems' (2.952), 'Understanding of industry-specific regulations' (2.910), and 'Develop effective technical solutions' (2.897).

Table No.3: **Soft Skills Competencies**

Factors	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
I communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing.	3.621	1.26
I work well in teams and collaborate effectively.	3.628	1.23
I exhibit strong leadership and decision-making skills.	3.607	1.25
I can resolve conflicts and negotiate effectively.	3.497	1.31
I manage my time and stay organized efficiently.	3.628	1.22
I am adaptable to changing work environments.	3.469	1.28
I have strong interpersonal and emotional intelligence skills.	3.614	1.26
I am creative and innovative in solving problems.	3.607	1.24
I take initiative and act proactively in my tasks.	3.490	1.24
I build and maintain professional relationships easily.	3.621	1.22
I think critically and make informed decisions.	3.579	1.27
I manage stress well and remain resilient under pressure.	3.524	1.25
I actively listen to and empathize with colleagues.	3.552	1.30
I am confident in public speaking and delivering presentations.	3.462	1.26

I provide constructive feedback and accept criticism effectively.	3.552	1.28

Source : Computed from Primary data

INFERENCE: From Table no.3, the soft skills competencies are ranked as follows: 'Work well in teams and collaborate effectively' and 'Manage time and stay organized efficiently' both ranked first with the highest mean score (3.628), followed by 'Build and maintain professional relationships' and 'Communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing' (3.621). 'Interpersonal and emotional intelligence skills' ranked third (3.614), while 'Creativity and innovation in problem-solving' and 'Leadership and decision-making' ranked fourth (3.607). 'Critical thinking and informed decision-making' ranked fifth (3.579), 'Providing constructive feedback' and 'Active listening and empathy' ranked sixth (3.552), followed by 'Managing stress and resilience' (3.524), 'Conflict resolution and negotiation' (3.497), 'Taking initiative' (3.490), 'Adaptability to changing environments' (3.469), and lastly, 'Confidence in public speaking and presentations' (3.462).

Table No.4 :Job Readiness

Factors	Mean	Std. Deviation
I understand the demands and expectations of the industry.	3.655	1.20
I can apply academic knowledge to real-world situations.	3.662	1.19
I am confident in handling job interviews and recruitment processes.	3.607	1.22
I am willing to continuously learn and develop new skills.	3.641	1.20
I am aware of current market trends and industry developments.	3.524	1.27
I can balance multiple tasks and prioritize effectively.	3.566	1.25
I am flexible and can adapt to different job roles and responsibilities.	3.524	1.29
I am confident in delivering projects on time.	3.531	1.30
I take ownership and responsibility in my job tasks.	3.579	1.27
I maintain a professional attitude and strong work ethic.	3.621	1.23
I can work independently with minimal supervision.	3.545	1.26
I can manage workplace challenges and ambiguity effectively.	3.552	1.24
I am ready to work in a culturally diverse environment.	3.662	1.24
I can network and build professional contacts easily.	3.455	1.27
I am aware of legal, ethical, and corporate responsibilities in the workplace.	3.510	1.26

Source : Computed from Primary data

INFERENCE: From table no.4, job readiness factors are ranked as follows: 'Applying academic knowledge to real-world situations' and 'Working in a culturally diverse environment' both ranked first with the highest mean score (3.662), followed by 'Understanding industry demands and expectations' in second (3.655). 'Willingness to continuously learn and develop skills' ranked third (3.641), 'Maintaining a professional attitude and work ethic' ranked fourth (3.621), and 'Confidence in handling job interviews'

ranked fifth (3.607). Other factors include 'Taking ownership in tasks' (3.579), 'Balancing tasks and prioritizing' (3.566), 'Managing workplace challenges' (3.552), 'Working independently' (3.545), 'Delivering projects on time' (3.531), 'Adapting to different roles' and 'Awareness of market trends' (both 3.524), 'Awareness of legal and corporate responsibilities' (3.510), and finally 'Networking and building professional contacts' (3.455).

Hypothesis No.: 1

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant association between the age group and the dimensions of Competency Framework

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): There is a significant association between the age group and the dimensions of Competency Framework

Table No.5: ANOVA analysis between the age group and the dimensions of Competency Framework

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Technical Competencies	Between Groups	274.064	3	91.355	3.113	.028
	Within Groups	4138.377	141	29.350		
	Total	4412.441	144			
Soft Skills Competencies	Between Groups	1189.392	3	396.464	6.175	.001
	Within Groups	9052.470	141	64.202		
	Total	10241.862	144			
Job Readiness	Between Groups	1288.783	3	429.594	5.884	.001
	Within Groups	10294.844	141	73.013		
	Total	11583.628	144			

Source : Computed from Primary data

INFERENCE : Table No. 5 revealing a significant association between age group and the dimensions of the Competency Framework. For Technical Competencies, the F-value is 3.113 with a significance level of .028, indicating a meaningful relationship. Soft Skills Competencies show a stronger association with an F-value of 6.175 and a p-value of .001. Similarly, Job Readiness also demonstrates a significant association, with an F-value of 5.884 and a p-value of .001. These results lead to the rejection of the Null Hypothesis (H_0), confirming that different age groups exhibit varying levels of competencies within the framework.

Hypothesis No.: 2

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant association between the educational level and the dimensions of Competency Framework

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): There is a significant association between the educational level and the dimensions of Competency Framework

Table No.6: ANOVA analysis between the educational level and the dimensions of Competency Framework

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Technical Competencies	Between Groups	416.695	3	138.898	4.901	.003
	Within Groups	3995.747	141	28.339		
	Total	4412.441	144			
Soft Skills Competencies	Between Groups	1965.914	3	655.305	11.165	.000
	Within Groups	8275.948	141	58.695		
	Total	10241.862	144			
Job Readiness	Between Groups	1816.883	3	605.628	8.743	.000
	Within Groups	9766.745	141	69.268		
	Total	11583.628	144			

Source : Computed from Primary data

INFERENCE : Table No. 6 presents the ANOVA analysis, indicating a significant association between educational level and the dimensions of the Competency Framework, leading to the acceptance of the Alternative Hypothesis (H_a). For Technical Competencies, the F-value is 4.901 with a p-value of .003, demonstrating a significant relationship. Soft Skills Competencies show an even stronger association with an F-value of 11.165 and a p-value of .000. Similarly, Job Readiness reveals a meaningful association with an F-value of 8.743 and a p-value of .000. These results confirm that educational level significantly influences the various dimensions of competencies among management graduates.

Hypothesis No.: 3

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant association between the work experience and the dimensions of Competency Framework

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): There is a significant association between the work experience and the dimensions of Competency Framework

Table No.7: ANOVA analysis between the work experience and the dimensions of Competency Framework

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Technical Competencies	Between Groups	216.559	4	54.140	1.806	.131
	Within Groups	4195.882	140	29.971		
	Total	4412.441	144			
Soft Skills Competencies	Between Groups	2493.949	4	623.487	11.266	.000
	Within Groups	7747.913	140	55.342		
	Total	10241.862	144			
Job Readiness	Between Groups	1543.587	4	385.897	5.381	.000
	Within Groups	10040.040	140	71.715		
	Total	11583.628	144			

Source : Computed from Primary data

INFERENCE : Table No. 7 ANOVA analysis reveals a significant association between work experience and the dimensions of the Competency Framework, supporting the Alternative Hypothesis (H_a). For Technical Competencies, there is no significant association as the F-value is 1.806 with a p-value of .131. However, Soft Skills Competencies demonstrate a strong association with an F-value of 11.266 and a p-value of .000. Similarly, Job Readiness shows a significant relationship with an F-value of 5.381 and a p-value of .000. These results confirm that work experience significantly impacts the development of soft skills and job readiness among management graduates, though not as much for technical competencies.

Hypothesis No.: 4

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant correlation between the dimensions of Competency Framework

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): There is a significant correlation between the dimensions of Competency Framework

Table No.8: Correlation analysis between the dimensions of Competency Framework

Correlations				
		Technical Competencies	Soft Skills Competencies	Job Readiness
Technical Competencies	Pearson Correlation	1	.354**	.366**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	145	145	145
Soft Skills Competencies	Pearson Correlation	.354**	1	.632**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	145	145	145

Job Readiness	Pearson Correlation	.366**	.632**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	145	145	145
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

Source : Computed from Primary data

INFERENCE : Table No. 8 Correlation analysis reveals a significant positive correlation between the dimensions of the Competency Framework, supporting the Alternative Hypothesis (H_a). The correlation between Technical Competencies and Soft Skills Competencies is 0.354, and between Technical Competencies and Job Readiness is 0.366, both significant at the 0.01 level. Additionally, the correlation between Soft Skills Competencies and Job Readiness is 0.632, also significant at the 0.01 level. These findings confirm that all dimensions—Technical Competencies, Soft Skills Competencies, and Job Readiness—are positively and significantly correlated with each other.

Hypothesis No.: 5

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant linear relationship between Technical Competencies, Soft Skills Competencies, and Job Readiness

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): There is a significant linear relationship between Technical Competencies, Soft Skills Competencies, and Job Readiness

Table No.9: Model Summary and ANOVA analysis between Technical Competencies, Soft Skills Competencies, and Job Readiness

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.650[a]	.422	.414	6.86651	.422	51.841	2	142	.000	1.775

a. Predictors: (Constant), Soft Skills Competencies, Technical Competencies

b. Dependent Variable: Job Readiness

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4888.473	2	2444.236	51.841	.000[b]
	Residual	6695.155	142	47.149		
	Total	11583.628	144			

a. Dependent Variable: Job Readiness

b. Predictors: (Constant), Soft Skills Competencies, Technical Competencies

Source : Computed from Primary data

INFERENCE: Table No. 9 reveals that the model summary reports an R square of .422, indicating that Technical Competencies and Soft Skills Competencies explain approximately 42.2% of the variance in Job Readiness. The ANOVA results further support this with an F-value of 51.841 and a significant p-value of .000, confirming a significant linear relationship between Technical Competencies, Soft Skills Competencies, and Job Readiness. These findings support the Alternative Hypothesis (H_a), indicating that both technical and soft skills significantly impact job readiness among management graduates.

Table No.10: Coefficients between Technical Competencies, Soft Skills Competencies, and Job Readiness

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	8.882	5.225		1.700	.091
	Technical Competencies	.263	.111	.162	2.380	.019
	Soft Skills Competencies	.611	.073	.574	8.415	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Job Readiness						

Source : Computed from Primary data

INFERENCE: Table No. 10 analysis shows that both Technical Competencies and Soft Skills Competencies significantly contribute to Job Readiness. The coefficient for Technical Competencies is 0.263 with a t-value of 2.380 and a p-value of .019, indicating a notable impact. The coefficient for Soft Skills Competencies is 0.611 with a t-value of 8.415 and a p-value of .000, demonstrating an even stronger influence. These results suggest that while both competencies are important for job readiness among management graduates, Soft Skills Competencies play a more significant role.

Table No.11: Residuals Statistics between Technical Competencies, Soft Skills Competencies, and Job Readiness

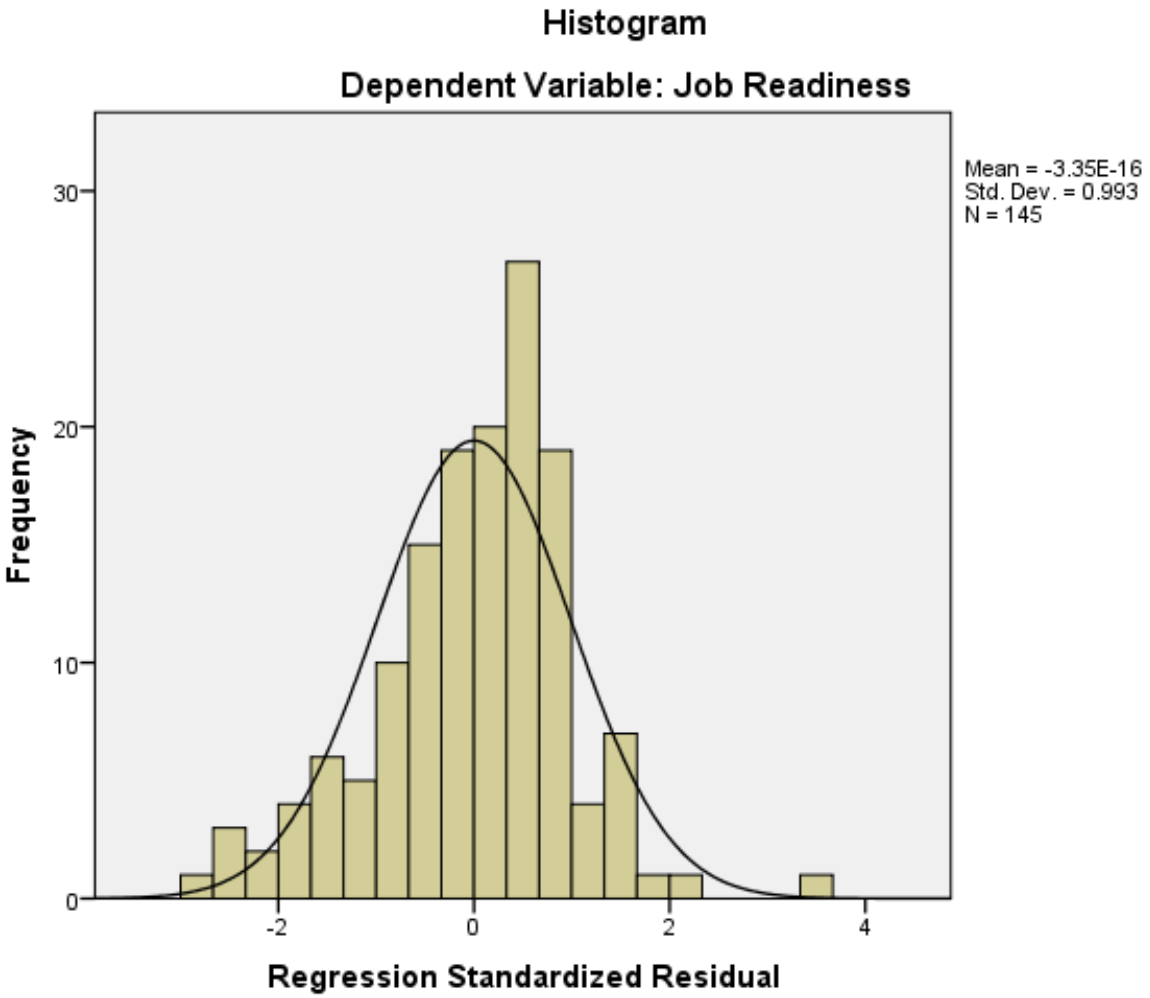
Residuals Statistics[a]					
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	40.8604	65.6600	53.6345	5.82647	145
Residual	-20.08134	24.13961	.00000	6.81866	145
Std. Predicted Value	-2.192	2.064	.000	1.000	145
Std. Residual	-2.925	3.516	.000	.993	145

a. Dependent Variable: Job Readiness

Source : Computed from Primary data

INFERENCE: Table No. 11 residuals statistics indicate that the predicted values of Job Readiness range from 40.86 to 65.66, with a mean of 53.63 and a standard deviation of 5.83, suggesting consistent estimations across the data points. The residuals, representing the differences between observed and predicted values, range from -20.08 to 24.14, with a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 6.82. This indicates a good model fit, as the residuals are centered around zero, and the distribution suggests no significant systematic errors.

Chart No.1 Histogram between Technical Competencies, Soft Skills Competencies, and Job Readiness



5. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. The majority of respondents are young, with 35.9% aged 23–27 and 26.9% aged 18–22 years.

2. Most respondents are highly educated, with 38.6% holding postgraduate degrees and 30.3% having doctorates.
3. A significant portion of respondents (35.2%) have 4–6 years of work experience, followed by 21.4% with 7–10 years.
4. Proficiency in domain-specific knowledge ranks highest among technical competencies, with a mean score of 3.476.
5. Collaboration and time management are the top-ranked soft skills competencies, both scoring 3.628.
6. Applying academic knowledge to real-world situations and working in diverse environments are the top job readiness factors, both scoring 3.662.
7. Age group shows a significant association with all dimensions of the Competency Framework, particularly in soft skills and job readiness.
8. Educational level significantly influences technical, soft skills, and job readiness competencies, with strong associations across all dimensions.
9. Work experience has a significant impact on soft skills and job readiness, but not as much on technical competencies.
10. There is a positive correlation between technical competencies, soft skills, and job readiness, confirming their interrelatedness.
11. Technical and soft skills explain 42.2% of the variance in job readiness, showing a significant linear relationship.
12. Soft skills competencies have a stronger impact on job readiness than technical competencies, according to regression analysis.
13. Technical competencies, though important, contribute less to job readiness compared to soft skills.
14. The residuals analysis indicates a well-fitting model with no major systematic errors in predicting job readiness.
15. The overall model shows consistent estimations for job readiness, with no significant deviations from observed values.

5.1 SUGGESTIONS

Based on the study's findings, it is evident that while technical competencies such as proficiency in domain-specific knowledge are important, soft skills like collaboration and time management have a greater influence on job readiness. Therefore, academic institutions should focus on creating a balanced curriculum that strengthens both technical and soft skills.

Programs should incorporate real-world simulations and collaborative projects that allow students to apply academic knowledge in practical settings and work in diverse teams. Furthermore, initiatives that enhance adaptability, leadership, and communication should be integrated into training programs to meet employer expectations and better prepare graduates for the evolving job market.

In addition, the significant association between work experience and soft skills highlights the need for more internship and work-based learning opportunities during the academic journey. Partnerships between educational institutions and industry should be encouraged to provide hands-on experience and ensure that graduates are equipped with the necessary skills to transition into the workplace. Employers should also recognize the importance of soft skills in their recruitment processes and offer training programs that focus on the continuous development of these competencies. This holistic approach will help address competency gaps and align graduate skills more closely with employer expectations.

5.2 CONCLUSION

The study highlights the critical role that both technical and soft skills play in shaping the job readiness of management graduates in Bangalore. While technical competencies, such as proficiency in domain-specific knowledge, are important, soft skills, particularly collaboration and time management, have a stronger influence on job readiness. The findings show that graduates must not only possess technical knowledge but also the ability to apply this knowledge in real-world settings and work in diverse, dynamic environments. Age, educational level, and work experience significantly influence these competencies, with soft skills proving to be the most essential in meeting employer expectations. As such, there is a clear need for academic institutions to balance technical education with soft skill development to enhance the overall readiness of graduates entering the workforce.

It is crucial for academic institutions and employers to collaborate more closely to bridge competency gaps. Educational programs should emphasize practical, hands-on learning opportunities, such as internships and industry partnerships, which allow students to gain work experience while developing essential soft skills. Employers, in turn, should invest in continuous training that focuses on improving soft skills, such as communication, leadership, and adaptability, to ensure that graduates are well-prepared for the challenges of the modern workplace. By aligning technical knowledge with strong soft skills, management graduates can better meet the expectations of employers, thus improving their job readiness and long-term career success.

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