

An Analysis of Incorporation of Soft Skills in MBA Curriculum in MBA Offering Institutes in Amravati Region

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Abstract

This study investigates the ways in which different Amravati colleges' MBA Programmes include soft skills. It evaluates the degree of integration, the efficacy of the curriculum, and teacher and student opinions about the significance and influence of soft skill development. The study finds that different institutions place different amounts of emphasis on soft skills through the use of surveys, interviews, and curriculum analysis. Some universities provide extensive Programmes, but others don't concentrate enough. Better instruction in problem-solving, cooperation, leadership, and communication is acknowledged by both teachers and students. The article ends with suggestions for improving the MBA Programme to better prepare students for the fast-paced business world. It promotes a well-rounded strategy that incorporates both technical and soft skills.

Keywords: Soft Skills, MBA Curriculum, Employability, Business Education

Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving business world, the demand for professionals equipped with both technical expertise and soft skills has grown significantly. Soft skills, including communication, leadership, teamwork, adaptability, and problem-solving, are crucial for success in the workplace. Recognizing this importance, business schools worldwide are reevaluating their curriculum to ensure graduates are prepared for the complexities of modern business. In Amravati, a burgeoning educational hub in India, the integration of soft skills into MBA programs is a critical question. This research aims to examine the current state of soft skills integration across various colleges in Amravati to provide actionable insights for enhancing the MBA curriculum and better preparing students for the dynamic business landscape.

Review of Literature

The need for workers with both technical competence and soft skills has increased dramatically in today's dynamic corporate environment. Soft skills are essential for success in the workplace and include problem-solving, teamwork, communication, leadership, and flexibility. Taking note of this significance, business schools over the globe are reviewing their curricula to guarantee that graduates are equipped to handle the complexity of contemporary business. One of the most important questions at Amravati, an emerging Indian educational centre, is how to include soft skills into MBA Programmes. The objective of this study is to investigate the present condition of soft skills integration at Amravati's institutions in

order to offer practical suggestions for improving the MBA Programme and better equipping students for the changing business environment.

Research Problem

Though the value of soft skills in the business sector is increasingly acknowledged, little is known about how well these abilities are incorporated into Amaravati colleges' MBA curricula. Through an analysis of the condition of soft skill inclusion today and the identification of areas for improvement, this study aims to close the gap.

Hypotheses

1. H1: Soft skills are not adequately incorporated into the MBA curriculum in colleges in Amaravati.
2. H2: Students and faculty perceive the current integration of soft skills in the MBA curriculum as insufficient.
3. H3: Enhancing the soft skills component of the MBA curriculum will significantly improve students' employability and job performance.

Objectives

1. To evaluate the current integration of soft skills in the MBA curriculum in Amaravati.
2. To assess the perceptions of students and faculty regarding the importance and effectiveness of soft skills training.
3. To identify gaps and areas for improvement in the incorporation of soft skills.
4. To provide recommendations for enhancing the MBA curriculum to better incorporate soft skills.

Significance of the study

The research on the integration of soft skills into MBA Programmes at Amaravati colleges is essential to improving the employability and success of graduates. Curriculum creators and policymakers can gain useful insights from the research by evaluating the present state of integration and proposing adjustments. Students' involvement and academic achievement can both be enhanced by improved soft skills training. Furthermore, it emphasizes the value of industry partnership and faculty development, which promotes real-world experience and practical insights. In the end, the research findings are intended to provide Amaravati MBA graduates with the competencies required to fulfill industry standards, improving their worldwide competitiveness and bolstering the educational and economic development of the area.

Research Methodology

- **Population:** MBA students and faculty from Amaravati colleges.
- **Sample Size:** 250 participants (200 MBA students, 50 faculty members).
- **Sampling Technique:** Stratified random sampling based on institution type, academic year, and faculty experience.

Data Collection

1. Primary Data:

- **Questionnaires:** Gathered quantitative data on soft skills integration and effectiveness perceptions

from both students and faculty through structured questionnaires.

- **Interviews:** Conducted semi-structured interviews with faculty and students to gain qualitative insights on soft skills integration.

2. Secondary Data:

- Utilized academic journals, college records, curriculum documents, and relevant literature to provide additional context and support for primary data findings.

Limitations of the Study

There are restrictions on the study on adding soft skills to the MBA Programme in Amaravati colleges. The diversity of viewpoints may not be fully captured by the sample size, and bias may be introduced by student and faculty self-reported data. The cross-sectional design does not take into consideration curriculum changes that are underway. It merely offers a snapshot. The applicability to other places is limited by the concentration on Amaravati, and the execution of recommended improvements may be hampered by practical issues including limited resources and divergent institutional agendas.

Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques were employed to analyze the collected data:

Category	Details
Quantitative Analysis	
Descriptive Statistics	Mean: 3.75/5 (SD: 0.85), Range: 1-5, Satisfaction: 65% students, 72% faculty
Chi-Square Test	Significant association ($p < 0.05$)
Regression Analysis	Predictors:
	- Curriculum: $\beta = 0.32$ ($p < 0.001$)
	- Faculty training: $\beta = 0.25$ ($p < 0.01$)
	- Industry: $\beta = 0.18$ ($p < 0.05$)
	- $R^2 = 0.60$

1 Quantitative Analysis:

1. Descriptive Statistics:

- The mean score for the level of soft skills integration was found to be 3.75 out of 5, with a standard deviation of 0.85. The range of scores varied from 1 to 5.
- A substantial proportion of both students and faculty members rated soft skills integration as "adequate" or "above average," with 65% of students and 72% of faculty members expressing satisfaction.

2. Chi-Square Test:

- The chi-square test results revealed a significant association ($p\text{-value} < 0.05$) between soft skills integration and perceptions among both students and faculty members. This indicates that perceptions of soft skills integration varied significantly based on the actual level of integration.

3. Regression Analysis:

- Regression analysis was conducted to identify predictors of soft skills integration. The analysis

yielded the following regression coefficients:

- Curriculum structure: $\beta = 0.32$ ($p < 0.001$)
- Faculty training: $\beta = 0.25$ ($p < 0.01$)
- Industry collaborations: $\beta = 0.18$ ($p < 0.05$)
- The model exhibited a substantial explanatory power, with an R-squared value of 0.60, indicating that 60% of the variance in soft skills integration can be explained by the included predictors.

Qualitative Analysis:

Category	Details
Thematic Analysis	Themes:
	- Lack of courses (80% students)
	- Need for training (90% faculty)
	- Industry exposure (75%)
Content Analysis	Satisfaction: 45% students, 60% faculty
	Need for enhancements: 80% students, 70% faculty

Qualitative Analysis:

- 1. Thematic Analysis:** Thematic analysis of qualitative data revealed recurring themes related to perceptions of soft skills integration. These themes included the lack of dedicated courses (mentioned by 80% of students), the need for practical training (mentioned by 90% of faculty members), and the importance of industry exposure (mentioned by 75% of both students and faculty members).
- 2. Content Analysis:** Content analysis of survey responses indicated a relatively lower level of satisfaction with the current soft skills curriculum, with only 45% of students and 60% of faculty expressing satisfaction. Moreover, interview participants identified specific areas for improvement in soft skills integration, with 80% of students and 70% of faculty members highlighting the need for enhancements.

Question	Quantitative Analysis	Qualitative Analysis	Conclusion
How Adequate is the Current Integration of Soft Skills?	Mean: 3.75/5, Satisfaction: 65% students, 72% faculty, Chi-Square ($p < 0.05$)	Lack of Courses (80% students), Need for Training (90% faculty), Industry Exposure (75%)	Moderately adequate but needs significant improvements.
What are the Key Predictors of Effective Integration?	Regression: Curriculum ($\beta = 0.32$), Faculty Training ($\beta = 0.25$), Industry Collaborations ($\beta = 0.18$), $R^2 = 0.60$	-	Key predictors include curriculum structure, faculty training, and industry collaborations.

Question	Quantitative Analysis	Qualitative Analysis	Conclusion
What are the Perceptions on Sufficiency of Integration?	Chi-Square ($p < 0.05$), Satisfaction: 65% students, 72% faculty	Common themes: Lack of Courses, Practical Training Needs, Industry Exposure, Satisfaction: 45% students, 60% faculty, Enhancements: 80%	Generally perceived as insufficient, with a demand for more structured and practical approaches.

The current integration of soft skills in MBA curricula is moderately adequate, with a mean score of 3.75/5 and 65% of students and 72% of faculty satisfied. Key predictors include curriculum structure, faculty training, and industry collaborations, explaining 60% of the variance. Perceptions show significant room for improvement, with common themes of lacking dedicated courses, practical training needs, and industry exposure, indicating a general insufficiency and demand for enhancements.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical guidelines were strictly adhered to during the entire investigation. All participants gave their informed consent, guaranteeing that they understood the goal of the research and that they might withdraw at any moment. The participants' identity and confidentiality were preserved by not using their personal information in favour of unique identifiers. The study complied with the norms and ethical criteria that govern the use of human beings in research.

Hypothesis Testing

- H1:** Soft skills are not adequately incorporated into the MBA curriculum in colleges in Amaravati.
Result: Supported. The descriptive statistics indicate that while some integration of soft skills exists, it is perceived as insufficient by a significant portion of both students and faculty.
- H2:** Students and faculty perceive the current integration of soft skills in the MBA curriculum as insufficient.
Result: Supported. The chi-square test results reveal a significant association between soft skills integration and perceptions, with 65% of students and 72% of faculty members rating it as "adequate" or above, suggesting room for improvement.
- H3:** Enhancing the soft skills component of the MBA curriculum will significantly improve students' employability and job performance.
Result: Supported. Regression analysis indicates that factors such as curriculum structure, faculty training, and industry collaborations significantly predict the level of soft skills integration, which in turn is expected to enhance employability and job performance.

Findings

- Current Integration:** The study reveals that while some elements of soft skills are included in the curriculum, they are not given sufficient emphasis or structured systematically across all colleges.
- Perceptions:** Both students and faculty perceive the current integration of soft skills as inadequate. Students express a need for more practical and interactive training sessions.

3. **Gaps Identified:** Key gaps include the lack of dedicated courses on soft skills, insufficient practical training, and limited industry exposure.

Conclusion

Amaravati colleges' MBA curricula do not include enough soft skills to match the needs of the contemporary corporate world. The professors and students feel that these skills are not sufficiently integrated. Numerous deficiencies are noted by the report, such as the dearth of specialized courses, the inadequate amount of hands-on training, and the restricted exposure to the sector. To close these gaps and boost students' employability and productivity on the work, soft skill training must take a more methodical and thorough approach.

Suggestions

It is imperative that MBA Programmes incorporate specialized courses on communication, leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving to improve students' soft skills. To successfully measure progress, these courses should be interwoven throughout the curriculum and assessed through activities like role-playing and group projects. While industry engagement through partnerships and guest lecturers offers insights from professionals, practical training—such as workshops and internships—offers hands-on experience. Ongoing progress is ensured by continuous assessment techniques including peer reviews and self-assessments. Programmes for faculty development are crucial for providing instructors with tools and instructional strategies that work, enabling the full integration of soft skills into MBA curricula.

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