



The Impact of Soft Skills Deficiency in University Education on Unemployment Rates in Uzbekistan

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Abstract: *through our written article, we researched that the lack of soft skills among university students is one of the reasons for its impact on the unemployment rate. Through this, we determined the state of knowledge of soft skills among university students, their importance for getting a job, and thus Together with the employee of the HR department of a real company, we studied the soft skills that students lack when starting a job, and those that are required during work. Through this, we made recommendations on the soft skills that university students should learn at the university with two types of research, and on the soft skills that are important for their development and employment.*

Key words: *soft skills, unemployment rate, communication, leadership, decision making, internship and work experience, hiring employee, journaling, 360° undergo assessment.*

Introduction

Nowadays, education system emphasizes hard skills instead of soft skills, because soft skills like excellent communication and emotional intelligence can be more effective than hard skills. Learning the ability to adapt, cooperate, learn new



knowledge and skills is very necessary in today's developing age. Teaching these and other similar soft skills is an important aspect of a holistic, well-rounded education that can have a life-changing impact. [1] (Mahmood 2024)

“Soft skills have more to do with who we are than what we know,” says Marcel M. Robles, Assistant Dean and Chair of Faculty at Eastern Kentucky University (US) Skilled employers always hire new employees by testing soft and hard skills. Hard skills are skills that employees learn and develop mainly through knowledge of foreign languages, computer programs, movement and experiential skills. Other side soft skills define personal abilities, human qualities, ability to communicate and work with others, solve problems, how a person learns and develops. [2] (Rose 2023)

In the European union countries made this survey 340 students attended from 6 countries and 76 teachers from 9 countries. Profile of the students: Bachelor level students – 61%; Master level students – 35%; Doctoral level students – 4%. 70% of this number of people they heard and know about what is “soft skill”, however 54% of them pointed that they don't have enough studies at the university to develop soft skills. Most students mentioned the most important soft skills are communication (23%), critical thinking (19%), team work (12%) and others. [3] (Diskom Project 2022) The results taken by teachers shows that 89% teacher agreed with that, soft skills is the most important skill in today job sphere, almost same percent (86%) teacher agreed that universities should attention to teaching soft skills. 35% teachers think that communication skills are very weak among students and they feel lackness when applying new job. (Diskom Project 2022)

Google have 5 hiring criteria and 4 of them is depends on soft skills, like teamwork and communication. Furthermore 60% Google high performing teams are with strong soft skilled people. [4] (Google 2023)

As given report by LinkedIn 65% of Apple job listing for product development requires creativity, problem-solving and other skills, in addition Apple



focus on candidates' emotional intelligence (EQ), 70% Apple managers consider that Emotional intelligence is key factor in their workplace, 20% teams that have higher EQ member increased faster in job position. [5] (Apple 2024)

At the same time, there is a problem called lack of soft skills in university education system and this end with high unemployment rate among gradulators. Nowadays, when all fields are developing, acquiring university knowledge alone does not guarantee success, what is the real problem? Students aim to get a job with the knowledge they have acquired in every field, but soft skills are also important for them to get a job in their field. With soft skills, students show that they are suitable for the job, that they can work with a team, and that they can solve problems that may arise. At the same time, students can acquire new knowledge and skills.

Global trend; The Top 3 Soft Skills Your Employees Need for 2024

Communication

Communication is a given for any job, but good communication is an essential skill. So, the demand for communication skills is increasing by 15.17% for employees and 13.39% for managers. Communication is actually one of the most complex soft skills because it involves so many elements. Communication skills fall into three main areas: who, where, and how.

Who - the people involved in the communication include customers, bosses, managers and supervisors. *Where* - today's professional communication is in meetings, casual discussion, email, zoom or other online networks. *How* - communication can be organized through oral speech, written point, body language, facial expression and listening. [6] (Bieric 2023)

Problem solving

According to a 2019 report, 51% of employers found university graduates to have poor problem-solving skills through an AAC&U survey, and 41% of employers were satisfied with the problem-solving skills of new student employees [7] (SHRM,2019). In addition, many providers struggle by not delivering well or



teaching students problem-solving and other soft skills in education. As a result, 40% to 60% of students, when starting a new job, cannot find individual and creative solutions to work problems [8] (Dana Wilkie 2019).

Leadership

After the survey of (NACE) 2023 86% of employers prefer to take workers with leadership skill leadership and leadership is one from the Top 5 most valued qualities with teamwork, problem-solving and communication skills. Furthermore, by the Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends survey (2023) 80% recruiters noted that they look first leadership potential of new workers, they hope they are able to grow faster in workplace. [9] (NACE 2023)

Methodology

Primary research

We used an online and offline survey for primary research. The main goal of our survey was to determine the role of soft skills in university education and their importance in new employment. In this way, we have studied one of the factors affecting unemployment problems. We conducted our survey among students studying at universities in Uzbekistan, the USA, Great Britain and South Korea. More than 50 students took part in our survey. The first part of our study showed that the majority of students who participated in the survey are studying in international, public and private higher education institutions, and all of them are studying at the undergraduate level.

Through the questions in our research below, we collected valuable thoughts and opinions about one of the factors affecting unemployment, which is becoming an urgent problem today. They're:

1. Do universities teach soft skills and how often do you get to practice soft skills in your university experience? 2. In which skills do you feel lackness in your university education? 3. Do you believe soft skills are as important as technical skills in securing employment? 4. How important do you think soft skills are in advancing



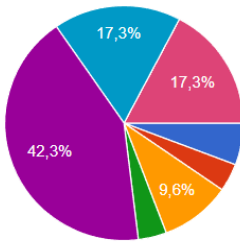
in your career? 5. Have you experienced or observed difficulty finding employment due to a lack of soft skills? 6. Which soft skills are important before entering a job?

Through the first question, we determined whether and how quickly students are taught to use soft skills in public and private higher education institutions. Through the second question, we identified gaps in teaching soft skills in university education and gaps in soft skills that students often encounter. According to the third and fourth questions of our survey, we found out how important soft skills are for students to get a job and how to achieve high results through soft skills in the professional process. Then with 5-6 questions, we learned whether students do not have some soft skills when starting a new job or lack the experience of using them, how to develop and form them during the educational process. And with our final question, we asked students which soft skills were most important during the job application or interview process and why those soft skills were important to them.

As primary research, we did also interview form with ASKO company's HR department recruiter, he is Umidjon Kimsanov with 5 years' experience on recruit employee. Through this interview form questions we got information about most vital soft skills for entering new job, main problem lack of soft skills between gradulators and also in the job sphere. Our questions: *1. How important is the role of soft skills in the selection of candidates? 2. What soft skills are lacking in many candidates today? 3. Does the lack of certain soft skills affect the decision not to hire? 4. What are the most important pure skills in the work process? 5. If a candidate is technically strong but lacks soft skills, how do you approach the hiring decision? 6. Candidates should work on which soft skills more. 7. In your opinion, what soft skills should universities teach when preparing students for a career? 8. What soft skills leaders and managers should have.*

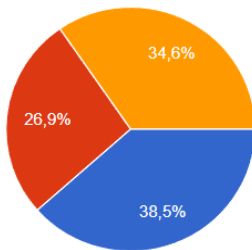
Result

First primary research; survey form with university students



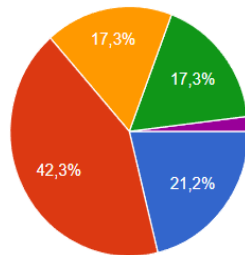
- Communication
- Teamwork
- Problem-solving
- Leadership
- Time management
- Emotional intelligence
- Other

According to this question survey diagram we can see most of university students have a problem with time management, emotional intelligence, problem solving, communication and others. According to the results, if we analyze the main problems faced by students in the university, the fact that students do not set a clear time and goal to achieve their tasks or goals.



- Yes
- No
- Not sure

most of the student had problem with entering new job.



- Workshops and seminars
- Internships or work experience
- Group projects
- Extracurricular activities
- consider doing all, step by step

“How would you prefer to develop soft skills during your education?” Through this question we got 42.3% student mentioned most important things are internships, work experience and 21.2% is workshops and seminars for increasing soft skills.

Second primary research result; questionnaire form with ASKO company’s HR department recruiter

1. Soft skills are sufficient to hire junior specialists, when appropriate for the field of activity. It is also considered as important as hard skills in getting top and middle manager positions. Many HR also pay special attention to soft skills in the candidate evaluation scoring list during the interview.

According to this question survey diagram we can see most of university students have a problem with time management, emotional intelligence, problem solving, communication and others. According to the results, if we analyze the main problems faced by students in the university, the fact that students do not set a clear time and goal to achieve their tasks or goals.

This diagram show that which student have experienced or observed difficulty finding employment due to a lack of soft skills. 38.5% students have a problem with lack of soft skills for entering new job. It means

“How would you prefer to develop soft skills during your education?” Through this question we got 42.3% student mentioned most important things are



2. Communication-communicativeness, leadership, resistance to stress and multifunctionality

3. Everything depends on the requirements of the vacant position that the candidate is considering. That is, the candidate's lack of the soft skills clearly indicated in the job profile will certainly lead to a negative outcome of the process.

4. Communicativeness, multifunctionality - the ability to work with several tasks at the same time and stress tolerance

5. In this process, I look at the tolerance of my team working together with me - if I see that the candidate can find his place in the team and bring results, I will respond positively, if it is the opposite, I will react negatively.

6. Multifunctionality, leadership and stress tolerance

7. Communicativeness and perseverance

8. Undoubtedly, the ability to lead and influence

Discussion

The main goal of the current two surveys was to determine the lack of teaching of soft skills in the educational system, the importance of basic soft skills for students, and the level of importance in getting a job. In the second primary research, through the question form, we determined how important the role of important soft skills is in the recruitment process through the HR recruiter of a real company, the soft skills that are important for current university graduates to get a job, and the most problematic issues.

The results of our first survey show that most of the students of private and public universities have problems with time management and 17% emotional intelligence soft skills during their studies. The main reasons for this are students' lack of time planning skills, lack of systematic teaching, excessive use of technology and social networks are causing problems in these soft skills. , not knowing their mission, excessive stress and worries in life, in the educational process, as well as the weakness of communication skills among other peers. Students need to develop



their daily plans and goals to develop these soft skills. Also, working with time can increase responsibility by increasing group work tasks. Through this, students perform tasks with a specific time limit. Students can use the "journaling" method to develop and manage their emotional intelligence, in which it is necessary to record the impact of daily emotions on decision-making. The second recommendation is "360° undergo assessment". Through this, students receive feedback from their fellow students by asking for their mistakes and emotional feelings, and through this, they review and correct their shortcomings. Also, in our survey, 38.5% of students faced a problem with the lack of soft skills to get a job. 42.3% of students chose internships and work experiences to develop soft skills in order to get a job. It is clear from this that students need to apply their knowledge in practice in order to improve their soft skills. Because the main reason is that the teaching system in the university education has not changed, still more attention is paid to technical knowledge. It requires collective tasks to retain knowledge in practice and to develop soft skills, at work, university, etc.

Currently, each company is asked specific questions about soft skills by HR specialists during recruitment. Not only junior, but also middle and senior workers, soft skills are valued as well as hard skills. Lack of communication, team leadership, and multitasking skills is seen in many hiring processes today. The lack of required soft skills can be the main reason why candidates are not hired. Usually, workers who do not have soft skills can also be hired, it mainly depends on the head of department and HR recruiter, the reason is decided by them. will be Today's university students need to focus on communication, problem solving, and team work skills so that they can work smoothly in their future careers.

Conclusion

The purpose of this article was about the lack of soft skills, one of the factors affecting the unemployment rate. In conclusion, due to the emphasis placed on technical knowledge in university education, there is a shortage of soft skills in the



workplace and university for students to apply their knowledge. To find out about this, we identified the soft skills that are important for students to get a job through our two types of surveys and gave important recommendations.

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