

## Utility Through Soft Skills: A Sustainable Approach



Shilpi Verma<sup>1\*</sup>, Atul Goyal<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Junior Research Fellow, Department of Banking, Economics & Finance Bundelkhand University, Jhansi-284001, Uttar Pradesh, India

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Institute of Banking, Economics & Finance, Bundelkhand University Jhansi-284001, Uttar Pradesh, India

### CORRESPONDING AUTHOR

Shilpi Verma

e-mail: [www.akritiverma246@gmail.com](mailto:www.akritiverma246@gmail.com)

### KEYWORDS

Soft Skills, Human Well-Being, Life Goals, Sustainable Utility, Consumption Pattern

### ARTICLE DETAILS

Received 03 June 2025; revised 20 August 2025; accepted 29 August 2025

DOI: 10.26671/IJIRG.2025.4.14.326

### CITATION

Verma, S., Goyal, A. (2025). Utility Through Soft Skills: A Sustainable Approach. *Int J Innovat Res Growth*, 14(4), 144078-144085. DOI



This work may be used under the terms of the Creative Commons License.

### Abstract

A pivotal inquiry underpinning this research endeavor is to elucidate the transformative impact of soft skills on human well-being, and their capacity to equip individuals with the expertise necessary to actualize their life goals. The overarching objective of this study is to scrutinize the interrelationship between soft skills and satisfaction, while also examining the pivotal role that soft skills play in fostering sustainable development. To achieve these objectives, this investigate will utilize an observational research paradigm. In order to glean actionable insights from this research endeavor, we engaged in in-depth interactions with high-achieving individuals who have distinguished themselves in their respective domains. Through meticulous observation and immersion in their work environments, we systematically identified, analyzed, and elucidated the soft skills that underpin their exceptional performance and professional success. Upon conducting a comprehensive examination of all pertinent factors, our research endeavored to distil key findings, revealing that communication skills and personality skills constitute essential determinants of professional success, rendering them utterly indispensable. Furthermore, our investigation indicated a positive correlation between the development of soft skills and the adoption of sustainable consumerism practices. Notably, our observation revealed that individuals who cultivate soft skills as a hobby exhibit a significantly reduced propensity for excessive screen time, in contrast to the average individual. Moreover, they demonstrate a diminished inclination towards indulging in luxuries, a trend that is decidedly encouraging. Such individuals are more likely to promote sustainable consumerism and exhibit a pronounced preference for eco-friendly products.

## 1. Introduction

In today's fast-paced era, humanity is ensnared in an incessant pursuit of advancement, where the omnipresent sense of urgency perpetuates a frenetic rush. While some individuals are driven to attain success, others strive for self-validation, and many more succumb to the allure of hedonistic indulgences. The burgeoning technological landscape and burgeoning indulgences are insidiously alienating us from our symbiotic relationship with the environment. Our precipitous pace often compromises environmental stewardship. However, upon closer examination, a silver lining emerges. A burgeoning affinity for environmental conservation is evident among the contemporary generation, a heartening phenomenon that heralds a promising future. The ascending trajectory of environmental awareness is incrementally steering us towards sustainable practices. The present generation is ardently committed to sustainable development, demonstrating profound concern for the welfare of future generations. This generation's aspirations transcend mere existence; they endeavor to craft a superior, more sustainable quality of life for posterity, exemplifying a laudable synergy of responsibility, foresight, and visionary thinking.

## 2. Literature Review

(Palumbo, 2013) stated that soft skills have direct effect on job satisfaction and motivation to work. (Tommaso Feraco, September 2024) tried to investigate the relationships of soft skills, as mentioned by the World Economic Forum, with two indicators of successful/healthy aging: life satisfaction and cognitive reserve. The results highlight the importance of considering soft skills also over the middle-late adult life course, due to the potential role of these individual qualities in supporting an individual's well-being and an active and engaged lifestyle, with implications for the promotion of a healthy aging. (Ana Cuic Tancovic Vitezić, March 2023) study tourists' perceptions of the effect of the communication skills of tourism service providers on soft-skills and on satisfaction with the rendered service. The result reveals the importance of the communication skills. (Mr, 2024) focused on understanding the role of soft skills to achieve the required satisfaction. (Hussein, August, 2024) determine the level of possession of soft skills and employability skills and the contribution of soft skills in enhancing employability. (Saihu Akla, 2022) examine the effect of soft skills, motivation, job satisfaction on employee performance through organizational commitment. Soft Skills, Motivation and Work Goals on Employee Performance through Organizational Commitment all variables had a significant effect. (Kumar, 2022) evaluates the impact of soft skill training provided to the candidates who are looking for the job. There is a significant relationship between soft skill training and job offers, job exposure, and job satisfaction. (singh, 2013) mentioned about achieving sustainability through effective communication skills that is required at all the level of management. (Athayde, 2011) talked about innovative minds through hard skills, soft skills and innovation. (Sydney Pons, 2024) employee sustainability and employee development can be enhanced through cultivating soft skills. (Catarina Farao, 2023) soft skills were perceived as more relevant than hard skills.

## 3. Objectives of The Study

- To scrutinize the interrelationship between soft skills and satisfaction,
- To examine the narrative that soft skills serve as a renewable resource that fosters sustainable development.

## 4. Research Methodology

In order to undertake this study, the observational methodology of primary data collection was utilized. To ensure the precision and reliability of the findings, in-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with high-achieving individuals who have attained exemplary success within their respective domains and simultaneously, we also sought the help of the questionnaire. Through these comprehensive discussions, meticulous observations were made to discern the distinct soft skills that differentiate these exceptional individuals from their counterparts.

## 5. Analysis and Findings of The Study

### 5.1 Possession of Soft Skills

**Table 1.1: following table showing the categories of the individuals who possess soft skills and who doesn't.**

	CATEGORY-1 Those who possess hobbies/ soft skills.	CATEGORY-2 Those who doesn't possess hobbies/soft skills.
Average music listening hours.	2-3 hours a day	1-2 hours a day
Average social work hours.	1-2 hours a day	0-1 hours a day

Average time spent with friends.	2-3 hours a day	1-2 hours a day
Average clothing purchase frequency.	Every 30-60 days	Every 15-20 days
Average tourism frequency.	Every 30-60 days	Every 60-90 days
Average monthly personal expenditure.	Rs. 3000- Rs. 6000	Rs. 5000- Rs. 10000
Average number of clothing items.	20-50	50-100
Average family member count.	3-5	4-6
Average vehicle count.	1-2 (bike/car)	2-4 (bike/car)
Average AC/cooler count.	1-2	2-4

**Factor Analysis:****Descriptive Statistics**

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
q1	3.76	1.041	50
q3	3.22	.996	50
q2	3.26	1.046	50

**Communalities**

	Initial	Extraction
q1	1.000	.539
q3	1.000	.686
q2	1.000	.591

**Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis:****Total Variance Explained**

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	1.816	60.545	60.545	1.816	60.545	60.545
2	.683	22.757	83.302			
3	.501	16.698	100.000			

**Component Matrix<sup>a</sup>**

	Component
	1
q1	.734
q3	.828
q2	.769

Our study shows that more than one soft skill is directly related to satisfaction. Soft skills reduce people's material consumption, which is conducive to environmental and sustainable development. People with soft skills gain additional consumption from entertainment such as sports, dancing and singing, and participating reduces their consumption elsewhere.

**1. Environmental Sustainability:**

- Energy Consumption: Category 2 (those without hobbies/soft skills) tends to have a higher average AC/cooler count (2-4) compared to Category 1 (1-2). This may indicate higher energy consumption.
- Transportation: Category 2 has a higher average vehicle count (2-4) compared to Category 1 (1-2), potentially leading to increased carbon emissions.
- Consumerism: Category 2 has a higher average number of clothing items (50-100) and more frequent clothing purchases (every 15-20 days) compared to Category 1. This may contribute to fast fashion and textile waste.

**2. Social Sustainability:**

- Social Connections: Category 1 spends more time with friends (2-3 hours/day) and engages in social work (1-2 hours/day) compared to Category 2. This may indicate stronger social bonds and community involvement.
- Economic Empowerment: Category 2 has a higher average monthly personal expenditure (Rs. 5000-10000) compared to Category 1 (Rs. 3000-6000), potentially indicating that they enjoy more material possessions.

**3. Economic Sustainability:**

- Resource Utilization: Category 1's higher consumption patterns (energy, transportation, clothing) may lead to increased resource utilization.

**4. Cultural Sustainability:**

- Cultural Engagement: Category 1's higher average music listening hours (2-3 hours/day) may indicate a greater appreciation for cultural activities.
- Community Involvement: Category 1's increased social work and time spent with friends may contribute to community development and social cohesion.

The analysis reveals a trade-off between sustainability dimensions for individuals with hobbies/soft skills (Category 1) and those without (Category 2). While Category 1 excels in social connections, economic empowerment, and cultural engagement, and has lower environmental impact. In contrast, Category 2 they exhibit higher environmental impacts due to increased energy consumption, transportation usage, and consumerist behaviors and weaker social connections and economic empowerment. To achieve sustainability, a balanced approach is necessary, combining the positive aspects of both categories. This can be achieved by promoting environmentally conscious behaviors, social responsibility, and economic empowerment, while fostering cultural engagement and community involvement.

**5.2 Different Factors Indicating Utility and Sustainability****Table 1.2: showing different factors related to utility and sustainability**

Importance to sustainability	82.4%
Eco-friendly products	85.7%
Sustainability factors	Quality 71.4% Sustainability 61.5% Brand 42.9%
Frequency of outdoor activities	71.4%

Motivation for outdoor activities	Connection with nature 53.2% Stress relief/ relaxation 91.6%
Promoting sustainability	57.1%

### 1. Sustainability Importance and Awareness:

- High importance: 82.4% of respondents consider sustainability important, indicating a growing awareness and concern for environmental issues.
- Eco-friendly products: 85.7% of respondents prioritize eco-friendly products, demonstrating a willingness to make sustainable choices.

### 2. Sustainability Factors in Purchasing Decisions

- **Quality:** 71.4% of respondents consider quality a crucial factor in purchasing decisions, highlighting the importance of product durability and performance.
- **Sustainability:** 61.5% of respondents consider sustainability a key factor, indicating a growing awareness of environmental impacts.
- **Brand:** 42.9% of respondents consider brand reputation when making purchasing decisions, suggesting that companies' sustainability commitments can influence consumer choices.

### 3. Outdoor Activities and Motivations

- **Frequency:** 71.4% of respondents engage in outdoor activities, highlighting the importance of nature connection and physical activity.
- **Motivations:** Connection with nature (53.2%) and stress relief/relaxation (91.6%) are primary motivations for outdoor activities, emphasizing the importance of mental well-being and nature connection.

### 4. Promoting Sustainability:

- Individual actions: 57.1% of respondents believe individual actions can promote sustainability, highlighting the importance of personal responsibility and agency.

In conclusion, the data suggests that respondents prioritize sustainability, eco-friendly products, and quality when making purchasing decisions. They also value connection with nature, stress relief, and relaxation as motivations for outdoor activities. To promote sustainability, individual actions, and personal responsibility are considered essential.

## 5.3 Soft Skills and Satisfaction Level

**Table 1.3: Distribution of satisfaction levels based on soft skills levels**

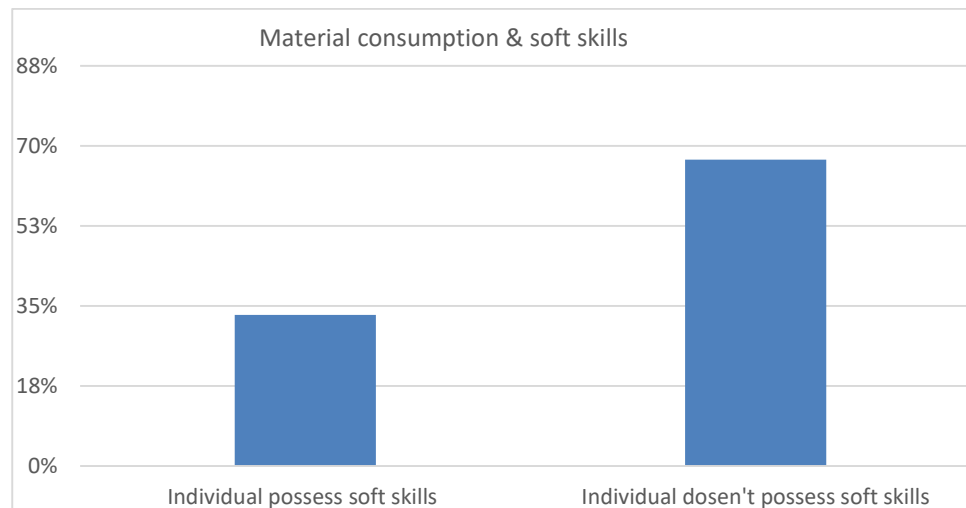
Level of satisfaction	Responses (in percentage)
Low	21%
Medium	32%
High	47%



### 5.3 Soft Skills and Material Consumption

**Table 1.4: Distribution of material consumption based on soft skills levels**

Level of material consumption	Responses (in percentage)
Individuals with soft skills	33%
Individuals without soft skills	67%



From table 1.3 & 1.4 indicates that an increase in soft skills level leads to an increase in personal satisfaction and decrease in material consumption. This suggest that soft skills may be a key to success in personal and professional life.

#### 1. Positive Correlation Between Soft Skills and Satisfaction

There is a significant positive correlation between soft skills level and satisfaction level. As soft skill level increase, satisfaction level also increases.

#### 2. Soft Skills Impact Material Consumption

The data suggests that individuals with higher soft skills level tend to have lower material consumption.

#### 3. High Soft Skills Linked to High Satisfaction

Individuals with high soft skills report the highest satisfaction level, with 47% of respondents falling into this category.

#### 4. low soft skills associated with low satisfaction

Conversely, individuals with low soft skill levels report the lowest satisfaction levels, with only 21% of respondents failing into this category.

### 6. Conclusions

In conclusion, the data highlighted significant differences in lifestyle and consumption pattern between individuals with soft skills/hobbies and those without. Individuals who don't possess any soft skills/ hobbies tends to have higher average monthly personal expenditures, more frequent clothing purchases, and a greater number of clothing items, vehicles and Acs. This indicates a higher environmental impact due to increased consumption and resources utilization. The data also suggests that respondents prioritize sustainability, eco-friendly products, and quality when making purchasing decisions. They also value connection with nature, stress relief, and relaxation as motivations for outdoor activities. To promote sustainability, individual actions, and personal responsibility are considered essential.

Individuals who possess soft skills or hobbies tend to use fewer comforts that provide them with physical relaxation but harm the environment. Those who dedicate even 1-2 hours a day to their passions have a significantly higher satisfaction level. Their per person energy consumption is also lower, as they are reliant on energy-intensive appliances like Acs, coolers, cars etc. Moreover, they have limited time for such indulgences, as they engage themselves in their acquired soft skills or hobbies.

Individuals with soft skills tend to express greater satisfaction and happiness, which according to economic theory, is often linked to increased consumption. To promote holistic development, the government should focus on fostering cultural and sports programs, rather than just investing in physical infrastructure. To encourage participation tax exemptions and subsidies should be offered for these programs.

## 7. Recommendations

### Individual-Level-Recommendations:

1. Adopt sustainable lifestyles: Individuals should strive to reduce their environmental impact by adopting sustainable practices, such as adopting hobbies or learning new soft skills, reducing energy consumption, using public transport, and choosing eco-friendly products.
2. Prioritize soft skills and hobbies: Engaging in soft skills and hobbies can lead to increased satisfaction and happiness, while also reducing reliance on energy-intensive comforts.
3. Make environmentally conscious purchasing decisions: Individuals should prioritize sustainability, eco-friendly products, and quality when making purchasing decisions.

### Government-Level-Recommendations:

1. Invest in cultural and sports programs: Governments should focus on fostering cultural and sports programs to promote holistic development, rather than just investing in physical infrastructure.
2. Offer incentives for sustainable behaviors: Governments can offer tax exemptions, subsidies, and other incentives to encourage individuals and businesses to adopt sustainable practices.
3. Develop and promote sustainable infrastructure: Governments should invest in sustainable infrastructure, such as renewable energy sources, green buildings, and efficient public transport systems.

### Community-Level-Recommendations:

1. Organize community events and programs: Communities can organize events and programs that promote sustainable lifestyles, cultural exchange, and social connections.
2. Create shared spaces for recreation and leisure: Communities can create shared spaces for recreation and leisure, reducing the need for individual ownership of energy-intensive comforts.
3. Develop community-led sustainability initiatives: Communities can develop and implement their own sustainability initiatives, such as community gardens, recycling programs, and energy cooperatives.

## Conflict of Interest

The authors state that there are no conflicts of interest related to this study.

## Sources of Funding

This study does not receive specific grants from fundraising agencies in the public, commercial or non-profit sectors.

## References

- [1] Akla, S., Indradewa, R. (2022 ). The Effect of Soft Skill, Motivation and Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance through Organizational Commitment. *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute-Journal (BIRCI-Journal)*, 5(1), 6070-6083.
- [2] Chell, E., Athayde, R. (2014). Planning for uncertainty: soft skills, hard skills and innovation. Higgins, D., *Reflective Learning in Management, Development and Education* (1<sup>st</sup> Eds, 128), Tylor & Francis Group.
- [3] Colaco, Lawrie Mr. (2024). The Impact of Soft Skills Training on Guest Satisfaction in the Hospitality Industry. *Culminating Experience Projects*. 446. <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/gradprojects/446>
- [4] Emmanuvel, A., Kumar, M. D. P. (2022). AN ANALYSIS ON THE IMPACT OF SOFT SKILL TRAINING PROVIDED TO THE MASTER OF BUSINESSADMINISTRATION COLLEGES IN AND AROUND TIRUCHIRAPPALLIDISTRICT. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, 6(4), 1990-1995.
- [5] Farao, C., Bernuzzi, C., Ronchetti, C. (2023). The Crucial Role of Green Soft Skills and Leadership for Sustainability: A Case Study of an Italian Small and Medium Enterprise Operating in the Food Sector. *Sustainability*, 15(22), 15841. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su152215841>
- [6] Feraco T, Casali N, Carbone E, Meneghetti C, Borella E, Carretti B, Muffato V. (2024). Soft skills and their relationship with life satisfaction and cognitive reserve in adulthood and older age. *Eur J Ageing*, 21(1), 25. doi: 10.1007/s10433-024-00820-2.
- [7] Hussein, M. G. (2024). Exploring the Significance of Soft Skills in Enhancing Employability of Taif University Postgraduates: An Analysis of Relevant Variables. *Sage Open*, 01-14. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440241271941>
- [8] Palumbo, C. (2013). Soft Skills and Job Satisfaction: Two Models in Comparison. *Universal Journal of Psychology*, 1(3): 103-106. DOI: 10.13189/ujp.2013.010303.
- [9] Pons, S., Khalilzadeh, J., Weber, M. R., Smith, R. A. (2024). Cultivating sustainability savvy: the role of soft skills in shaping sustainable practices. *International Hospitality Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IHR-01-2024-0007>

- [10] Singh, A. (2013). Achieving Sustainability Through Internal Communication and Soft Skills. *The IUP Journal of Soft Skills*, 7(1), 21-26.
- [11] Tanković, A. C., Vitezić, V., Kraljić, V. (2023) Employee communication and soft skills influencing tourists' satisfaction. *European Journal of Tourism Research*, 34, 3410. <https://doi.org/10.54055/ejtr.v34i.2967>