

Soft Skills Management to Strengthen the Quality Learning: Analysis of Teachers' perspectives at Secondary Level

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: This research study explores teachers' perspective regarding various factors of soft skills management to strengthen the quality learning. These factors include teachers' communication skills, emotional skills, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, time management, leadership and initiative, resilience and growth mindset, networking and relationship building and the impact of soft skills management on quality learning.

Methodology: Descriptive quantitative research design was employed. A self-structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 380 high school teachers (220 male, 160 female) who were chosen through random sampling. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Findings: The major results showed that there was a strong agreement among teachers that all the measured soft skills were important in the provision of good learning. It is important to note that although no differences were established by gender, academic qualification and teaching experience, the rural teachers and those in the private schools placed a great value on SSM compared to those in the urban and the public schools.

Conclusion: It is concluded that the secondary school teachers in Pakistan are quite aware of importance of soft skills but they need systematic support in order to implement the same. It is recommended teacher training programs should incorporate soft skills management pedagogies.

Keywords: Soft Skills Management, Quality Learning, Teachers' Perspectives.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The modern educational landscape, highlighted by accelerated advancements and global challenges, has made the learning of soft skills management increasingly crucial. A broad spectrum of interpersonal, social, and communication abilities, including analytical, problem-solving, leadership, and communication skills, are included in the notion of "Soft skills" (Dobrovolska et al., 2021). Due to globalization and speedy technological progress, demands on the education system to yield individuals

having strong social and emotional competencies which are remarkable in the market. Thus, the soft skills development on the basis of the school leadership management is becoming the most urgent one (Susanti et al., 2023). In addition to it, teachers' soft skills are of vital importance as such interpersonal competencies have a deep impact on teaching learning process. Teachers having strong communication as well as collaboration abilities can create an effective classroom environment which helps students attain better academic performance and outcomes (Ulmira,2025).

According to Dogan (2021) soft skills include taking initiatives, fairness, critical thinking, frankness to learning, determination, motivation, eloquent, persuasive, attentive to detail prudent and collaboration. As opposed to formal or technical knowledge, soft skills possess wide range of competencies and attributes. Within the field of education, these skills possessed by teachers have a dominant position in teaching.

The implementation of soft skills education in the classroom has not been without its setbacks that have hampered the learning process and school can still be of great importance in this area. The only way of solving this problem is through soft skills embedding. Although there is a great need integrate soft skills instructions in the classrooms (Touloumakos, 2020). The function of soft skills throughout numerous social domains, encompassing the realm of education. Specifically, it is described that how the emotional trend shapes the development of socio sentimental abilities in a education system (Scheerens et al., 2020). It is also demonstrated that the value of soft skill development in a professional setting where individuals must overcome obstacles requiring more than just technical expertise (Rosa et al. 2022). Professionals with behavioral or socioemotional abilities, particularly in communication and interpersonal relationships, are in high demand in today's job market in order to handle circumstances that call for flexibility and rapid decision making.

The teacher's competency is supported for the development of certain soft skills management in teachers (Astriani & Alfahnum, 2020). Training initiatives focus on specific competency components, such as the development of creative learning materials in the classroom (Putri et al., 2024). The effects of specific professional development on the application of empirically supported soft skills management by teachers' techniques was conducted (Simonsen et al., 2020). It is clear that teachers receive little assistance and training in soft skills management, and there is a gap in the field's understanding and application of soft skills management techniques. As a result, school must offer productive and successful professional development opportunities to their staff. In-service teachers training shows that teachers training improves classroom practice and soft skills management. This is because it is recognized that practicing teachers must keep up to date on their knowledge and abilities of soft skills management as they go through their experiences in the classroom (Oguttu, 2023).

According to Kratumnok (2024), teamwork skills are the attributes and proficiencies that enable you to collaborate well with others on tasks, projects, meetings, and other types of interactions. Many additional soft skills, like communication, accountability, honesty, active listening, empathy, collaboration, and awareness, are components of teamwork abilities. Soft skills at secondary education level is a major factor in raising students' learning outcomes. Effective teaching generally improves students' academic performance, skills, and capacities, influencing them for the rest of their lives by fostering an endless intellectual pursuit of learning. The caliber and efficacy of teachers have a significant impact on students' high academic attainment (Ghamrawi et al., 2023). This strategy has gained popularity globally and has improved professional soft skills teaching to strengthen the quality learning at different level.

1.1 Statement of Problem

Despite the recognized importance of soft skills in enhancing educational quality, there is limited understanding of teacher's perceptions regarding their integration into the classroom. This gap hinders effective implementation and may affect student's outcomes. Therefore, investigating teacher's views on soft skills management is essential to identify factors and opportunities for strengthening quality learning in secondary education.

1.2 Research Objective

To explore teachers' perception regarding various factors of soft skills management to strengthen the quality learning.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The distinction between soft skills and hard skills first emerged in the 1960s and 1970s within military contexts. According to (Robles, 2012), these terms were introduced in the "Military Training Design Systems" doctrine, where hard skills referred to technical or machine-related abilities, while soft skills encompassed interpersonal and administrative competencies. Over time, these concepts gained prominence in the business world. Scholars have since emphasized the significance of cultivating soft skills in students to enhance their professional communication and career readiness. As Mitchell (2008) for instance, highlighted the value of incorporating soft skills training into business education to improve graduates' employability and adaptability in the evolving job market. Today, there is widespread recognition that soft skills are essential across all professions, leading to calls for their integration into educational curricula alongside discipline-specific competencies.

Therefore, contemporary education must equip primary teachers with a balanced combination of hard and soft skills, enabling them to foster these competencies in their students. This emphasis is reflected in the Regulations on Accreditation of Study Programs in Higher Education, where sub-criterion explicitly states: "The study program ensures the cultivation of soft skills aligned with its stated objectives" (Bondar & Konovalenko, 2024). Such an approach enhances graduates' readiness for professional success by preparing them for the demands of the modern workplace

Educational leaders that emphasize reflection and the enhancement of the quality of student-centered learning processes view education as a joint effort to produce the best possible outcomes in terms of individual student achievement. The primary basis of assessment and enhancement of learning practices is a reflective approach (Ritonga et al., 2022). It is not only about the assessment but also about the comprehension of the effects of educational activities on the learning experiences of students (Watson & Devereaux, 2022). Educational leaders who use reflection do not only concentrate on the end product but they are aware of the procedures and dynamics in the classroom (Hamzah, 2022). Reflectively, teachers can assess the teaching strategies, student reaction, and modify the teaching strategies. In addition to that, reflection also promotes cooperation among residents to find the best practices and develop collective improvement plans. The understanding of how educational actions affect the learning experiences of students makes leaders want to develop and learn on an ongoing basis (Lambrecht et al., 2022). Therefore, reflection does not just entail evaluation, the destination, but also ongoing enhancement that leads to innovation in the learning process.

2.1 Theoretical Framework of Soft Skills Management

Soft skills management in education is grounded in multiple interdisciplinary theories that explain how teachers' interpersonal, emotional, and cognitive abilities influence teaching effectiveness and student outcomes.

2.1.1 Social Learning Theory and soft skills

Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory suggested that people acquire skills via observing others, imitation, and modeling. With regards to teachers' soft skills, communication, emotional intelligence, and leadership skills are mastered through mentorship and peer observation (Bandura & Walters, 1977; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Professional development courses based on modeling and feedback help in the acquisition of soft skills (Johnson, 2024). The collaborative learning and peer observation of effective class management foster interpersonal skills.

2.1.2 Emotional Intelligence Theory

The theory of emotional intelligence (EI), presented by Mayer et al (2004), discusses on the ability to recognize, comprehend, handle, and control emotions, which is a perspective that proves well into the development of soft skills management. Serrat et al. (2020) claimed that individuals with high EI scores are better equipped to handle social complexities, adapt to rapidly changing work environments, and foster collaborative relationships, which are the main soft skills in the contemporary workplace. Scheerens et al. (2020) demonstrated that these competencies can be enhanced through special training programs that focus on EI, and as a result, improve performance and the soft skills of teachers in the workplace and the effectiveness of leadership.

2.1.3 Transformational Leadership Theory

When we refer to transformational leadership theory, the big picture is that leaders can inspire and motivate their followers to achieve extraordinary results through creation of a common vision, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration and idealized influence (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The current studies connect this entire model with soft skills, in particular with emotional intelligence, communication, and empathy, which, as Korakis and Poulaki (2025) noted, have now become a key to success in contemporary companies. Emotionally intelligent leaders are abler to identify, control, and comprehend their emotions and those of their groups, which further enhances trust and collaboration (Bailey, 2021). This exposes the crucial importance of soft skills in the success of an organization.

2.1.4 Growth Mindset Theory and soft skills

According to Carol Dweck's theory of a growth mindset, individuals who embrace challenges and view effort as a pathway to improvement tend to achieve greater success. Teachers with a growth mindset welcome challenges, work through obstacles, and cultivate their soft skills (Yeager et al., 2022). Recent research indicates that growth mindset interventions are linked to enhanced resilience and adaptability among teachers (Mansfield et al., 2016).

2.1.5 Situational Leadership Theory

Situational Leadership Theory states that the appropriateness of a leadership style depends on the readiness of the followers. Teachers need to adapt their communication, compassion, and mentoring to the levels of the students (Hersey, 2024). Current examples include differentiated instruction and trauma-informed teaching, which are centered on soft skills frameworks for a variety of learners. According to Miao et al. (2018), leaders who use situational leadership tend to have a good emotional intelligence, enhanced communication, and flexibility, which enhance team performance. Cortes (2023) demonstrated that situational leaders who actively refine soft skills, i.e., active listening and empathy, wind up managing inclusive and motivating workplaces.

2.1.6 Self Determination Theory

Within the scope of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), autonomy, competence, and relatedness are core drivers. SDT informs teachers to design classrooms whereby students feel appreciated and the environment is supportive (Ryan & Vansteenkiste, 2023). There is evidence that teaching in a supportive manner promotes student engagement and enhances teacher's satisfaction (Reeve & Cheon, 2024). The theory of self-determination (SDT) claims that human well-being and motivation boil down to three fundamental psychological needs, namely autonomy, competence and relatedness. Satisfying these needs is closely related to the acquisition of soft skills, communication, teamwork, and emotional intelligence, which are essential to success in personal and professional life. Individuals who feel autonomous are more likely to perform proactive behaviors such as effective communication and realistic problem-solving that are core to soft skills (Van den Broeck et al., 2021).

2.1.7 Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory underscores the importance of social interaction for cognitive development. Teachers' interpersonal skills, namely collaboration and scaffolding, assist learners within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Combining all these theories gives a strong basis for the understanding of soft skill management in education. Social learning and Emotional Intelligence (EI) theories account for skill acquisition, while transformational leadership and theories on a growth mindset focus on professional development. This is of great importance to anyone doing research on the formation of soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and emotional intelligence. The actual learning occurs in the context of a collaborative situation when more experienced individuals act as a scaffold to the knowledge of a learner. This notion aligns with what we understand about the development of soft skills, which is not innate but rather a result of culturally specific activities through guided involvement (Qizi, 2020).

2.2 General Principles of Soft Skills Management

Effective soft skills management is essential for teachers to foster a positive learning environment, enhance student engagement, and improve professional collaboration. Below are the key principles that guide the development and application of soft skills in educational settings:

2.2.1 Self-Awareness and Continuous Improvement

Teachers must engage in self-reflection to assess their strengths and areas for growth in communication, emotional intelligence, and leadership. Feedback mechanisms, such as peer reviews and student evaluations, help teachers refine their soft skills (Hattie, 2024). Professional development programs should incorporate self-assessment tools to promote lifelong learning (Zhang et al., 2024).

One of the most important aspects of soft skills management is self-awareness and constant improvement, especially within the professional and organizational setting. Emotional intelligence, communication, leadership, and adaptability are some of the soft skills that are considered more and more crucial to career success and organizational performance (Drigas & Papoutsi, 2021). The first component of emotional intelligence is self-awareness, which helps a person to understand their strengths, weaknesses, and behavioral patterns, which promotes personal and professional development (Goleman, 2020).

2.2.2 Adaptability and Flexibility

Teachers must adjust their communication and leadership styles based on student needs, classroom dynamics, and cultural contexts (Courie-Lemur & de Saint Julien, 2023). Situational leadership ensures that teachers modify their approach for different learners (Aabepuor, 2024). In hybrid or digital learning environments, adaptability includes mastering virtual communication tools (Martinez et al., 2021). Soft skills improvement is an ongoing process that includes repetitive learning, incorporation of feedback, and responsiveness. The idea is consistent with the philosophy of Kaizen, which is focused on small steps in personal and professional growth. In the dynamic workplaces, the professionals have to keep enhancing their soft skills to stay competitive (Lammi, 2024).

Sitzmann and Bauer (2025) opined that employees who self-regulated their learning, such as goal-setting, progress tracking, and feedback seeking, have a higher mastery of soft skills. Moreover, AI-based coaching tools and digital learning platforms have become valuable tools of individual skill building (Dignath & Veenman, 2021).

2.2.3 Empathy and Student-Centered Approach

Student-centered approach changes the focus on teachers-centered instruction to active participation of students, which helps to develop critical soft skills. Thornhill-Miller et al. (2023) noted that student centered learning (SLC) techniques, including project-based learning and peer discussions, promote communication and collaboration. Uya (2025) revealed that SCL not only enhances academic

performance but also develops workplace competencies that are necessary. Active listening and emotional intelligence help teachers understand students' academic and socio-emotional needs (Brackett et al., 2025). A trauma-informed teaching approach ensures that teachers respond sensitively to students' backgrounds (Jennings & Greenberg, 2025).

2.2.4 Effective Communication and Clarity

Communication and clarity are important soft skills in management and they determine the success of an organization, the effectiveness of a leader and the engagement of employees. According to the recent studies, clear communication plays a key role in collaboration, minimizing misunderstandings, and improving decision-making processes (Marbun et al., 2023). According to a study by Lehman et al. (2024), ambiguous communication is one of the factors that lead to conflicts at the workplace and low morale among employees. On the other hand, managers who focus on clarity of their message foster trust and involvement among the team members (Sagrao et al., 2025).

2.2.5 Collaboration and Teamwork

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) encourage knowledge-sharing and collaborative problem-solving (Harris et al., 2024). Interpersonal skills such as conflict resolution and negotiation improve teamwork among staff. Mentorship programs help novice teachers develop soft skills through guided support (Parker et al., 2021). Teamwork and collaboration are vital soft skills in contemporary management, as they help an organization to succeed, innovate, and be satisfied with its employees. The capacity to collaborate and develop working relationships in teams is becoming more appreciated in the modern dynamic working environment.

Meszaros et al., (2025) showed that teamwork can improve problem-solving and decision-making because it takes advantage of the different opinions. The productivity and engagement of employees are also increased in organizations that encourage teamwork since collaborative working environments minimize workplace conflicts and enhance communication. Moreover, collaboration leads to innovation since workers are more willing to express their ideas in a favorable environment (Zhang et al., 2024). Leadership requires soft skills such as collaboration especially, teamwork fosters a culture of trust and mutual respect among the managers, resulting in conflict resolution and job satisfaction (Cao et al., 2023).

2.2.6 Time Management and Organizational Skills

Time management is also becoming one of the most important soft skills that improve efficiency and decrease stress at work (Molek-Winiarska et al., 2024). Good time management entails prioritizing, goal setting, and avoiding procrastination, which enhances performance (Patel, 2025). According to a study conducted by Yener et al. (2021), workers who demonstrated good time management skills were more satisfied with their jobs and had a lower burnout rate, which implies that time management is directly related to emotional intelligence, which is one of the most important elements of soft skills. Moreover, digital technologies like time-tracking applications and project management systems have been found to complement these abilities, further supporting their significance in contemporary workplaces (Garcia-Martinez, 2020).

2.2.7 Resilience and Stress Management

Soft skills management is an important aspect of life, especially in a dynamic and high-stress working environment, and resilience and stress management are important elements of the same. Emotional intelligence, adaptability, and communication are examples of soft skills that are important in improving the capacity of an individual to deal with stress and overcome adversity (Beltman, 2021). The recent studies also show the interdependence of these constructs, the role of resilience and stress management in the success of a person and his/her career (Putra & Sari, 2025).

Resilience has become an important soft skill that is becoming more and more important to help people to overcome difficulties. Luthans et al. (2015) defined resilience as a psychological process that enables

people to recover after adversity, change, and perform well in a stressful situation. Research indicates that resilience is strongly associated with other soft skills, including emotional control and problem-solving (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013). Highly resilient employees are more productive and satisfied with their jobs because they can better cope with stressful factors in the workplace (Shin et al., 2012). Moreover, it has been demonstrated that resilience training programs positively affect the overall emotional intelligence, thus supporting its contribution to the acquisition of soft skills.

2.2.8 Ethical and Professional Conduct

Soft skills (communication, emotional intelligence, adaptability, conflict resolution, etc.) are becoming more and more important to the professional success. According to a study by Habecker (2024), employers are more focused on soft skills as well as technical skills, especially when it comes to leadership positions. Goleman (2020) supported the role of emotional intelligence in ethical decision-making, proving that leaders with high EI create more inclusive and ethical work environments. Furthermore, Coates (2020) concluded that soft skills such as active listening and empathy increase teamwork, minimizing conflicts in the workplace and boosting productivity.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive quantitative research design was employed. A quantitative survey method was used to collect data from secondary level teachers in District Dera Ghazi Khan. After reviewing the related literature in detail, a survey questionnaire is developed for exploration the perceptions of teachers on “Soft skills management to strengthen the quality learning at Secondary Level”. The developed questionnaire was validated by a panel of experts in USP Multan and piloted to determine the reliability. Cranach’s Alpha value was 0.853 which shows high reliability of the tool. The population of this research study comprises teachers serving in public and private schools within the district of Dera Ghazi Khan. The sample of the study comprised of 380 Secondary school teachers (220 males and 160 female). The results were derived using both inferential and descriptive statistics.

4. FINDINGS: ANALYSES OF TEACHERS’ RESPONSES

4.1 Descriptive Analyses

4.1.1 SSM Factor 1: Teachers’ communication skills

All statements are perceived in a very positive way, pointing out a high level of agreeableness that communication skills of teachers play a vital role in understanding, confidence, and development of students. The most rated skill (Mean=4.00) is "Effective listening increases student understanding" and the lowest mean is meant by the skill of Encouraging an attitude of inquiry (3.77), though still high rating. The low standard deviations (S.D.) especially of assessing the student’s growth (S.D.=0.520) indicate that the responses of the respondents were centrally focused and there was a high degree of consensus and minimum disagreement on the significance of these communicative practices.

4.1.2 SSM Factor 2: Teachers’ emotional skills

It is almost unanimously agreed that emotional skills of teachers (self-awareness, empathy, and motivation) are of paramount importance to the creation of a supportive classroom atmosphere and to the attainment of the academic objectives. The extremely low standard deviations, especially empathy (S.D.=0.373) and appreciation (S.D.=0.390) show that the response of the respondents was very much concentrated around the very positive means indicating extremely low dispersion and high level of homogeneity in strong endorsement of the emotional competencies by respondents.

4.1.3 SSM Factor 3: Teachers’ Interpersonal skills and Collaboration

The consensus that interpersonal and collaborative skills of teachers are core in helping to build trust in students, conflict resolution and cooperation in learning is very high. The greatest consensus is in

evaluating collaborative skills (Mean=4.01) then there is the utilization of cooperative learning approaches closely (Mean=3.98). The standard deviations which were less than 0.75 and much lower at 0.447 show that the responses were more or less concentrated around these high means indicating a strong agreement among the respondents with a minimal deviation in their positive perceptions.

4.1.4 SSM Factor 4: Teachers' critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

The fact that the percentages of agreement (A% and SA%) and the mean scores always approach to 4.0 suggest that teachers are highly convinced that analytical skills, active learning, creativity and adaptability are components that student development needs. Interestingly, the highest agreement (94.2) and the high mean (4.01) are related to the active learning with the help of independent problem-solving and the role of creativity in identification of new solutions, which is a student-centered approach.

4.1.5 SSM Factor 5: Teachers' leadership and initiative

It is concurring that leadership motivates students to be responsible (Statement 2, 89.2% A, Mean, 3.87) and that mentorship enhances the learning of students among themselves. The low values of the Standard deviation (0.374 and 0.397) indicate that the answers of the respondents were closely clustered around the mean and there was minimal disagreement or deviation in the opinions.

4.1.6 SSM Factor 6: Teachers' resilience and growth mindset

The positive association between emotional support and academic resilience has the largest consensus (Mean 3.93). The belief that growth mindset has a positive influence on teacher well-being (Mean 3.91) and positive attitude supports professional development (Mean 3.90) is very strong. The statement on receiving feedback has a slightly lower mean (3.77) and greater standard deviation, and still, it can be estimated that it is the most diverse area, although the agreement still prevails. The standard deviations (less than 0.63) used are low reflecting that all of these positive perceptions are present with a very slight variation among the respondents.

4.1.7 SSM Factor 7: Teachers' networking and relationship building

The most agreeable is the social skills that assist students in developing relationships and networking will improve the process of learning (both with a Mean of 3.93). The mean scores of all statements are high (3.88 to 3.93), which proves the high level of a consistent belief in the significance of community and cooperation. These positive views are quite widespread, and there is no significant disagreement among the respondents as the standard deviations are moderately low (mostly, they fall between 0.50 and 0.57).

4.2 Inferential Statistical Analysis of Teachers' Responses

An inferential statistical analysis of the data was conducted to examine variations in teachers' opinions across different demographic factors, including school location, gender, designation, age group, academic qualification and professional qualification.

Table 1: Gender, location and sector-based difference of teachers' perceptions of soft skills management

| Variable | Group | N | Mean | SD | Df | Mean Df | t-value | p-value |
|-----------------|--------------|----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| SSM | Male | 220 | 3.90 | .184 | 378 | 0.007 | .395 | .693 |
| | Female | 160 | 3.89 | .193 | | | | |
| SSM | Urban | 218 | 3.88 | .205 | 378 | -.041 | -2.095 | .037 |
| | Rural | 162 | 3.92 | .160 | | | | |
| SSM | Public | 243 | 3.88 | .192 | 378 | -.050 | -2.511 | .012 |
| | Private | 137 | 3.93 | .177 | | | | |

The findings show that, although there is no statistically significant difference between the male and female teachers (p-value = 0.693), the differences are significant depending on the location and sector. In particular, the perception of soft skills management among teachers in rural schools is considerably

higher than among teachers in urban ones (p -value = 0.037), and it is considerably higher among teachers in the private sector than in the public one (p -value = 0.012).

Table 2: *Subject-based difference of teachers' perception of soft skills management*

| Variable | | Sum of square | DF | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------|----------------|---------------|-----|-------------|------|------|
| SSM | Between groups | .025 | 2 | .013 | .355 | .701 |
| SSM | Within groups | 13.446 | 377 | .036 | | |
| | Total | 13.472 | 379 | | | |

The outcome shows that the mean score of perception among the various subject-based groups does not differ significantly across groups. The low F-value of 0.355 is yet again a confirmation that the difference in the scores between the groups is not high as compared to the difference within the groups.

Table 3: *Academic qualification-based difference of teachers' perception of soft skills management*

| Variable | | Sum of square | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------|----------------|---------------|-----|-------------|------|------|
| SSM | Between groups | .051 | 3 | .017 | .478 | .698 |
| SSM | Within groups | 13.420 | 377 | .036 | | |
| | Total | 13.472 | 379 | | | |

The outcome shows that the difference between the mean scores of perceptions between the various groups of academic qualifications is not statistically significant. The fact that the F-value of 0.478 is very low also supports the fact that the difference between the scores in the qualification groups is small and does not have any significance.

Table 4: *Professional qualification-based difference of teachers' perception of soft skills management*

| Variable | | Sum of square | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------|----------------|---------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| SSMS | Between groups | .107 | 3 | .036 | 1.000 | .393 |
| SSMS | Within groups | 13.365 | 376 | .036 | | |
| | Total | 13.472 | 379 | | | |

The outcome suggests the absence of statistically significant difference as the p -value is large (it is 0.393), and this value exceeds the standard alpha of 0.05. The F value of 1.000 also shows that the difference between the groups is not significantly high as compared to the difference within groups.

Table 5: *Teaching experience-based difference of teachers' perception of soft skills management*

| Variable | | Sum of square | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------|----------------|---------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| SSM | Between groups | .199 | 5 | .040 | 1.124 | .347 |
| SSM | Within groups | 13.272 | 374 | .035 | | |
| | Total | 13.472 | 379 | | | |

The analysis reveals no statistically significant differences across the various experience groups, as the p -value of 0.347 is substantially higher than the standard significance level of 0.05.

5. DISCUSSION

The study of the perceptions of teachers regarding soft skills management (SSM) and its impact on the quality of learning in the secondary schools of Pakistan has yielded some interesting results. The teachers were found to value most the communication and emotional skills. This finding correlates to Smith (2025), who claims that the role of teachers who may serve as emotional coaches is one of the most significant contributors to the academic resilience and self-awareness of students due to the establishment of a psychologically safe classroom. The teachers acknowledged the role of the interpersonal and collaborative skills as well as cooperation learning strategies which are also supported by the study of Sortwell et al. (2024) and Tureck and Tierean (2021). Likewise, educators promoted student independence in critical thinking and problem-solving, and it was a wider educational trend where rote learning is being replaced by inquiry-based learning, producing agile and innovative learners (Khan & Ahmad, 2025). Teachers thought they were well organized, effective time managers and effective delegators. Those teachers who are able to demonstrate these skills can create properly organized classrooms where students can become self-directed learners (Abrams et al., 2021). The research examined the key connection between the resilience of teachers, the growth mindset, and student achievement. These findings are in accordance with Aycock (2025) who opined that students' success is dependent on the positive attitude and resilience of teachers. Teachers were also fond of professional networks and were of the view that social skills enhanced peer and mentor relationships. Overall, the findings point out that the role of teachers is extremely crucial for inculcating students' soft skills. Teachers' perceptions, aptitudes and attitudes regarding soft skills define the degrees as to which students learn, develop and practice. Teachers' sensitivity and readiness to soft skills are paramount factors for their effective application in the classroom. These findings are supported by Ugolo and Oribhabor (2025).

6. CONCLUSION

The management of soft skills in educational institutions has recently received an increasing amount of scholarly attention, especially at the secondary level, where teachers have a central role in the comprehensive growth of their students. The competence of communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and emotional intelligence is recognized as essential in academic performance and future employment. In Pakistan, the inclusion of soft skills management into the education system is still in its infancy, and the studies highlight the necessity of teacher preparation and policy change to facilitate the improvement of learning outcomes. The attitudes of teachers towards soft skills management are paramount because they directly influence the classroom practice and the results of students. Although teachers do recognize the significance of communication, cooperation and emotional intelligence, skills that align with the global educational agenda, the rigid academic culture in Pakistan is yet to translate that awareness into daily practice.

6.1 Recommendations

1. Pre-service and in-service programs should include modules on communication, emotional intelligence, and collaborative pedagogies.
2. Smaller classes facilitate interactive learning, enabling personalized feedback and skill development.
3. Include soft skills management integration in national curricula with clear guidelines for implementation.

6.2 Suggestions for Future Research

1. Investigate the impact of parental attitudes on SSM adoption in rural vs. urban schools.
2. Explore the role of technology (e.g., AI-driven tools) in enhancing soft skills training.
3. Conduct longitudinal studies on SSM's correlation with student employability.

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