



A STUDY ON CHALLENGES IN ENGAGING STUDENTS IN SOFT SKILLS TRAINING SESSIONS

Mr. Dhananjay A. Yerande

Assistant Professor, Department of Teaching, Learning and Development

Pune Institute of Aviation Technology

(Approved by Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India; Affiliated to Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune, India)

Abstract: Soft skills training has become an essential component in improving students' employability and workplace readiness. Despite its importance, trainers often face difficulties in maintaining active participation and engagement during such sessions. This study focuses on identifying the key challenges that affect student engagement in soft skills training. The research is based on practical classroom observations and feedback from students. The findings reveal that factors such as low interest, limited attention span, and preference for practical learning methods significantly impact engagement levels. The study suggests that interactive and learner-centered approaches can enhance participation and effectiveness.

Index Terms - Soft Skills Training, Student Engagement, Employability Skills, Interactive Learning, Communication Skills, Activity-Based Learning, Higher Education, Student Participation

I. INTRODUCTION

In the modern professional environment, soft skills such as communication, teamwork, adaptability, and confidence play a vital role in career growth. Many educational and skill development institutions have included soft skills training as a mandatory part of their curriculum. However, engaging students in such sessions remains a major challenge for trainers.

Unlike technical subjects, soft skills are often perceived as less important by students. As a result, their level of interest and involvement is comparatively low. Based on my experience as a trainer, it has been observed that students tend to lose attention quickly in traditional lecture-based sessions but show better participation in interactive activities.

II. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

- To identify the major challenges in engaging students during soft skills training
- To understand student behavior and learning preferences
- To examine reasons for low participation in sessions
- To recommend practical strategies to improve engagement

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research follows a descriptive approach. Data was collected through:

- Direct classroom observation during training sessions
- Informal feedback collected from 20–30 students

The study focuses on students participating in regular academic college level session, external related programs and seminars. Observations were made based on student reactions, participation levels, and interaction during sessions.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that students are more actively engaged when sessions include interactive elements such as group discussions, role plays, and real-life examples. It was also observed that students respond positively when trainers use simple language or a bilingual approach (English along with Hindi/Marathi).

Additionally, long theoretical sessions reduce student attention, while short and activity-based sessions improve participation. Students showed increased interest when the training content was linked to real-life situations and career opportunities.

4.1 CHALLENGES IN STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

The study identified several common challenges affecting student engagement:

- Lack of interest in non-technical subjects
- Short attention span (typically 15–20 minutes)
- Distractions caused by mobile phone usage
- Preference for hands-on or practical learning
- Difficulty in understanding English language
- Low confidence in communication activities
- Influence of peer group behavior
- Limited effectiveness of lecture-based teaching methods

4.2 Suggestions and Recommendations

Following are the findings, few strategies are recommended:

- Adopt activity-based and experiential learning methods
- Use real-life case studies and practical examples
- Incorporate audio-visual tools such as videos and presentations
- Keep sessions short, interactive, and engaging
- Use a mix of languages for better understanding
- Encourage participation through discussions and group work
- Provide motivation by connecting topics with career growth
- Introduce quizzes, games, and rewards to maintain interest

V. CONCLUSION

Engagement level plays an important role in determining the effectiveness of soft skills training.

It is found out in the research that traditional teaching strategies fail in terms of engaging trainees. Through the use of interactive and practice-based training techniques, it is possible to boost engagement levels substantially. Higher engagement in soft skills training will lead to better employability in the future for students.

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