# THE INFLUENCE OF SOFT SKILLS ON WORK READINESS STUDENTS OF THE FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS STATE UNIVERSITY OF GORONTALO

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## Abstract

This study aims to determine the effect of soft skills on the work readiness of students at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Gorontalo State University. This study uses a quantitative approach. The population in this study was students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Gorontalo State University, intakes of 2021 to 2023, with the sample determined using the Slovin formula. The research data used were primary data obtained through distributing questionnaires to 100 respondents using a purposive sampling technique. The data analysis technique used was simple linear analysis with the aid of Statistical Program for Social Science (SPSS 25). The results of this study indicate that soft skills have a positive and significant effect on work readiness. This means that the greater the mastery of students' soft skills, the greater their work readiness in facing the world of work.
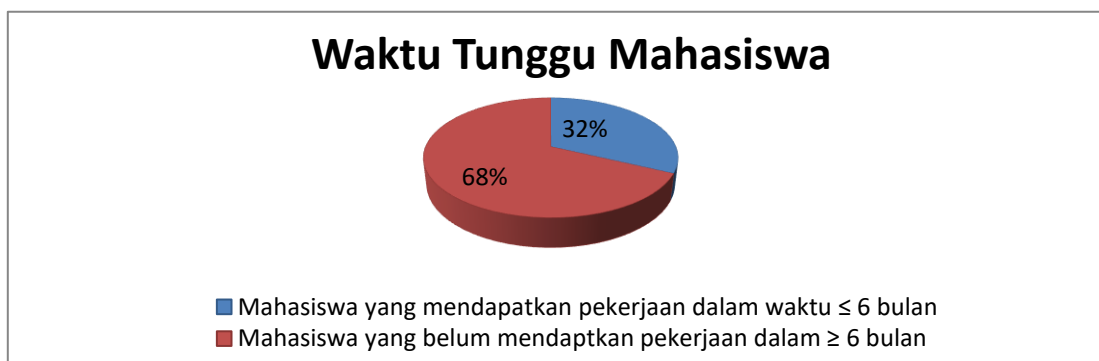
**Keywords:** Soft Skills, Work Readiness, Students

## INTRODUCTION

In the growing era of globalization, economic competition is becoming increasingly tight and requires rapid adaptation of various industrial sectors. Companies and organizations are faced with challenges to increase competitiveness and achieve their strategic goals. In this context, human resources (HR) play a crucial role as the main driver of progress. Bawazir & Suhana (2023), HR is the key that determines the company's development, and the company's financial performance is often a benchmark for HR management results (Setiarini et al., 2022). However, more than just having high-quality human resources, today's companies need workers who are ready to work (work-ready), namely individuals who not only have knowledge and technical skills, but also adaptability, collaboration, and high motivation, have contributed $effectively since the first day. In the midst of the need for human resources who are ready to work, Indonesia is still facing challenges related to workforce productivity. The dominance of the informal sector and low productivity have the potential to hamper the rate of growth of the Indonesian economy. This condition indicates that there is a fundamental problem in the quality of the workforce available, including the high level of preparedness and the high level of management to support the business needs of the industry.

Job readiness is a crucial issue in higher education, including at Gorontalo State University (UGN). The Faculty of Economics and Business of Gorontalo State University continues to strive to improve students' skills and competencies so they can compete in the job market. However, based on Tracer Study data, it shows that the transition from education to work is still a challenge for graduates of Gorontalo State University in general.



**Waktu Tunggu Mahasiswa**

32%

68%

■ Mahasiswa yang mendapatkan pekerjaan dalam waktu ≤ 6 bulan
■ Mahasiswa yang belum mendaptkan pekerjaan dalam ≥ 6 bulan

*Source: Student Career Development (PKM) U$NG 2025*

Based on the data from the tracer study above, it indicates that there are challenges in the work readiness of the Gorontalo Community of the Republic of

**The Influence of Soft Skills on Work …**

Indonesia as a whole, which are likely also experienced by the Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB). The high number of students who have to work and the long time students wait to enter the world of work is caused by a lack of skills, knowledge, understanding, and personality attributes needed to enter the world of work. This indicates that there is a gap in work readiness that is not yet optimal among students, which needs to be reviewed again because there are various factors that cause students to have to wait and not immediately get a job.

Work readiness is influenced by various factors, including soft skills according to Siswati,(2019), Soft skills are important to be owned and developed by students as future preparations in today's digital era, considering the competition that really starts when you leave college. (Yulianti & Khafid, 2015) The higher the soft skill capabilities possessed by an individual, the higher the level of work readiness will be, and vice versa, the lower the soft skill capabilities possessed, the lower the work readiness will be. Therefore, soft skill capabilities need to be paid attention to so that the level of work readiness possessed is better.

This research is based on previous research that has been carried out by Khoiroh & Prajanti,(2019),and Lie$ & Darmase$tiawan,(2018)  which states that soft skills variables have a positive and significant impact on work readiness. However, this is different from other research.(Ratuela et al., 2022)which states that soft skills have a positive but not significant influence on students' work readiness.

Based on this background, the research problem is formulated as follows: Do soft skills influence the work readiness of students at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Gorontalo State University? The purpose of this research is to determine the influence of soft skills on the work readiness of students at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Gorontalo State University.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Soft Skill

(Deswarta et al., 2023) Soft skills are defined as $capabilities that are needed by any employee, such as communication and so on. This includes the ability to communicate effectively, work together in a team, time management, solve problems, and the ability to adapt to the work environment. Soft skills are really important in building $n $n workability of a $person so that they are more confident in carrying out their work and adapting to their work environment(Rahmadani & Mardalis, 2022)

Soft skills are the skills of a person in socializing with other people or developing himself in carrying out work, such as being polite, adaptive, patient, respectful, responsible, communicative, working as a team, skillful entrepreneur, and has a leadership spirit (Fauzan, 2020). Another meaning is nu$ru$t(De$vita Pu$tri, 2024), soft skills are part of the character of a person who is su$se$s in life, including the skill of establishing relationships with the surrounding environment or friends or rapport as internal skills, as well as abilities. Individuals are able to manage themselves, or what is often called intrapersonal skills, so they can achieve maximum labor productivity.

## Job Readiness

Job readiness is a combination of an individual's abilities, abilities and readiness that are in line with the potential he or she has and also supports the ability of society in various types of work, which can be applied practically (Lie & Darmasetiawan, 2018) (Ratuela et al., 2022). Expressing work readiness is the condition of an individual who is ready to give a response and answer in a way that determines the response given.

According to (Angraini et al., 2021), Work readiness is also defined as an individual's ability to be able to go straight to work without needing time-consuming self-adaptation periods in the context of creating a product or adding value to resources with maximum results in accordance with targets that have been set. As for (Setiarini et al., 2022) that work readiness is the ability of a student to be able to enter a new company without spending a long time adapting to the work environment, which is supported by physical, mental maturity, and learning experience. in line with the purpose of the world of work.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed quantitative methods. The population comprised students from the Faculty of Economics and Business, Gorontalo State University, from 2021 to 2023. The sample was determined using the Slovin formula. The data used were numerical data obtained through research instruments. Statistical analysis with the aim of testing predetermined hypotheses. The analysis methods used were validity test, reliability test, normality test, simple linear regression analysis, partial test (t-test), and determination test (R2).

*The Influence of Soft Skills on Work …*

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Validity Test

To calculate the validity test, the researcher used a sample of 100 respondents and set the significance coefficient at 5%. Based on this, the r value of the table can be concluded to be 0.1966 (df = n-2 = 98).

**Table 1.**
**Validity Test Results**

| Variables | Statement | Information |
|---|---|---|
| Soft Skills (X1) | All statements answered by respondents showed values greater than the r table of 0.1966 and exceeded the validity standard of 0.30. | VALID |
| Work Readiness (Y) | | |

*Source: Primary data processed by SPSS 25.2025.*

Based on the results of testing using SPSS, the validity of the soft skills and work readiness variables showed that all respondents' statements had values above 0.30. Therefore, the researcher concluded that the statements in the questionnaire were valid.

### Reliability Test

Reliability testing is performed to determine the Cronbach's Alpha value. A statement is considered reliable if each variable has a Cronbach's Alpha value exceeding 0.600. Therefore, it can be concluded that the items associated with each variable are reliable.

**Table 2.**
**Reliability Test Results**

| Variables | Alpha Value | Reference Number | Status |
|---|---|---|---|
| Soft Skill | 0.878 | 0.600 | Reliable |
| Job Readiness | 0.905 | | |

*Source: Primary data processed by SPSS 25, 2025*

Based on the results of testing using SPSS, the reliability of the soft skills and work readiness variables showed that all respondents' statements had a value > 0.600. Thus, all items in the questionnaire were declared reliable.

### Data Normality Test

The normality test aims to test whether the regression model has a normal distribution by looking at the results based on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. The

**Manhia, etc**

basis for decision making is if the significant value or probability value is > 0.05 or 5% then it is considered to be normally distributed; conversely, if the significant value is < 0.05 or 5% then the data is not normally distributed.

**Table 3.**
**Normality Test Results**
**One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test**

|  |  | Unstandardized Residual |
|---|---|---|
| N |  | 100 |
| Normal Parametersa,b | Mean | .0000000 |
|  | Standard Deviation | 5.38546810 |
| Most Extreme Differences | Absolute | .065 |
|  | Positive | .043 |
|  | Negative | -.065 |
| Test Statistics |  | .065 |
| Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) |  | .200c,d |

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.
d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.
*Source: Primary data processed by SPSS 25, 2025*

The results of the analysis above show a significance value of 0.200. Compared to the predetermined alpha value of 0.05, it can be concluded that the data distribution in this study is normally distributed.

**Simple Linear Analysis**

**Table 4.**
**Simple Linear Regression Test Results**

**Coefficientsa**

| Model |  | Unstandardized Coefficients B | Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error | Standardized Coefficients Beta | t | Sig |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | (Constant) | 9,741 | 5.124 |  | 1,901 | .06 |
|  | Soft skills | .668 | .062 | .739 | 10,846 | .00 |

a. Dependent Variable: Work Readiness
*Source: Primary data processed by SPSS 25, 2025*

**The Influence of Soft Skills on Work …**

Based on the table above, the simple linear regression equation can be seen as follows:

**Y = 9.741 + 0.668 X**

1.  The constant value shows a value of 9.741, meaning that if there is no change in the independent variable (the value of X is 0), then the value of the dependent variable (Y) is 9.741.
2.  The regression coefficient value of the soft skill variable (X) is 0.668 with a positive value. If the soft skill value increases by 1, then work readiness will increase.

**Coefficient of Determination Test (R2)**

The coefficient of determination aims to determine the extent to which the independent variables are able to explain the dependent variable. This coefficient of determination test is conducted to measure the model's ability to explain how much the independent variables simultaneously influence the dependent variable, which can be indicated by the R-Squared value. The following are the results of the coefficient of determination test:

**Table 5.**

**Results of the Determination Coefficient Test (R2 Test)**

**Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Standard Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .739a | .546 | .541 | 4,446 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Softskill

*Source: Primary data processed by SPSS 25,2025*

Based on the table above, the R2 value in this study is 0.546. This indicates that soft skills (X) have a 54.6% influence on work readiness (Y). The remaining 44.3% is influenced by variables other than those used in this study.

**Partial Test (t-Test)**

The t-test is used to show the extent to which an individual independent variable influences the dependent variable. The t-test can be seen through its significance level, where a significance level of <0.05 indicates a significant influence between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

**Manhia, etc**

**Table 6**
**Partial Test Results (t-Test)**

**Coefficientsa**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | t | Sig. |
| 1 | (Constant) | 9,741 | 5.124 | | 1,901 | .060 |
| | Soft skills | .668 | .062 | .739 | 10,846 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Work Readiness

*Source: Primary data processed by SPSS 25,2025*

Based on the analysis results, the calculated t-value for the soft skills variable is 10.846, which is significantly greater than the t-table value of 1.660. In addition, the significance value is 0.000, which is lower than the 5% significance level. Therefore, it can be concluded that soft skills have a positive and significant influence on the work readiness of students at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Gorontalo State University.

**The Influence of Soft Skills on the Job Readiness of Students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Gorontalo State University**

The results of this study indicate that soft skills have a positive and significant influence on the work readiness of students at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Gorontalo State University. Soft skills, which include communication, cooperation, responsibility, honesty, and adaptation, play a significant role in shaping students' work readiness. Field data indicates that students at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Gorontalo State University, generally possess adequate soft skills across all measured indicators.

This finding is in line with the supporting theory put forward by (Mahasneh & Thabet, 2015) Soft skills are defined as skills, abilities, and traits related to personality and behavioral attitudes rather than formal or technical knowledge. Soft skills are a person's ability to socialize with others or develop themselves in carrying out work, including being polite, adaptive, patient, ethical, responsible, communicative, honest, teamwork, entrepreneurial skills, and leadership (Fauzan, 2020). Soft skills are crucial for building a person's employability, allowing them to become more confident in their work and adapt to their work environment (Rahmadani & Mardalis, 2022).

This is reinforced by research conducted by(Maulidiyah & Ubaidillah, 2024), which states that there is a positive and significant influence between soft skills and students' work readiness. This is also in line with research (Deswarta et al., 2024), which proves that soft skills have a positive and significant influence

on the work readiness of students at the Islamic University of Riau, and (Lie & Darmasetiawan, 2018), which states that soft skill variables have a positive and significant impact on work readiness.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the data processing and discussion above, it can be concluded that soft skills have a positive and significant influence on the work readiness of students at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Gorontalo State University. This means that skills such as communication, cooperation, responsibility, honesty, and adaptability are crucial for improving students' readiness to enter the workforce. The better students master soft skills, the better prepared they will be to face the challenges and demands of the future workforce.

## SUGGESTION

The influence of soft skills needs to be strengthened through more intensive integration into the curriculum and learning activities so that students can effectively improve their communication, cooperation, responsibility, honesty, and adaptability. Furthermore, future research is recommended to explore other factors influencing work readiness and use more diverse methodological approaches to gain a deeper understanding.

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The Influence of Soft Skills on Work …

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**Manhia, etc**