CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The discussions of soft skills ability amongst fresh graduates have been aplenty. Reports in the newspapers frequently highlighted the dissatisfaction of many employers with their new recruits' ability to function effectively on the whole. The level of concern has prompted the education ministry to look into how the education of soft skills can be incorporated into the curriculum of students in both public and private institutions of higher learning in the hope that these students will be better equipped when they enter the job market.

Many studies done described factors affecting success in school indicating increased student participation, student achievement and successful student outcomes but the research on how academic success in school can be transferred into effective functioning in the working world is very limited. This research attempts to find if certain factors at present can shape the development of soft skills of these students in the future.

4.2 Demographic

To conduct this study, responses from students and their respective supervisors were matched to determine the skill level of the students and what is actually observed by their supervisors. A total of 366 survey questionnaires for the

student portion were e-mailed to students and 112 survey questionnaires for the supervisor portion were hand delivered to the supervisors.

The data collection took approximately one month. 189 survey questionnaires of the student portion were returned and 72 supervisors responded with their sets of questionnaires. The overall response rate for students was 51.64% and 64.29% for supervisors. Of the 189 student questionnaire returned, only 169 could be used as the remaining 20 questionnaires could not be paired to their supervisors. The reason as explained earlier was some of the supervisors had already resigned or were away on maternity leave.

The data collected was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences software or commonly referred to as SPSS version 17. The demographics for the respondents are as listed in the table below.

Table 4.1

Profile of respondents

Background Information	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Total number of supervisors	72	100
Total number of students	169	100
Supervisor's experience of supervising students		
At least 1 year	21	12.4
Between 1 – 2 years	19	11.2
Between 2 – 3 years	15	8.9
Between 3 – 4 years	3	1.8
Between 4 – 5 years	9	5.3
Above 5 years	5	3.0
Total	72	100

Table 4.1 continued

Background Information	*Frequency*	*Percentage (%)*
Total students supervised by each supervisor		
1 student	9	5.3
2 – 3 student	16	9.5
4 – 5 students	18	10.7
6 – 7 students	7	4.1
8 – 9 students	5	3.0
10 students and above	17	10.1
Total	72	100
Student's nationality		
Malaysian	166	98.2
International	3	1.8
Total		
Student's age		
17 – 19 years old	86	50.9
20 – 22 years old	79	46.7
23 – 25 years old	3	1.8
26 – 28 years old	0	0
29 – 30 years old	1	0.6
Above 30 years old	0	0
Total	172	100
Student's field of study		
Medical Sciences	1	0.6
Pharmaceutical Sciences	7	4.1
Applied Sciences	47	27.8
Management & Information Technology	51	30.2
Music, Social Sciences & Design	27	16.0
Engineering & Architecture	28	16.6
A-Levels	8	4.7
Total	169	100
Year of study		
1st year student	72	42.6
2nd year student	43	25.4
3rd year student	14	8.3
Final year student	27	16.0
Foundation student	11	6.5
Masters student	2	1.2
Total	169	100
Semester of study		
1st semester student	76	45
2nd semester student	58	34.3
3rd semester student	35	20.7
Total	169	100

Table 4.1 continued

Background Information	*Frequency*	*Percentage (%)*
Reasons for enrolling in course		
I am interested in this course	142	84.0
My parent(s) asked me to take this course	7	4.1
My friend(s) is(are) taking this course	1	0.6
I don't know what other courses to take	8	4.7
Other reasons	11	6.5
Total	169	100
Student's gender		
Male	52	30.8
Female	117	69.2
Total	169	100
Race		
Malay	0	0
Chinese	155	91.7
Indian	9	5.3
Others	5	3.0
Total	169	100

Malaysian students made up the majority of the respondents who returned the questionnaire. A total of 98.2% or 166 were Malaysian whereas only 1.8% of 3 students are international students. This low response rate amongst the international students could be attributed to the lack of records or not updated records. Their email addresses were not listed in the system and their phone numbers have changed. International students usually used pre-paid numbers and when they can change their hand phone numbers, they may not have updated the university of the change.

Seventeen to nineteen year olds made up the majority of the respondents. 50.9% of student respondents are from this age category as most of the students are fresh from high school either Form 5 or Upper 6 coming in university to take either the Foundation level or start Year One of the degree. The high response rate among the freshmen could be attributed to the fact that they are new to the institution and are more likely to listen to and follow instructions.

Female students made up the majority of the respondents which was 69.2% as compared to their male counterpart of 30.8%. The high female response rate was because the majority of the students at this institution are females. This is consistent with the overall enrolment of the university where more than 60% of the total student population are females.

Of the Malaysian students who responded, 91.7% are Chinese, followed by Indian students of 5.3% while others such as Punjabi and Eurasians made up 3% of the total respondents. An interesting finding is that there are no Malay students who responded to this survey. This is probably due to the majority of the enrolment of this private institution is made up of Chinese students. Most of the Chinese families either send their children to private institutions of higher education in Malaysia or overseas. This is reflected in the total enrolment of the institution. The Malay students who are studying at UCSI were mainly sponsored by various bodies such as MARA and JPA.

4.3 Factor Analysis

According to Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson and Tatham (2006), factor analysis is a generic name given to a class of multivariate statistical methods whose primary purpose is data reduction and summarization. Cooper and Schindler (2006) said that factor analyses are "specific computational techniques" used to reduce data with many variables that may belong together or that may have overlapping measurement characteristics to a more manageable number. It then attempts to explain the variables in terms of their common underlying factors. When summarizing the data, factor analysis derives underlying dimensions that describes the data in a much smaller number of items then the original individual variables. Data reduction can be

achieved by calculating scores for each underlying dimension and substituting them for the original variables.

4.3.1 Factor analysis for Independent variables

First factor analysis was done on the independent variables. The questionnaires sent to students were supposed to measure the constructs of personality type, peer relationship, emotional intelligence and school factors. There were a total of 123 questions. The first round of factor analysis was done. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin's (KMO) had a measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) score of 0.680, which according to Hair et al. (2006) the goodness of measures of between 0.6 to 0.7 was mediocre. MSA is a measure calculated both for the entire correlation matrix and each individual variable evaluating the appropriateness of applying factor analysis. Latent Root Criterion using Eigenvalues ≥ 1 was used to determine the number of factors to be extracted. According to Hair et al., (2006) for the sample size of between 150 – 200, the factor loading of 0.45 and above was considered acceptable. Varimax rotation was applied to improve the interpretation of dimensions of the construct. The higher the factor loadings, the better the relationship between variable and factor. Any items with loadings of below 0.45 and items with double loading were discarded. After discarding the items, factor analysis was done again on the independent variables to determine if the items can be further summarised.

After several rounds of running the factor analysis, a more manageable item size was obtained. The KMO – MSA was 0.818 which according to Hair et al., (2006) MSA of 0.80 and above was meritorious.

Table 4.2

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (Independent Variable)

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.818
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3983.493
	Df	820
	Sig.	.000

The analysis resulted in a seven factor solution. The cumulative percentage of variance was 57.71% which was acceptable. The acceptable range of cumulative percentage of variance is between 50% - 60%. After the Varimax rotation was applied, the results are summarised as below:

Table 4.3

Summary of factors for Independent Variable

Items	Factors						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Doing well in university is important for my future career goals	**.672**	.164	.138	-.020	-.021	.098	-.036
Doing well in university is one of my goals	**.704**	.233	.116	.111	.078	.025	-.010
It is important to get good grades in university	**.800**	.031	.107	.034	.052	.014	-.086
I want to do my best in the university	**.813**	.107	.232	.201	.017	-.004	-.024
It is important for me to do well in university	**.825**	.039	.255	.038	.062	.045	.016

Table 4.3 – continued

Items	Factors						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I want to get good grades in university	**.772**	.024	.217	.083	.019	.080	-.020
I am glad I go to this university	.137	**.789**	.079	.134	.123	.045	.016
This is a good university	.158	**.856**	.080	.086	.086	.013	.007
This university is a good match for me	.051	**.829**	.114	.173	.073	.025	-.048
I like this university	.120	**.817**	.150	.140	.113	.064	.079
I am proud of this university	.082	**.738**	.146	.064	.102	.082	-.025
I work harder in the university	.106	.278	**.558**	.177	-.057	.073	-.069
I complete my schoolwork regularly	.239	-.042	**.569**	.151	.093	-.092	-.043
I spend a lot of time on my schoolwork	.094	.033	**.646**	-.125	-.165	-.073	.056
I am a responsible student	.084	-.004	**.751**	.255	.167	-.013	.000
I persevere until task is finished	.253	.106	**.636**	.117	.058	.046	.016
I put a lot of effort into my schoolwork	.313	.181	**.772**	.087	.055	-.041	.028
I concentrate on my schoolwork	.114	.229	**.725**	.085	.126	-.040	.006
I always come up with new ideas	.050	.168	.175	**.686**	.085	.108	.159
I am an ingenious and a deep thinker	.055	.100	.120	**.652**	.040	.074	.122
I have an active imagination	-.014	.062	-.042	**.667**	.110	.115	.387
University work is easy for me	.051	.056	-.015	**.529**	.087	-.030	-.040
I use a variety of strategies to learn new material	.041	.212	.226	**.572**	.071	.100	.162
I am good at learning new things in university	.190	.172	.179	**.648**	.244	.143	.036
I am smart	.078	-.085	.117	**.596**	.070	.157	.053
I like to reflect and play with ideas	.089	.257	.039	**.575**	.120	.119	.350
Some people make me feel bad about myself, no matter what I do	.023	-.116	.231	-.091	**.599**	-.056	.086
I feel depressed and blue	.103	.137	.164	.055	**.668**	-.064	.090
When I mess up, I say self-depreciating things, such as “I am a loser”, “Stupid, stupid, stupid” or “I can’t do anything right”	.082	.094	.154	.158	**.610**	-.063	.023
I cannot stop thinking about my problems	-.019	.150	-.069	.209	**.617**	.005	.000
I am easily tensed	.088	.102	-.009	.208	**.582**	.092	-.018
People tell me that I overreact to minor problems	.085	-.039	-.072	.064	**.606**	-.014	.007
I worry a lot	-.014	.067	-.125	.087	**.736**	-054	-.042
I can be moody	-.108	.106	.054	-.047	**.614**	.019	-.074
I am talkative	-.036	.062	.043	.040	.023	**.741**	.032
I tend to mix with more outgoing students	.134	.044	-.072	.189	-.085	**.582**	.051
I tend to be quiet	.036	-.005	-.158	.043	.037	**.696**	-.053
I am outgoing, sociable	.107	.113	.103	.308	.014	**.707**	.156
I have few artistic interest	-.022	-.023	.190	.232	-.045	-.067	**.560**
I am sophisticated in art, music or literature	-.102	.015	-.100	.128	-.032	.127	**.725**
I value artistic, aesthetic experiences	-.029	-.006	-.063	.217	.063	.028	**.844**

From the table above, the seven factor solution are renamed according to the similar themes they belong to. They are, Factor 1 will be renamed 'attitude towards studies', Factor 2 will be renamed 'attitude towards school', Factor 3 renamed as 'conscientiousness', Factor 4 becomes 'self-esteem', Factor 5 will be renamed 'emotional intelligence', Factor 6 is 'extroversion' and Factor 7 is 'openness'

4.3.2 Factor Analysis for Dependent variables

Next factor analysis was done on the dependent variables. The dependent variable for this study is soft skills. The questionnaire was sent to the supervisor to evaluate the student's soft skills. There were a total of 32 questions measuring soft skills such as communication skills/English proficiency, time management, leadership and emotional intelligence. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin's (KMO) had a measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) score of 0.896 which is meritorious according to Hair et al., (2006)

Figure 4.4

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (Dependent Variable)

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.896
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1241.258
	Df	55
	Sig.	.000

Latent Root Criterion using Eigenvalues ≥ 1 was used to determine the number of factors to be extracted. The analysis provided a one factor solution which is categorized as soft skills. The cumulative percentage of variance was

53.92% which was acceptable. The acceptable range of cumulative percentage of variance is between 50% - 60%. After the Varimax rotation was applied, the results are summarised as below:

Table 4.5

Summary of factors for Dependent Variable

Items	Factor
Student is able to carry out responsibilities assigned to him/her	.754
Student is able to handle most of the problems or conflicts that arose during projects or events they managed or participated in	.754
Student exhibits leadership among peers	.653
Student is able to communicate clearly verbally	.757
Student has good command of the English language	.702
Student is able to write a formal business letter	.586
Student is a team player	.724
Student is able to motivate others/peers	.699
Exhibits good negotiation skills	.717
Student is considerate to others around him/her	.874
Student is honest and owns up to mistakes	.817

4.3.3 Factor analysis for Moderating variables

The moderating variable mentioned in this study is culture. This study hopes to find if there is a moderating effect of culture and the development of soft skills amongst students. There were 22 times measuring the construct of culture which are individualism/collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/femininity. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin's (KMO) had a measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) score of 0.657 which is mediocre according to Hair et al., (2006)

Table 4.6

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (Moderating Variable)

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.657
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	482.288
	Df	55
	Sig.	.000

Latent Root Criterion using Eigenvalues ≥ 1 was used to determine the number of factors to be extracted. The analysis resulted in a 4 factor solution. The cumulative percentage of variance was 52.28% which was acceptable. The acceptable range of cumulative percentage of variance is between 50% - 60%. After the Varimax rotation was applied, the results are summarised as below:

Table 4.7

Summary of factors for Moderating variable

Items	Factor			
	1	2	3	4
Group welfare is more important than individual rewards	.110	**.782**	.033	-.112
Group success more important than individual success	.179	**.802**	.051	.077
Managers should make most decisions without consulting subordinates	-.170	.115	.109	**.539**
Managers should seldom ask for the opinions of employees	-.192	-.086	.057	**.468**
Employees should not disagree with management decisions	.145	-.058	.081	**.723**
It is important to have job requirements and instructions spelled out in detail so that employees always know what they are expected to do	**.677**	.078	-.054	-.022
Rules and regulations are important because they inform employees what the organization expects of them	**.648**	.184	-.009	-.220
Standard operating procedures are helpful to employees on the job	**.717**	.108	-.029	-.220
Instructions for operations are important for employees on the job	**.697**	.018	-.039	-.174
It is more important for men to have a professional career than it is for women to have a professional career	-.127	.040	**.779**	.072
It is preferable to have a man in a high level position rather than a woman	.032	.038	**.765**	.158

From the table above, the four factor solution will be renamed. Factor 1 is renamed as 'uncertainty/avoidance', Factor 2 as 'individualism/collectivism', Factor 3 is 'masculinity/femininity' and last but not least Factor 4 will be renamed to 'power distance'.

4.4 Reliability

Reliability is the degree to which measures are free from error and yield consistent results (Zikmund, 2003). The good method to measure internal consistency reliability is using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha. It determines the mean reliability coefficient for all possible ways of splitting a set of items in half. According to Hair et al., (2006) a coefficient alpha of 0.7 or higher suggests good reliability and a reliability between 0.6 and 0.7 is acceptable.

4.4.1 Reliability for independent variables

Table 4.8

Reliability Coefficients for Independent Variables

Factor	**No. of Items**	**Reliability Coefficients**
Attitude towards studies	6	.908
Attitude towards school	5	.919
Conscientiousness	7	.863
Self-esteem	8	.864
Emotional Intelligence	8	.842
Extroversion	4	.781
Openness	3	.766

All the factors above had a reliability of over 0.7; therefore they are all very reliable. There was no significant improvement in reliability if any items were deleted hence the items representing each of the factors above were retained.

4.4.2 Reliability for dependent variables

Table 4.9

Reliability Coefficients for Dependent Variable

Factors	No. of Items	Reliability Coefficients
Soft Skills	11	.926

The soft skills factor had a reliability of over 0.7, therefore they are very reliable. Since there is no item which Cronbach's Alpha if item deleted can be higher than the original Cronbach' Alpha of .926, therefore none of the items can be dropped as it will not improve the construct any further.

4.4.3 Reliability for moderating variables

Table 4.10

Reliability Coefficients for Moderating Variables

Factor	No of items	Reliability Coefficient
Uncertainty Avoidance	4	.777
Individualism/Collectivism	2	.778
Masculinity/Femininity	2	.754
Power Distance	3	.587

Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism/Collectivism and Masculinity/Femininity all had a reliability of over 0.7; therefore the 3 factors are reliable. However for the Power Distance factor, the Cronbach's Alpha obtained from this analysis is .587 which is lower than the acceptable significance level of between 0.6 to 0.7 according to Hair et al., (2006). Therefore the construct of power distance is not very reliable for the purpose of this study, hence results must be treated with caution.

4.5 Multiple Regression

A regression analysis will be conducted in this study to find a linear composite of the predictor variables that will compactly express the relationship between a criterion variable and the set of predictors. If possible, it will also show how strong is the relationship and how well it can predict values of the criterion variable form values of the linear composite. The analysis also hopes to find if the overall relationship is statistically significant and what are the predictors most important in accounting for variation in the criterion variable.

There are seven independent variables derived from the factor analysis. The variables are attitude toward studies, school factors, conscientiousness, self-esteem, emotional intelligence, extraversion and openness. With the new independent variables above, the researcher discovered that they actually fall in the original variables of personality type, peer relationship, emotional intelligence and attitude towards school.

Conscientiousness, self-esteem, extroversion and openness to new experiences fall under Personality types which is explained by the Big 5 Personality Types as discussed earlier. Attitude towards studies and school factors fall under the attitude towards school. The variable of emotional intelligence is still relevant in this study. However after factor analysis, the variable peer relationship is not listed, therefore this variable could not be tested to see if it influences soft skills development of students.

The link between the old and new variable is summarised in the figure below.

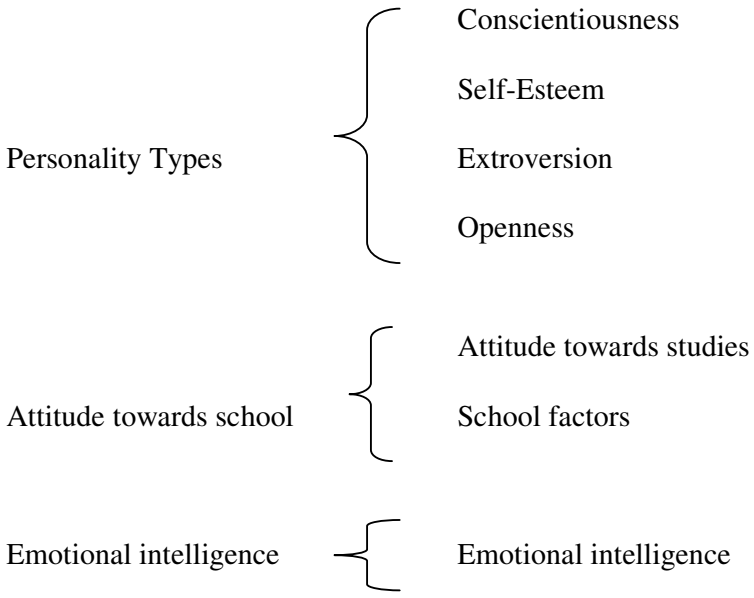


Figure 4.0

Link between new variables and old variables

Using hierarchical regression analysis, this research hopes to find if there is a relationship between the predictor variables and the criterion variables and to find if there is a moderating effect on the relationship.

Linear model: $Y = \alpha + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 + \beta_6X_6 + \beta_7X_7 + \varepsilon$ where,

Y = Soft skills
X_1 = Attitude towards studies
X_2 = School factors
X_3 = Conscientiousness
X_4 = Self-esteem
X_5 = Emotional intelligence
X_6 = Extroversion
X_7 = Openness
B = Regression coefficient of $X_{i,\ i=1,\ 2,\ 3,...7}$
ε = error term.

All the above variables were entered into the regression analysis to test whether there is a linear relationship and the kind of relationship between soft skills (dependent variable) and the seven independent variables. The analysis will also include hierarchical regression to test for moderating effect.

4.5.1 Hierarchical regression analysis with moderator

Table 4.11

Hierarchical Regression results using Uncertainty Avoidance as a Moderator in the relationship between personality, peer relationship, attitude towards school, emotional intelligence and the development of soft skills

Independent Variable	Std Beta Step 1	Std Beta Step 2	Std Beta Step 3
Model Variables			
Attitude towards studies	-.057	-.060	1.415*
School factor	.055	.055	-.956
Conscientiousness	.080	.079	-.760
Self-esteem	-.037	-.037	1.290*
Emotional Intelligence	-.129	-.129	-.122
Extroversion	-.087	-.087	-.377
Openness	-.067	-.066	-.826
Moderating Variable			
Uncertainty Avoidance (UA)		.006	.876
Interaction Terms			
UA*Attitude towards studies			-2.861*
UA*School factor			1.386*
UA*Conscientiousness			1.350
UA*Self-Esteem			-1.987*
UA*Emotional Intelligence			-.039
UA*Extroversion			.415
UA*Openness			.891
R^2	.041	.041	.140
Adj R^2	.000	-.007	.055
R^2 Change	.041	.000	.098
Sig. F Change	.440	.947	.018
Durbin Watson	1.280	1.280	1.280

Note: *p < 0.05

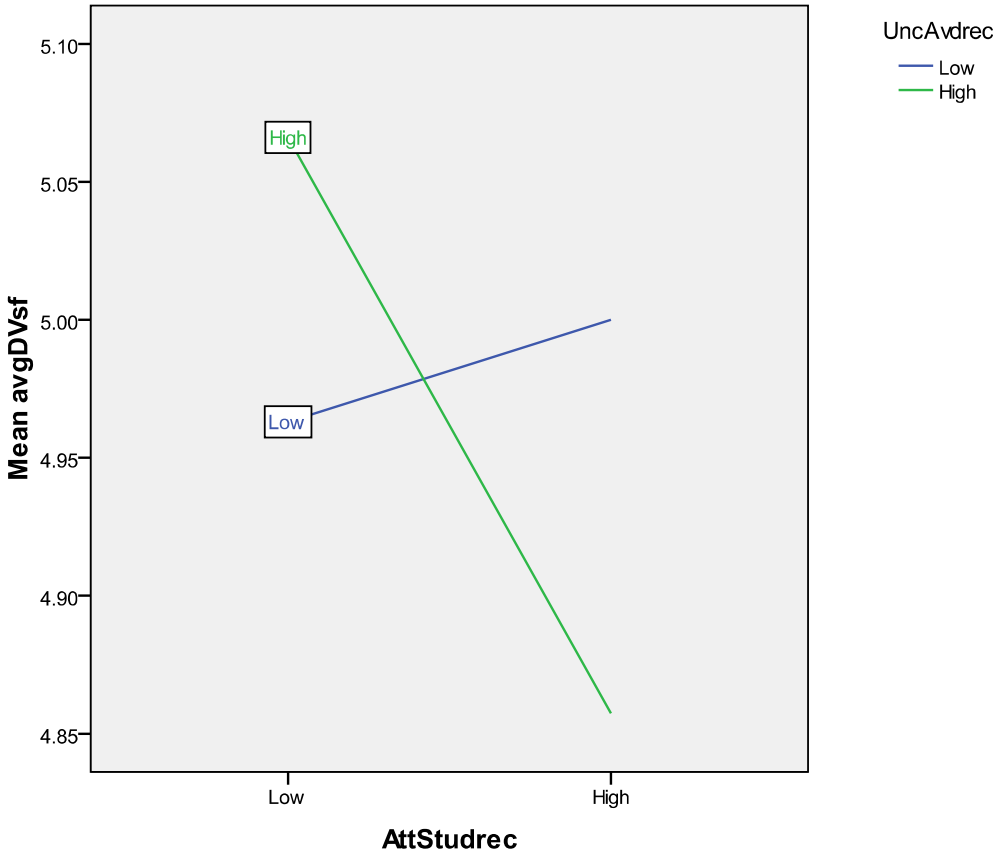
The adjusted R^2 indicates the percentage of variances explained by the linear model used. It explains the power of the model. However in this model the variances are explained very little by the model. From the analysis, it shows that there is no direct relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables. There is no direct correlation between peer relationships, student personality, emotional intelligence and attitude towards school on the development of soft skills amongst students. Therefore, we reject H1, H2, H3 and H4.

The R^2 change is low but uncertainty avoidance had significant moderating influence on the relationship between attitude towards studies, attitude towards school and self-esteem on soft skills development as these 3 interaction has a significance of < 0.05. Although there is no direct correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variables, when the element of cultural orientation is introduced, there seem to be some moderating effect on soft skills development. Hence we accept H5c to say that uncertainty avoidance does have a moderating effect between the independent variables and soft skills development.

The graphs below will show the degree of the effect on the independent and dependent variable.

Graph 4.1

Relationship between Uncertainty Avoidance and Attitude towards Studies on Soft Skills Development

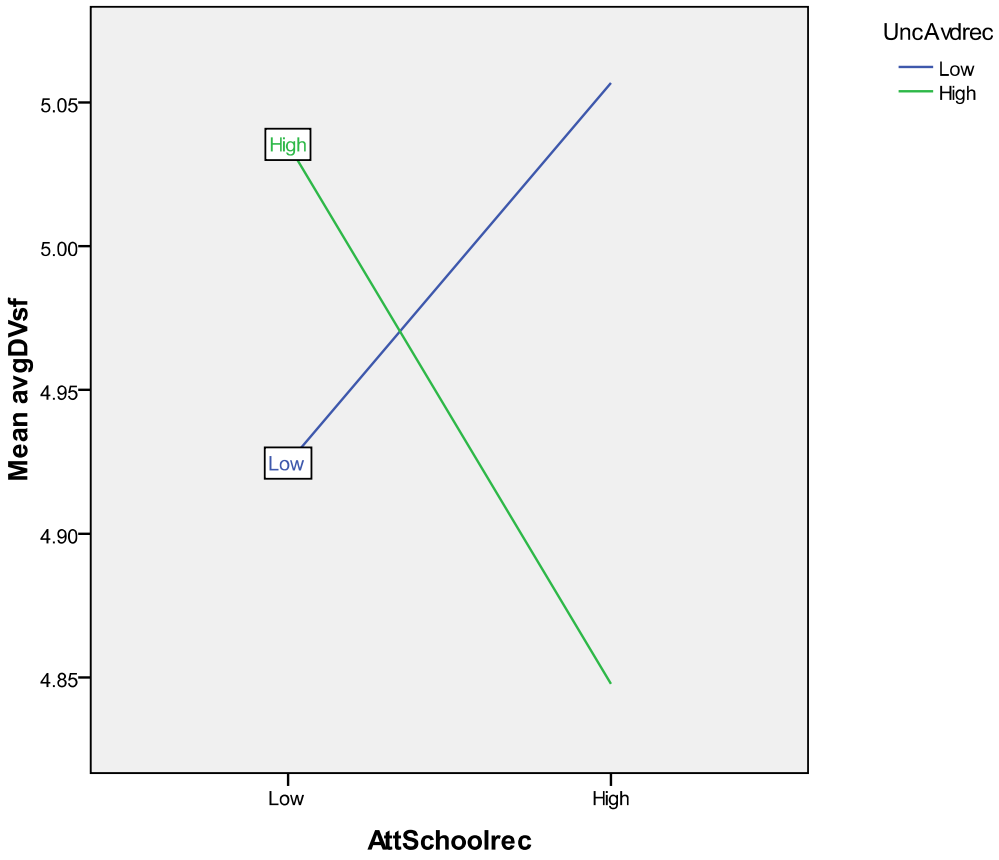


From the graph above, in low uncertainty avoidance situation, attitude towards studies has a positive impact on soft skills development. On the other hand, in a high uncertainty avoidance situation, attitude towards studies has a negative impact on soft skills development.

We can conclude that uncertainty avoidance does have a moderating effect between attitude towards studies and soft skills development.

Graph 4.2

Relationship between Uncertainty Avoidance and Attitude towards School on Soft Skills Development

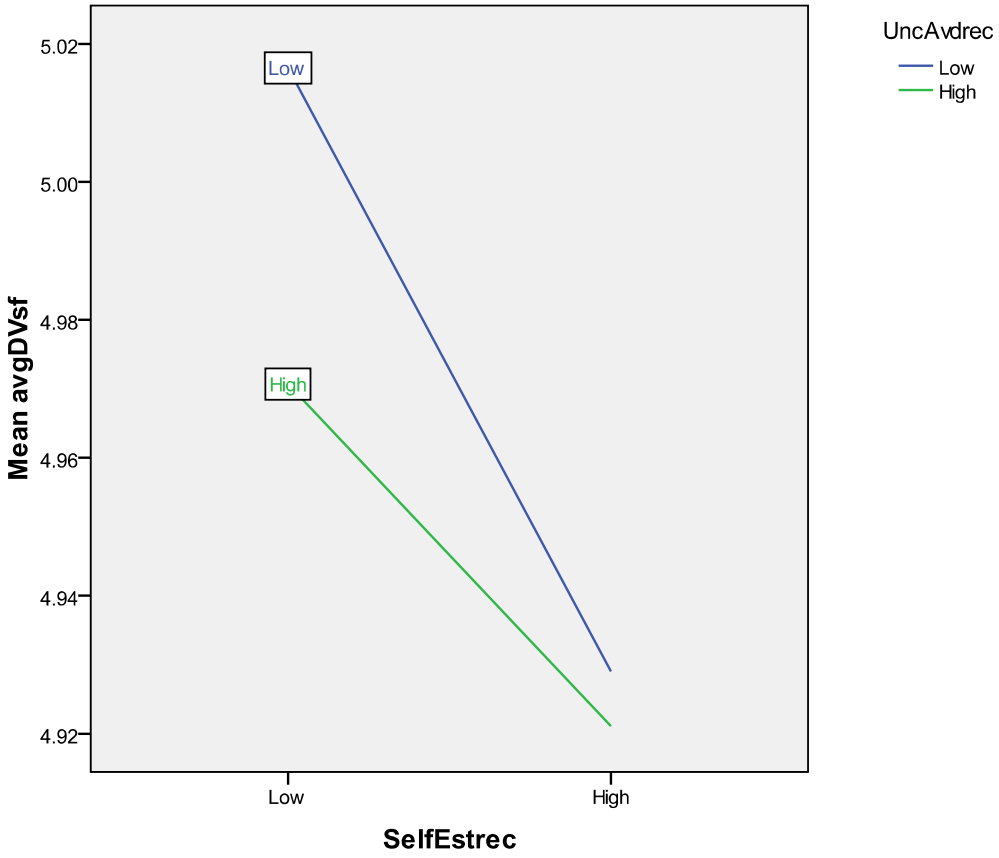


When uncertainty avoidance is low, attitude towards school is positively correlated to soft skills development. This creates a positive impact on soft skills development whereas when uncertainty avoidance is high, this creates a negative impact towards soft skills development.

Here, we can conclude that uncertainty avoidance does have a moderating effect between attitude towards school and soft skills development.

Graph 4.3

Relationship between Uncertainty Avoidance and Self-Esteem on Soft Skills Development



When uncertainty avoidance is low, this creates a negative relationship on soft skills development. This is also true when uncertainty avoidance is high, self-esteem still has a negative relationship on soft skills development.

Uncertainty avoidance therefore does have a moderating effect between self-esteem and soft skills development.

Table 4.12

Hierarchical Regression results using Individualism/Collectivism as a Moderator in the relationship between personality, peer relationship, attitude towards schools, emotional intelligence and the development of soft skills

Independent Variable	Std Beta Step 1	Std Beta Step 2	Std Beta Step 3
Model Variables			
Attitude towards studies	-.057	-.055	.260
School factor	.055	.045	.277
Conscientiousness	.080	.073	.002
Self-esteem	-.037	-.032	-.356
Emotional Intelligence	-.129	-.137	-.073
Extroversion	-.087	-.095	-.072
Openness	-.067	-.075	-.044
Moderating Variable			
Individualism / Collectivism (I/C)		.061	.374
Interaction Terms			
I/C*Attitude towards studies			-.700
I/C*School factor			-.404
I/C*Conscientiousness			.163
I/C*Self-Esteem			.716
I/C*Emotional Intelligence			-.081
I/C*Extroversion			-.049
I/C*Openness			-.094
R^2	.041	.045	.055
Adj R^2	.000	-.003	-.038
R^2 Change	.041	.003	.010
Sig. F Change	.440	.454	.975
Durbin Watson	1.241	1.241	1.241

Note: *p < 0.05

Adjusted R^2 is not significant. The variances cannot be explained by the model. This could be due to other factors. The R^2 change is also not significant. Therefore we can conclude that there is no moderating effect of individualism/collectivism between the independent variable and dependent variable. Hence, H5a as rejected as individualism/collectivism does not have a moderating effect between the independent variables and soft skills development.

Table 4.13

Hierarchical Regression results using Masculinity / Femininity as a Moderator in the relationship between personality, peer relationship, attitude towards schools, emotional intelligence and the development of soft skills.

Independent Variable	Std Beta Step 1	Std Beta Step 2	Std Beta Step 3
Model Variables			
Attitude towards studies	-.057	-.078	.002
School factor	.055	.060	.242
Conscientiousness	.080	.088	.260
Self-esteem	-.037	-.032	.164
Emotional Intelligence	-.129	-.137	-.156
Extroversion	-.087	-.092	-.102
Openess	-.067	-.076	-.163
Moderating Variable			
Masculinity / Femininity (M/F)		-.069	1.436
Interaction Terms			
M/F*Attitude towards studies			-.102
M/F*School factor			-.406
M/F*Conscientiousness			-.624
M/F*Self-Esteem			-.717
M/F*Emotional Intelligence			-.017
M/F*Extroversion			.038
M/F*Openness			.230
R^2	.041	.046	.096
Adj R^2	.000	-.002	.007
R^2 Change	.041	.004	.050
Sig. F Change	.440	.401	.302
Durbin Watson	1.181	1.181	1.181

Note: *p < 0.05

The Adjusted R^2 is not significant. The variances cannot be explained by the model. This could be due to other factors. The R^2 change is also not significant. Therefore we can conclude that there is no moderating effect of masculinity/femininity between the independent variables and soft skills development. Hence, H5d is rejected as masculinity/femininity has no moderating effect between the independent variables and soft skills development

Table 4.14

Hierarchical Regression results using Power Distance as a Moderator in the relationship between personality, peer relationship, attitude towards schools, emotional intelligence and the development of soft skills.

Independent Variable	Std Beta Step 1	Std Beta Step 2	Std Beta Step 3
Model Variables			
Attitude towards studies	-.057	-.068	-.153
School factor	.055	.068	.066
Conscientiousness	.080	.072	.276
Self-esteem	-.037	-.028	.472
Emotional Intelligence	-.129	-.146	-.352
Extroversion	-.087	-.099	-.392
Openness	-.067	-.083	-.150
Moderating Variable			
Power Distance (PD)		-.120	.214
Interaction Terms			
PD*Attitude towards studies			.377
PD*School factor			-.085
PD*Conscientiousness			-.432
PD*Self-Esteem			-1.362*
PD*Emotional Intelligence			.440
PD*Extroversion			.607
PD*Openness			.150
R^2	.041	.055	.111
Adj R^2	.000	.008	.024
R^2 Change	.041	.014	.057
Sig. F Change	.440	.132	.213
Durbin Watson	1.171	1.171	1.171

Note: *p < 0.05

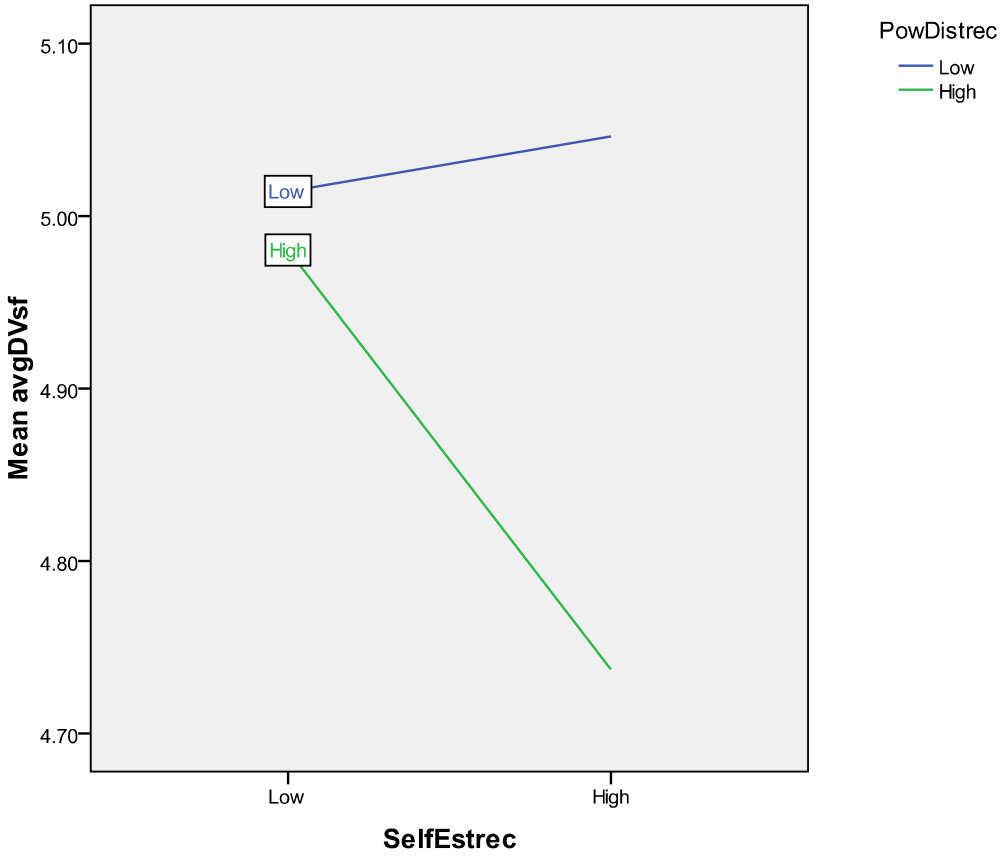
The adjusted R^2 is low and very little of the variances can be explained by the model. This could be due to other factors.

The R^2 change is not too significant but power distance had significant moderating influence on the relationship between self-esteem on soft skills development as this interaction has a significance of < 0.05. Although there is no direct correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variables,

when the element of cultural orientation – power distance is introduced, there seem to be some moderating effect on soft skills development. Hence we accept H5b to say that power distance does have a moderating effect between the independent variables and soft skills development. The graph below will show the degree of the moderating effect.

Graph 4.4

The Relationship between Power Distance and Self-Esteem on Soft Skills Development



In this study, for high power distance context, self-esteem is has a negative impact on soft skills development. This could be due to the fact that these are still mostly first year students and they are not inclined to questioning authority or challenge a lecturer or staff. They feel that they should just accept what the lecturers tell them.

Whereas in a low power distance context, self esteem has a positive impact on soft skills development. For students who are not too concerned about speaking up, asking question or to seek clarification, they are more open to discussions and receiving constructive feedback from lecturers. These students are more engaged in their learning. In conclusion power distance does have an effect on self esteem and soft skills development.

To sum up, for the various analysis conducted peer relationship, student personality, emotional intelligence and attitude towards school does not have a direct correlation with the students' soft skills development however, cultural orientation had a significant correlation with soft skills development in particular for uncertainty avoidance and power distance. Further explanation on the findings will be discussed in Chapter 5.