

## Developing skills for decision-making and effective management

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**Abstract:** *The discussion of new curriculum in the management institution today is an issue to be taken seriously because of the changing pattern of the industry and its demand in the form of fresh candidates from the institutes. India is a country where we have good resources but still are not properly utilized. The candidates have rich qualification and attain good record of results but still unable to achieve what they dreamt for themselves. Today it being a tough time, the employer desires people having jack of skills and they promote people those are self directed, having interpersonal skills and ready to take challenges at every path of their life apart from the academic knowledge. Therefore, it becomes very tough in the market to compete. The employability issue among the graduates has become a serious issue because of the required skills among the candidates. They started desiring people who have the ability to show decision -making skills, fluent in communication, work in a team, and entrepreneurial interest. It becomes very tough job as most of the institutions those are imparting education have Interpersonal skills as a core subject. Though in most of the institutions some workshops are conducted, but that is not sufficient. For imparting interpersonal skills the students need to undergo various phases to understand and retain what is taught in the class to become strong in the tough competition of market.*

*Audibert and James emphasize the importance of interpersonal skills from employers' point of view to retain help people at their positions. According to them "Interpersonal skills such as decision -making, communication, teambuilding and entrepreneurial interest have become important to establish oneself and get opportunity in promotion and maintaining their positions at the workplace and society.*

*The skills required by the industry like Self Management, Communications, Managing people and tasks, Mobilizing Innovation and Change can be grasped provided the institute include this subject in the curriculum and conduct classes regularly for the students and make them employable.*

*The scholars in this paper put emphasis on the necessary incorporation of certain skills under the umbrella "Interpersonal skills" in the curriculum being followed showing importance and relevance of interpersonal skills and various pedagogies to be applied.*

**Key Words:** *Interpersonal Skills, Decision making skills , Modules, Personality Development, Communication Skills. Interaction. Behavioral Skills Training*

### 1. INTRODUCTION:

The present time is the time where simply grabbing of bookish knowledge is not sufficient. Today when we are talking about tough competition in the market, it has become necessary for the students to not only perform well but have technical as well as behavioral skills to survive in the industry and to maintain liaison in the field. To be success at the work place one should have skills that define personal attributes and enhance interaction, quality of jobs, career prospects. Here the colleges, institutes, Universities can play an important role to impart skills and knowledge that help them placing in the industries and to establish business. The institution should change in their curriculum components of Interpersonal skills through which the students learn to interact well, can present well, add value to their personality, can improve communication, inter-personal skills, learn decision -making qualities, and acquire knowledge related to the industry.

### 2. BACKGROUND:

When we go through the literature based on Interpersonal skills, we will find that many thinkers, trainers have listed many corporate skills required or judged during recruitment process and that make the candidate different from others. Today every recruiter first judge the candidates on Interpersonal skills parameters and this particular demand of the recruiters made the competition tighter and tougher. When we talk about Interpersonal skills, the HR department of any organization always looks for interpersonal skills, communication skills and decision making management skills. At present the well developed, trained interpersonal skills students are very hard to be found and therefore, when the fresher's join the organization, the management give the m training on the same and it takes time to groom and to develop them, therefore, the recruiters now a day's started demanding people who are well versed in interpersonal skills, so that the moment they join the industry, they start working and establish rapport with the market.

This shows that the industry as well as the institute has gap between demand and supply in the form of skills the students have or need to enhance. And therefore, it is necessary for the institutes today to interact with the industry people, the recruiters, HR people and find out what exactly the industry require and how can they fulfil the demand to improve productivity, and profitability.

Hewitt Sean (2008) said those candidates who wish to get an edge over their competitor should refine their interpersonal skills as today's professionals need to encompass a high soft skills quotient, apart from the domain knowledge in order to succeed at the workplace. He further added that to inculcate interpersonal skills in them the institute has to impart training as part of the syllabus clubbed with their regular domain syllabus to help students improve their personality, compatibility to secure a respectable position in the industry.

Interpersonal skills trainings in their curriculum, to ensure commendable placements, According to Tobin interpersonal skills are "non-technical, intangible, personality specific skills" which determines an individual's strength as "a leader, listener and negotiator, or as a conflict mediator". Interpersonal skills are the traits and abilities of attitude and behavior rather than of knowledge or technical aptitude

Martin Carole of the opinion that Soft Skills are "cluster of personality traits, social graces, personal habits, friendliness and optimism." It is not a substitute of hard skills but serve as an effective tool to groom the youth.

### **3. THE NEED OF DEVELOPING DECISION MAKING SKILLS:**

Interpersonal skills like decision making are the need of the hour, when we talk about tough competition, we simply cannot grab the bookish knowledge and depend upon it, in fact we need to be equipped with the relevant skills demanded by the recruiters or through which we can maintain ourselves at the work place and can do justice to our jobs. When we are on the progressive ladder, we have to have skills which enable us to establish in the market, that help us to compete with a number of people in the industry. Today there is a huge mass of qualified job seekers existing in the society and the competition within them for job acquisition becoming tougher. To get an edge over the competitors they are left with no other choice but to add required skills with interpersonal skills to exhibit their true potential. If one has got advanced interpersonal skills then definitely he will be able to establish them and instinct amongst other job seekers.

Looking the interest & importance of Interpersonal skills at the institute level, Thacker & Yost noted that the fresher's need training to groom to gel with the present time and the system. Many a time the industrialists and the HR managers complain that the fresher's coming directly from the colleges, institutes lack decision -making skills, they are not good at communication & interpersonal skills, the poor management starts training on them and it consumes time.

In the year 2013 The NASSCOM Mc-KINSEY stated that shortages in interpersonal skills, including communication, teamwork, and critical thinking, high order thinking, responsiveness as far more crucial than hard or technical skills as they found only 25% of students from engineering colleges are directly employable and the situation has not changed in the last five years in India. Poor soft skills like communication skills create a negative impression with employers during the recruitment phase and may exclude a graduate with good technical skills from being selected for employment (Pauwand et al, 2006).

Today whatever condition we experience in the industry or the employability, it is because of lack of interpersonal skills, because the institutes impart all sort of knowledge except interpersonal skills without which the students do not learn to present, to express, hence, interpersonal skills components after having discussed with the HR and industrialists may be incorporated to make the students place able. To some extent the IT sector companies felt good when interacted with the students where the Interpersonal skills training program is introduced and found the students well versed in comparison to others. The success rate was high who attended interpersonal skills sessions and found lack in communication, lack of expression who could not attend sessions on interpersonal skills.

Based on these evidence and interaction with the HR of various companies, we can infer that there is dire need of interpersonal skills training prior to join the corporate world to develop students and to prepare them for the industries. The management of the institutes, colleges has to see how can they incorporate it in their regular curriculum and benefit the students. They need to prepare module which would possibly train the students on assertiveness, negotiation skills, communication skills and the skill to make decisions and maintain interpersonal relationships. As such it's felt as these Interpersonal skills as those capabilities that are inherent in an individual. These competencies or skill sets does exist in every individual to a particular level.

### **4. THE PROCESS:**

The Interpersonal skills training can be divided in two parts. One includes various attributes and attitude & the other include fine-tuning on different skills to express attitude, ideas, views, thoughts, feelings, emotions, etc. The first part of the training give students to understand self and their potency to evaluate themselves to fight the hurdles come across. The second part of the training deal with the importance of LSRW, non-verbal, behavioral skills. Apart from

these the grooming of students will take place to develop confidence and to look smart while interacting with the mass.

The idea behind both the parts to orient students on the job where they are able to express clear, correct and concise. To achieve success in it the trainers need to prepare module for different cadre of students to make students learn language skills, behavioral skills. Here the students get training of personal growth for working effectively. They also get to know their strengths, weakness and can prepare them accordingly. The trainer can include a variety of topics relevant for the students and market like Aptitude test, team work, decision -making skills, Time management, interpersonal skills, decision making and negotiation, conflict management, goal setting, punctuality, listening skills, social grace, cooperative and coordination to add values among students and help improve personality. As employment conditions become tougher, potential recruiters look for personal attributes like attitude and values. Training in Group Discussion(the GD's ) and Personal Interview (PI) is given through conducting series of simulated 'mock sessions' before the students go through real job interviews, they are made to go through a series of practice sessions on GD and PI.

Here the role of a trainer is very important, the trainer has to motivate all the students and take part seriously with the students to gel with them to take part in all activities actively and effectively. And this new student's will easily absorbed in the industry easily as the inputs were taken in advance while preparing training module from the industry. During the training the trainer has to have the record of students before and after having exposed with the activities , so that the end of the day, the trainer can tell the stud bets their changes in personality and behavior. The trainer even can store the feedback taken from students and time to time they may expose with the industry experts also for appropriate feedback and suggestions. Apart from this the trainer should also see to how interpersonal skills can be clubbed with the domain knowledge to turn the monotonous way of teaching and add value to the system to help the management retain students .

**5. RESEARCH METHOD:**

The main OBJECTIVE of the study is to enhance interpersonal skills for effective decision making

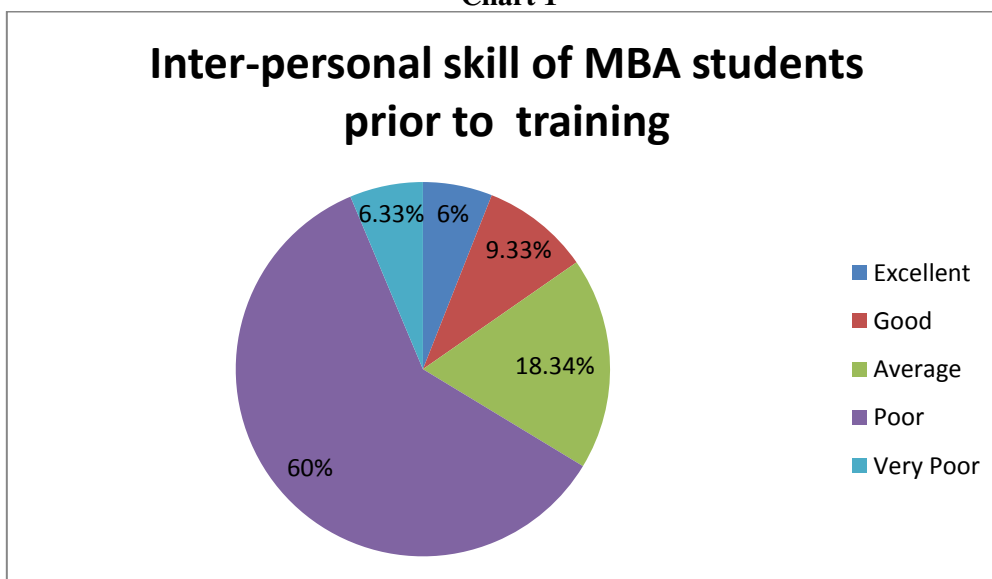
**Inter personal skill:**

Data relating of 250 MBA students were collected to analyze the interpersonal skill of students

**Table 1**  
**Interpersonal skill among MBA students prior to training**

Soft Skill	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	Total
Inter-personal communication skill	90	140	275	900	95	1500
Points	4	3	2	1	0	
Scores	360	420	550	900	0	2230

**Chart 1**



Analysis of table1 and chart 1 shows that majority of MBA students i.e. 60% were poor at Inter-personal skillos. Merely 15.33% MBA students were between the ranges of good to excellent. Human resource managers of all the six companies were quite disappointed with the students' inability to interact effectively. They were not confident,

and precise. After three months intensive training of different skills adequate improvement was seen in the respondents

**Table 2**  
**Inter-personal skill among MBA students after soft skills training**

Skill	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	Total
Inter-personal skill	198	426	387	414	75	1500
Points	4	3	2	1	0	
Scores	792	1278	774	414	0	3258

**Chart 2**

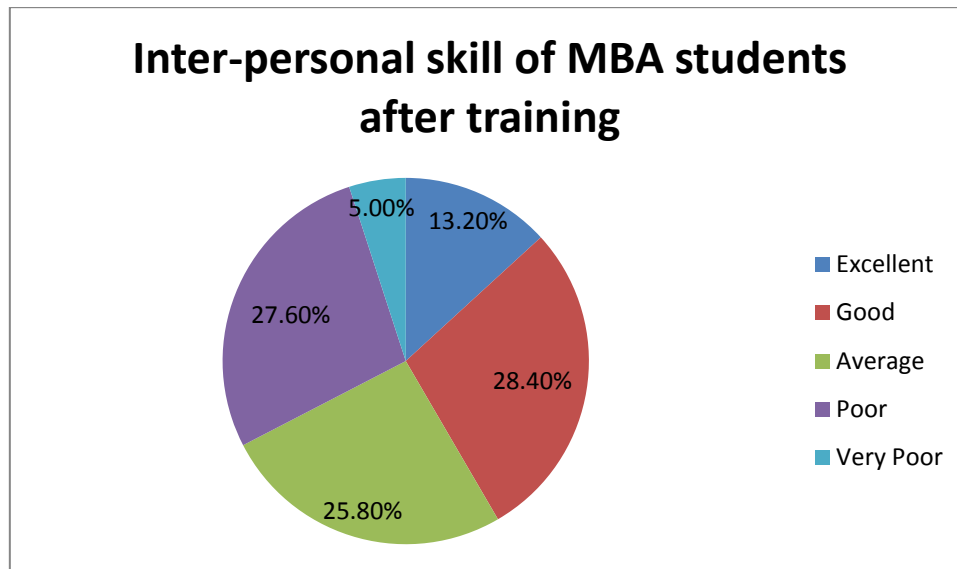
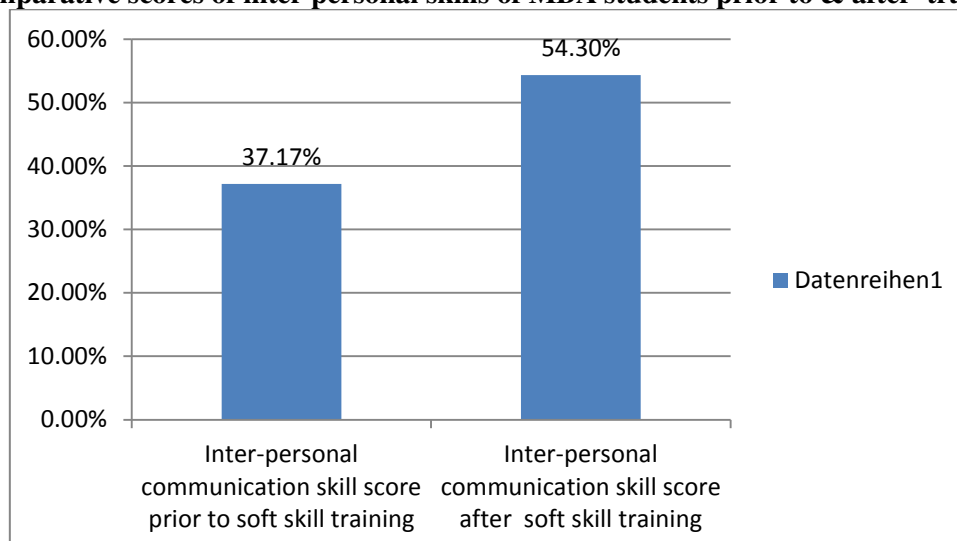


Table and chart 2 reveals that just 32.60% MBA students were poor or very poor in inter personal skills after 3 months intensive training. 41.60% MBA students were between the range of good to excellent. This assessment was done by the same human resource managers who interviewed these 250 MBA students earlier. HR managers were not all that dissatisfied after interviewing the same students again. They were little more confident, fluent and precise.

Chart 3 clearly shows that inter personal skill scores of MBA students which were 37.17% (total marks 2230) prior to soft skills training improved and reached upto 54.30% (total marks 3258) after three months intensive soft skills training. It clearly indicates that level of inter personal skill is low among MBA students and it can be improved by intensive skills training.

**Chart 4**  
**Comparative scores of inter personal skills of MBA students prior to & after training**



To ascertain whether the improvement achieved in level of inter personal skill of MBA students through intensive training is significant or not; Z test was conducted.

$$|Z| = \frac{P1 - P2}{\sqrt{P0q0(\frac{1}{n1} + \frac{1}{n2})}}$$

$$|Z| = \frac{.543 - .3717}{\sqrt{.45735 \times .54265 (\frac{1}{250} + \frac{1}{250})}}$$

$$|Z| = 3.85$$

Since the computed value of Z= 3.85 is higher than critical value of Z = 1.96. It does not lie in acceptance region at 5% level of significance. Thus we can say that there is significant difference between level of inter personal skills prior and after skills training i.e. it improves significantly after intensive training.

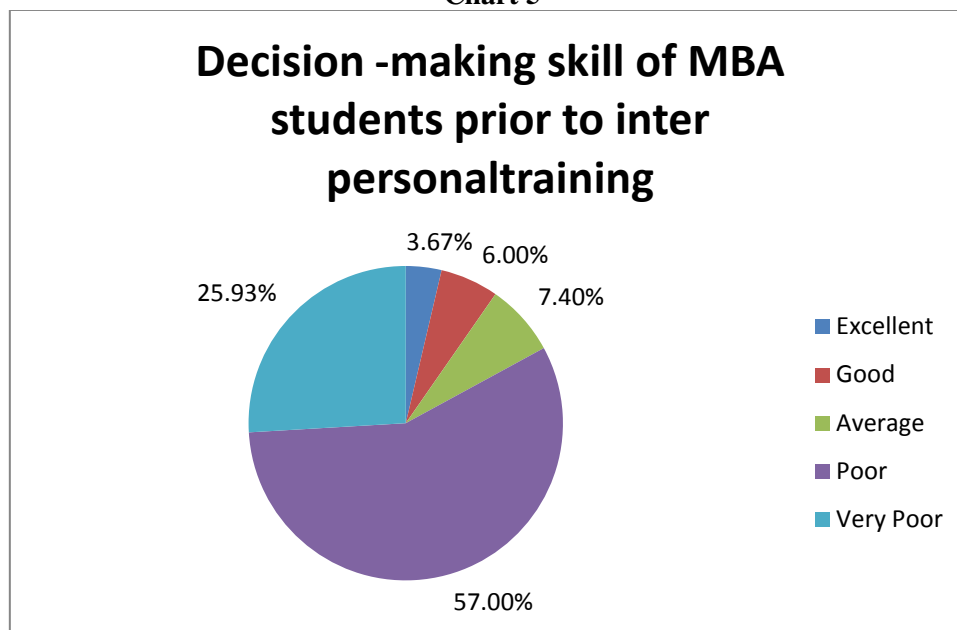
**Decision making skill:**

Data relating to decision -making skill were collected from the human resource managers of 6 companies and tabulated as below-

**Table 3**  
**Decision -making skill among MBA students prior to interpersonal skills training**

Soft Skill	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	Total
Decision -making skill	55	90	111	855	389	1500
Points	4	3	2	1	0	
Scores	220	270	222	855	0	1567

**Chart 5**



Analysis of above table and chart shows that majority of MBA students i.e. 82.93% were poor to very poor at decision -making skill. Merely 10% MBA students were between the range of good to excellent. Human resource managers of all the six companies were quite disappointed with the students' inability to handle and manage the situations given to them. They were not confident, appropriate regarding their decision level and were quite confused. They were quite hesitant and were lacking the zeal of taking the decisions while acting as a leader.

After three months intensive training of interpersonal skills having good number of sessions on decision -making skill improvement the following data relating to decision -making skill of same 250 MBA students were collected from the same human resource managers of 6 companies and tabulated as below-

**Table 5**  
**Decision -making skill among MBA students after interpersonal skills training**

Soft Skill	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	Total
Decision -making skill	115	190	235	700	260	1500
Points	4	3	2	1	0	
Scores	460	570	470	700	0	2200

Chart 6

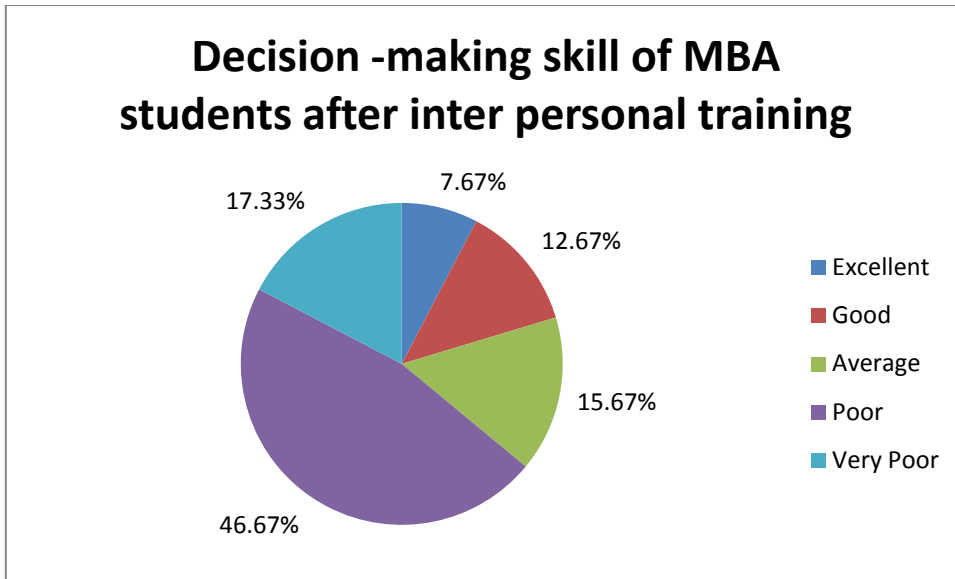
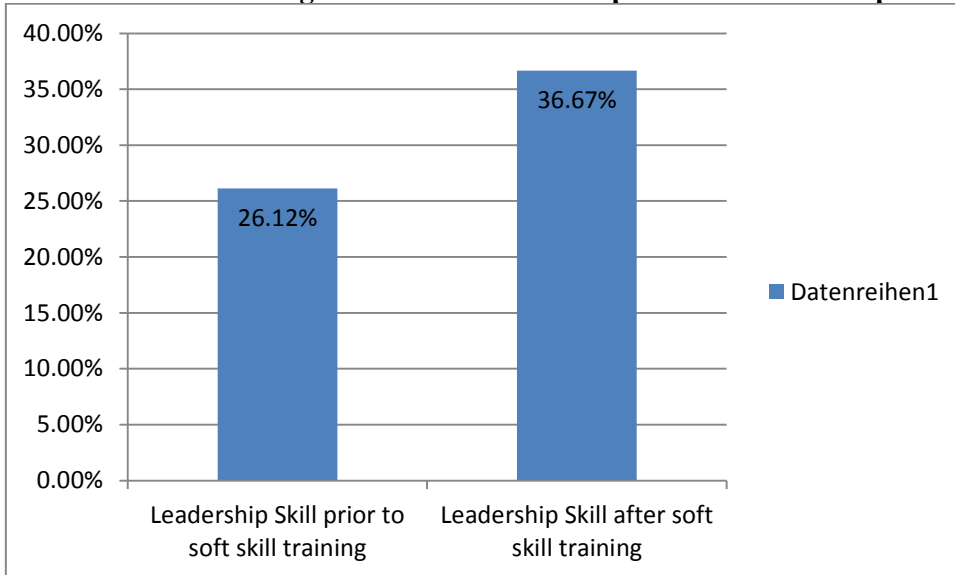


Table and chart reveals that 64% MBA students were still poor or very poor in decision-making after 3 months intensive interpersonal skills training. Near about 21% MBA students were between the range of good to excellent. This assessment was done by the same human resource managers who interviewed these 250 MBA students earlier. HR managers were not all that dissatisfied after interviewing the same students again. They were little more confident, were having better performance while taking decisions. They were able to handle and manage the situations well.

Chart 3 clearly shows that decision-making scores of MBA students which were 26.12% (total marks 1567) prior to interpersonal skills training improved and reached upto 36.67% (total marks 2200) after three months intensive interpersonal skills training. It clearly indicates that level of decision-making is low among MBA students and it can be improved by intensive interpersonal skills training.

Chart 7

Comparative scores of decision-making skills of MBA students prior to & after interpersonal skills training



To ascertain whether the improvement achieved in level of decision-making skill of MBA students through intensive interpersonal skills training is significant or not; Z test was conducted.

$$|Z| = \frac{P_1 - P_2}{\sqrt{P_0 q_0 \left( \frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2} \right)}}$$

$$|Z| = \frac{.3667 - .2612}{\sqrt{.31395 \times .68605 \left( \frac{1}{250} + \frac{1}{250} \right)}}$$

$$|Z| = 2.54$$

Since the computed value of  $Z = 2.54$  is higher than critical value of  $Z = 1.96$ . It does not lie in acceptance region at 5% level of significance. Thus we can say that there is significant difference between level of decision - making skill prior to interpersonal skills training & after interpersonal skills training. It improves significantly after intensive interpersonal skills training.

## 6. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION:

The researchers ultimately found that the industry in India is moving with a great pace and therefore, it is a mandatory for the young graduates to work according to meet the requirements of the industries. They should work in aligned with the guidelines of the industrialists and take help of the mentors to improve their Decision -making skills, Motivation, Team Spirit skills and likes. Apart from the regular subjects being taught, the fresher need to undergo various types of training at the graduation level to groom and develop themselves, hence at the institution level they should be motivated to take an active part in all the activities being conducted in the institutions, in fact it should be made compulsory for them to work hard and learn the above listed skills to overcome the challenges they will face after having joined the organization prior to that phase.

## 7. CONCLUSION:

Based on the study the researchers reached to the conclusion that apart from inter personal skills various behavioral skills are required at the time of interaction for placements and overall grooming and development of students at large therefore, it should be reflected in the curriculum and make it regularize to help students learn the corporate etiquette and to improve their skills which are utmost important today and demanded by the industries.

In view of the problems being faced by the organizations, the following are some suggestions on which the educational industry should work out and include in the regular syllabus to make a complete package for the market.

- Focus should be given on Inter personal, and Decision -making Skills from the beginning of the session.
- Students' abilities and skills be refined in terms of fluency in language so as to provoke qualitative thought process in problem solving, critical reflective ability, flexibility, and adaptability, willingness to learn and to continue to learn.
- Industry need people with a jack of traits therefore, students be prepared accordingly, means more focus be given on practical aspects of business.
- Students are taught with proper grooming with appropriate skills that help them present well.
- Interpersonal skills be given priority to make students fit for the market place and be able to get the things done in the organizations and be able to have good relationship with other organizations and people of the society.

With these points the researchers conclude that the employability quotient be taken care at the institute level to make the students more employable in the market.

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