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Organizational Involvement in Higher Education as a Predictor of Students' Soft Skills

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effect of student involvement in Student Activity Units (UKM) on the development of soft skills. A quantitative approach using the survey method was employed in this research. The research population consisted of 455 fourth-semester students from STIE Wibawa Karta Raharja (Wikara Business School). The sample was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error. Data were collected using a questionnaire based on a 1–5 Likert scale, which was distributed online via Google Forms. The independent variable is student involvement in UKM, assessed through three indicators: participation level, duration of involvement, and organizational membership status. The dependent variable is soft skills, encompassing seven dimensions: public speaking, entrepreneurship, teamwork, leadership, problem solving, critical and creative thinking, and time management. The test results indicate that student activity in UKM has a significant effect on soft skills, with a path coefficient of 0.679 and a p-value of 0.000. The R-square value of 0.371 suggests that student activities account for 37.1% of the variance in soft skills, while the f-square value of 0.590 indicates a strong effect size. The strongest indicators of soft skills development are public speaking, problem-solving, and leadership. These findings suggest that active involvement in student organizations (UKM) can serve as a strategic means to enhance students' non-technical skills, which are essential for success in the professional world. Therefore, educational institutions should continue to promote and support active participation in such organizations.

Keywords: leadership; problem solving; public speaking; soft skills; student activity

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pengaruh aktivitas mahasiswa yang tergabung dalam Unit Kegiatan Mahasiswa (UKM) terhadap pengembangan soft skills. Pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode survei digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Populasi penelitian adalah mahasiswa semester 4 STIE Wibawa Karta Raharja sebanyak 455 orang, dengan penentuan sampel menggunakan rumus Slovin (margin of error 5%). Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner berbasis skala Likert 1–5 dan disebarkan secara daring melalui Google Form. Variabel bebas adalah aktivitas mahasiswa dalam UKM, yang diukur melalui tiga indikator: tingkat partisipasi, lama keikutsertaan, dan status keanggotaan. Variabel terikat adalah soft skills yang terdiri dari tujuh dimensi: public speaking, kewirausahaan, kerja sama tim, kepemimpinan, problem solving, berpikir kritis dan kreatif, serta manajemen waktu. Analisis data dilakukan dengan bantuan software SmartPLS 4. Hasil pengujian menunjukkan bahwa aktivitas mahasiswa dalam UKM berpengaruh signifikan terhadap soft skills, dengan nilai koefisien jalur sebesar 0.679 dan p-value 0.000. Nilai R-square sebesar 0.371 menunjukkan bahwa aktivitas mahasiswa menjelaskan 37,1% variasi soft skills, dan nilai f-square sebesar 0.590 menunjukkan pengaruh besar. Indikator-indikator yang paling kuat dalam pengembangan soft skills adalah public speaking, problem solving, dan kepemimpinan. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa keaktifan dalam UKM dapat menjadi sarana strategis dalam meningkatkan keterampilan non-teknis mahasiswa yang penting bagi dunia kerja. Oleh karena itu, partisipasi aktif dalam UKM sebaiknya terus didorong oleh institusi pendidikan

Keywords: leadership; problem solving; public speaking; soft skills; student activity

Introduction

Higher education institutions serve as producers of academic graduates (Susilawati et al., 2021), and as key agents in shaping human resources that are adaptive (Ross & Rajkoomar, 2024), competitive (Ryazanova, 2022), and prepared to face the challenges of the workforce and social life (Goulart et al., 2021; Martins & Faciola, 2025). The development of soft skills has emerged as a growing area of concern. Competencies (Wahyuni et al., 2023) such as communication, leadership (Azzouzi & Gantare, 2024; Ko et al., 2025), teamwork (Azzouzi & Gantare, 2024; Hu & Chan, 2024; Landaverde-Alvarado, 2025), critical thinking (Ru-Zhue et al., 2025; Wannapiroon, 2014), and time management (Masnan et al., 2025; Öztaş et al., 2024; Pathuddin et al., 2025) are vital in addressing the complexities of the workplace and the demands of an ever-changing society. Numerous studies have shown that an individual's success in their career and societal roles is more strongly influenced by soft skills (Avleeva, Wickey Byrd, et al., 2025; Imjai et al., 2025; Silitonga et al., 2025) than by technical abilities alone.

The development of soft skills in higher education is achieved through formal classroom instruction (Elkhalladi & Sefrioui, 2024; Imjai et al., 2025), and through various forms of non-formal and informal education—one of which is participation in Student Activity Units (UKM), a form of student organization in Indonesia. UKM serve as platforms for student organizations (Burhanuddin et al., 2024; Pietsch et al., 2025) that provide opportunities for students to engage in practical learning experiences in leadership (Deng et al., 2020; Tran & Nagirikandalage, 2025), decision-making (Manurung et al., 2024), program management (Aziz et al., 2021), public communication (Faustyna, 2023), and cross-disciplinary collaboration (Ellingsen et al., 2021; Sulistyanto et al., 2021). Through active participation in UKM, students are expected to develop their personal potential—to support academic success and to enhance their readiness to contribute meaningfully to society.

STIE Wibawa Karta Raharja (Wikara Business School), as a private higher education institution, encourages students to actively participate in student activities as part of a holistic learning process. However, the level of student participation in Student Activity Units (UKM) varies considerably in terms of frequency of involvement, duration of membership, and organizational role. This variation raises a critical question: to what extent does student involvement in UKM significantly contribute to the development of students' soft skills?

This study focuses on students of STIE Wibawa Karta Raharja, class of 2023, as the research subjects. Student activities within the Student Activity Units (UKM) are measured based on three main aspects: level of participation (Panjaitan et al., 2021), duration of involvement (Leksuwankun et al., 2023), and membership status (Aziz et al., 2021). Meanwhile, soft skills are assessed through seven key dimensions: public speaking ability (Alfi & Amalia, 2024), entrepreneurship (Putera et al., 2022), teamwork (Bowers et al., 2023), leadership (Wati, 2023), problem-solving (Dorfman-Furman & Weissman, 2024; Vidal-Vilaplana et al., 2024), critical and creative thinking (Darwis et al., 2024), and time management (Dorfman-Furman & Weissman, 2024).

The findings of this study are expected to contribute to student development efforts at the institutional level, while also providing insights into how non-formal education through campus organizations can support economic empowerment and enhance the capacity of young human resources. This aligns with the direction of higher education policy, which emphasizes the importance of synergy between

academic activities and character development in preparing graduates who are competitive and socially impactful.

Based on the background described earlier, this study addresses three main research problems. First, what are the characteristics of the student activities of fourth-semester students at STIE Wibawa Karta Raharja in participating in Student Activity Units (UKM), viewed from the perspectives of participation level, duration of involvement, and membership status. Second, what is the level of students' soft skills mastery when assessed across the seven dimensions studied, namely public speaking, entrepreneurship, teamwork, leadership, problem-solving, critical and creative thinking, and time management. Third, is there a significant effect of student participation in UKM on their overall soft skills mastery.

In line with the research problem, this study aims to comprehensively describe the extracurricular activities of fourth-semester students at STIE Wibawa Karta Raharja within Student Activity Units (UKM), analyze the level of students' soft skills across seven dimensions, and examine the influence of UKM involvement on the development of students' soft skills. This objective is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the contribution of non-formal education, particularly through student organizations, to the enhancement of students' personal capacities.

Both theoretical and practical contributions are provided by this study. Theoretically, it should help advance scholarly discussions about the connection between extracurricular activities in higher education and the development of students' soft skills, which are a component of the social and economic capital needed for the future. Practically, the findings of this study can be utilized by various stakeholders. For educational institutions, the results may serve as a basis for designing more effective student development strategies that focus on enhancing graduates' competencies. For students, this research may raise awareness of the importance of engaging in student organization activities (UKM) as a means of character building and soft skills development. Meanwhile, for advisors or managers of student organizations, the findings can serve as a reference for formulating focused work programs that have a direct impact on improving students' capacities and readiness to face the challenges of the professional and entrepreneurial world. Based on the research problem and objectives, the hypothesis proposed in this study is as follows:

Ha: Student participation in Student Activity Units (UKM) has a statistically significant positive influence on students' soft skills proficiency.

Research Methods

This study employed a quantitative approach (Afriana et al., 2022) using a survey research design (Adam, 2020) to measure and analyze the influence of student involvement in Student Activity Units (UKM) on the development of students' soft skills. This approach was selected for its ability to provide an objective overview through numerical data collected from a large number of respondents. Data were gathered using a five-point Likert scale questionnaire (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016), designed to capture both the level of student activity in UKM and their proficiency in seven dimensions of soft skills (Avleeva, Byrd, et al., 2025; Bedoya-Guerrero et

al., 2024; Buayai et al., 2025; Ginting et al., 2020; Silitonga et al., 2025): public speaking, entrepreneurship, teamwork, leadership, problem-solving, critical and creative thinking, and time management.

The subjects of this study were all fourth-semester students of STIE Wibawa Karta Raharja, with a total population of 455 students. To determine a representative sample size, the Slovin formula (Munoz et al., 2023) was used with a 5% margin of error, resulting in a minimum required sample of 213 students. The sampling technique employed was simple random sampling (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016), in which each member of the population had an equal chance of being selected as a respondent. The questionnaire was distributed online via Google Forms (Adelia et al., 2021) to facilitate efficient distribution and data collection.

To ensure that each variable in this study could be measured systematically and consistently, the researcher developed an operational definition of variables. This includes detailing each variable into dimensions relevant to the study, measurement indicators, and the type of scale used. The independent variable in this research is student activity in Student Activity Units (UKM), which is broken down into three indicators: level of participation, duration of involvement, and membership status. Subsequently, the dependent variable is students' soft skills, which are categorized into seven dimensions reflecting essential interpersonal and intrapersonal competencies relevant to personal development and career readiness. All indicators in this study were measured using a five-point Likert scale, indicating levels of agreement or frequency in response to the provided statements. A detailed description of the operational definitions of each variable is presented in the following table.

Table 1. Operational Definition of Variables

| Variables & Dimensions | Indicators *) | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| Variable: Student Activity in Student Activity Units (Independent Variable/X) | | | | | |
| 1. Level of Participation | Frequency of participation in UKM activities (very rarely very frequently) | | | | |
| 2. Length of Membership | Duration of being an active UKM member (< 1 month - 1 year) | | | | |
| 3. Membership Status | Position within the organizational structure of UKM (non-member – core committee member) | | | | |
| Variable: Student Soft Sl | kills (Dependent Variable/Y) | | | | |
| 1. Public Speaking | Confidence in speaking in public; Ability to convey ideas effectively; Adjustment of intonation, speed, and gestures; Managing nervousness; Enthusiasm in performing before an audience. | | | | |
| 2. Entrepreneurship | Confidence in running a business; Ability to seize opportunities; Innovation in business; Willingness to take business risks; Interest in entrepreneurship. | | | | |
| 3. Teamwork | Comfort in working within a team; Effective communication in a team; Understanding of roles within a team; Collaboration with members from diverse backgrounds; Ability to resolve team conflicts. | | | | |
| 4. Leadership | Confidence in leading; Ability to make decisions; Motivation toward team members; Communication of vision and mission; Sense of responsibility as a leader. | | | | |
| 5. Problem Solving | Problem identification; Analysis of information for solutions; Collaboration in finding solutions; Evaluation of solutions; Responsiveness to failed solutions. | | | | |
| 6. Critical and Creative | Analysis from multiple perspectives; Questioning | | | | |
| Thinking | information; Creative and innovative ideas; Alternative approaches; Integrating ideas into new solutions. | | | | |
| 7. Time Management | Timely task completion; Prioritization of activities; Avoidance of procrastination; Balance between academic, organizational, and rest time. | | | | |

*) Measurement Scale: 5-point Likert scale

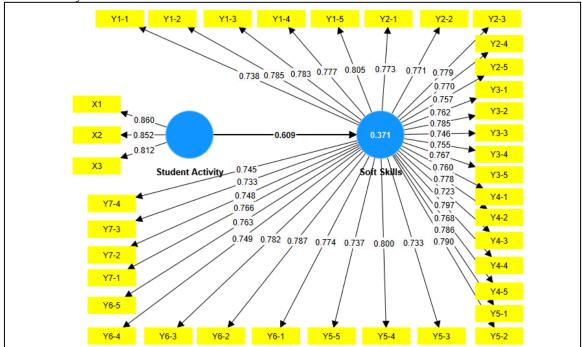
Sumber: Data Penelitian (2025)

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive analysis was employed to describe the characteristics of the respondents and the distribution of responses based on each variable indicator. Meanwhile, inferential analysis—which in this study is planned to use multiple linear regression techniques—was applied to examine both the simultaneous and partial effects of student activity variables (level of participation, length of involvement, and membership status) on students' mastery of soft skills. The entire data analysis process was carried out with the assistance of SmartPLS software to ensure accuracy in result interpretation.

Results and discussion

This study involved respondents who were fourth-semester students of STIE Wibawa Karta Raharja, selected as samples using the Slovin formula. A total of 215 respondents completed the questionnaire in full. The majority of respondents in this study were female, accounting for 85%, while male respondents made up 15%. This indicates that female participation in completing the questionnaire and in UKM activities at STIE Wibawa Karta Raharja was more dominant. As many as 80% of the respondents came from the Management study program, while 20% were from the Accounting study program.

To ensure that the indicators used in this study accurately reflect the latent variables being measured, convergent validity testing was conducted through the analysis of outer loading values. A good outer loading value indicates that an indicator has a strong correlation with the variable it represents. Generally, an acceptable outer loading value is ≥ 0.70 (Hair et al., 2022), which suggests that the indicator is valid. The following figure presents the outer loading values of each indicator for the variables Student Activity in UKM (X) and Student Soft Skills (Y). The results of the outer loading analysis indicate that all indicators used in this research instrument are valid and can be utilized for further structural model testing. There are no indicators that need to be eliminated, as all meet the criteria for convergent validity. This confirms that the questionnaire employed has effectively measured the variables of "student activity" and "student soft skills" both conceptually and statistically.



Source: Research Data (2025)

Figure 1. Outer Loadings & R-Square

To ensure that the variables in this research model are reliable and valid, a test of Construct Reliability & Validity was conducted, specifically using three measures:

Cronbach's Alpha (CA), Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The following table presents these values for the two main variables in this study:

Table 2. Construct Reliability & Validity

| | CA | CR (rho_a) | CR (rho_b) | AVE |
|------------------|-------|------------|------------|-------|
| Soft Skills | 0.979 | 0.980 | 0.980 | 0.588 |
| Student Activity | 0.795 | 0.807 | 0.879 | 0.708 |

Source: Research Data (2025)

Based on the results of the reliability and validity testing of the variables above, it can be concluded that: all variables in this model are reliable and valid. The high values of Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR) indicate that each variable has a very strong internal consistency among its indicators. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values, which exceed the minimum threshold of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2022), further confirm that the variables have successfully captured the constructs they are intended to represent. Therefore, the model can proceed to the next stage of analysis, namely the examination of relationships between variables through structural model testing (inner model).

Next, the Cross Loadings test was conducted to assess discriminant validity, which aims to ensure that each indicator measures its own construct more strongly than other constructs. In this case, the indicators of the Student Activity variable (X) should have high loadings on that variable, and lower loadings on the Soft Skills variable (Y). Similarly, the indicators of the Soft Skills variable (Y) should have the highest loadings on the Soft Skills construct, and lower loadings on the Student Activity construct.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity

| | SS | SA | | SS |
|------|-------|-------|------|-------|
| X1 | 0.584 | 0.860 | Y3-1 | 0.762 |
| X2 | 0.451 | 0.852 | Y3-2 | 0.785 |
| X3 | 0.486 | 0.812 | Y3-3 | 0.746 |
| Y1-1 | 0.738 | 0.494 | Y3-4 | 0.755 |
| Y1-2 | 0.785 | 0.490 | Y3-5 | 0.767 |
| Y1-3 | 0.783 | 0.502 | Y4-1 | 0.760 |
| Y1-4 | 0.777 | 0.543 | Y4-2 | 0.778 |
| Y1-5 | 0.805 | 0.523 | Y4-3 | 0.723 |
| Y2-1 | 0.773 | 0.538 | Y4-4 | 0.797 |
| Y2-2 | 0.771 | 0.490 | Y4-5 | 0.768 |
| Y2-3 | 0.779 | 0.466 | Y5-1 | 0.786 |
| Y2-4 | 0.770 | 0.412 | Y5-2 | 0.790 |
| Y2-5 | 0.757 | 0.454 | Y5-3 | 0.733 |

| | SS | SA |
|------|-------|-------|
| Y3-1 | 0.762 | 0.592 |
| Y3-2 | 0.785 | 0.494 |
| Y3-3 | 0.746 | 0.441 |
| Y3-4 | 0.755 | 0.449 |
| Y3-5 | 0.767 | 0.405 |
| Y4-1 | 0.760 | 0.500 |
| Y4-2 | 0.778 | 0.426 |
| Y4-3 | 0.723 | 0.413 |
| Y4-4 | 0.797 | 0.499 |
| Y4-5 | 0.768 | 0.407 |
| Y5-1 | 0.786 | 0.471 |
| Y5-2 | 0.790 | 0.461 |
| Y5-3 | 0.733 | 0.452 |
| | | |

| | SS | SA | |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|--|
| Y5-4 | 0.800 | 0.448 | |
| Y5-5 | 0.737 | 0.420 | |
| Y6-1 | 0.774 | 0.556 | |
| Y6-2 | 0.787 | 0.440 | |
| Y6-3 | 0.782 | 0.460 | |
| Y6-4 | 0.749 | 0.424 | |
| Y6-5 | 0.763 | 0.476 | |
| Y7-1 | 0.766 | 0.415 | |
| Y7-2 | 0.748 | 0.373 | |
| Y7-3 | 0.733 | 0.409 | |
| Y7-4 | 0.745 | 0.369 | |
| SS = Soft Skills | | | |
| SA = Student Activity | | | |

Source: Research Data (2025)

All three indicators of Student Activity show the highest loading values on the Student Activity construct, which are significantly higher than their loadings on the Soft Skills construct. This indicates that discriminant validity is established for the Student Activity construct. All indicators of Soft Skills consistently exhibit stronger correlations with the Soft Skills variable than with Student Activity, indicating that discriminant validity is also achieved for the Soft Skills construct.

To assess the extent to which the constructs in this model possess discriminant validity, two main approaches were employed: the Fornell-Larcker Criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). Discriminant validity is necessary to ensure that each construct in the model is truly distinct from the others, and that the indicators do not overlap with those of other constructs. The following table presents the results of both tests.

Table 4. Fornell-Larcker criterion & HTMT

| | Soft Skills | Student Activity | | |
|---|-------------|------------------|--|--|
| Fornell-Larcker criterion | | | | |
| Soft Skills | 0.767 | | | |
| Student Activity | 0.609 | 0.841 | | |
| Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) - Matrix | | | | |
| Student Activity | 0.674 | | | |

Source: Research Data (2025)

Based on the results of the Fornell-Larcker Criterion, the square root of AVE (\sqrt{AVE}) for each construct is higher than its correlation with other constructs. The $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$ value for Soft Skills is 0.767, while its correlation with Student Activity is 0.609. Similarly, the √AVE for Student Activity is 0.841, which is also higher than its correlation with Soft Skills. This indicates that each construct demonstrates good discriminant validity. Furthermore, the HTMT (Hair et al., 2022) value between the constructs Student Activity and Soft Skills is 0.674, which is below the maximum threshold of 0.85. This suggests that there are no discriminant validity issues based on the HTMT approach. Thus, both assessment methods consistently confirm that discriminant validity has been achieved, indicating that the measurement model is sound and suitable for further structural model analysis

Following the completion of the measurement model's validity and reliability tests, the next step was to evaluate the structural model (inner model) to determine the extent to which the independent variable (Student Activity) could explain the variance of the dependent variable (Soft Skills). The R-square value was used to measure the model's predictive power, and the f-square was used to assess the magnitude of each construct's contribution to the target construct.

Table 5. R-square & f-square

| R-square | R-square | R-square adjusted | f-square | Soft Skills |
|-------------|----------|-------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Soft Skills | 0.371 | 0.368 | Student Activity | 0.590 |

Source: Research Data (2025)

The analysis results indicate that the R-square value for the Soft Skills construct is 0.371, which means that approximately 37.1% of the variance in Soft Skills can be explained by student activities in Student Activity Units (UKM). The remaining 62.9% is explained by other factors outside the model. According to Hair et al. (2022), an R-square value between 0.33 and 0.67 falls into the moderate category, indicating that this model has a reasonably good explanatory power. Meanwhile, the f-square value of the Student Activity construct on Soft Skills is 0.590, which is considered large. Therefore, it can be concluded that student involvement in UKM

has a substantial and significant contribution in shaping and influencing students' soft skills. This finding suggests that active participation in student organizations plays a vital role in the development of students' non-academic competencies.

Following the assessment of both the measurement and structural models, hypothesis testing was conducted to examine whether the independent variable (Student Activity) significantly influences the dependent variable (Soft Skills). The hypothesis testing was carried out using the bootstrapping technique in SmartPLS version 4, with the path coefficient, t-statistic, and p-value serving as the primary criteria for drawing conclusions.

Table 6. Hypothesis Testing

| Path | Path Coeff | Mean | STDEV | T stat | P values |
|---------|------------|-------|-------|--------|----------|
| SA → SS | 0.609 | 0.615 | 0.045 | 13.511 | 0.000 |

SA = Student Activity; SS = Soft Skills

Source: Research Data (2025)

Based on the results of hypothesis testing presented in Table 1, it is known that student activity in UKM (Student Activity) has a positive and significant effect on students' soft skills. The path coefficient value of 0.679 indicates a positive direction of the relationship. The t-statistic value of 14.639 far exceeds the minimum threshold of 1.95 for significance at the 5% level, and the p-value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Thus, the research hypothesis stating that participation in UKM has a significant effect on soft skills is accepted.

Discussion

The results of the data analysis indicate that student activities in Student Activity Units (UKM) have a significant effect on students' soft skills, with acceptable t-statistic and p-value values. These findings affirm that the more actively students are involved in UKM activities—whether in terms of frequency, duration of participation, or organizational role—the greater the development of various aspects of their soft skills. The results of this study support the findings of Ramadhanti et al. (2021), who examined the influence of student organizational activities on academic achievement and soft skills. Using a quantitative approach on students of the Faculty of Economics and Business at UNP Kediri, Ramadhanti et al. (2021) found a positive and significant impact on both aspects.

From the perspective of predictive strength, the R-square value indicates that the variation in students' soft skills can be explained by their participation in Student Activity Units (UKM) in this study. This suggests that involvement in student organizations (UKM) is one of the key factors influencing the development of soft skills. The findings of this study support the conclusions of previous research by Ishak et al. (2021) which found that 19 essential skills and attributes for engineering education and practice can be developed through co-curricular involvement at the undergraduate level.

Meanwhile, the f-square value obtained in this research reinforces this finding by indicating that the contribution effect of student activities on soft skills is considered large. This finding is consistent with previous studies that emphasize the importance of involvement in student organizations as an effective form of non-

formal learning. A prior study conducted by Sahabuddin (2024) found that soft skills training has a positive and significant effect on student employability. Self-efficacy also serves as a significant intervening variable, although its direct effect on employability is lower compared to that of soft skills training.

Furthermore, activities in student organizations (UKM) require students to communicate actively (Hidayah et al., 2022), solve problems collaboratively (Hussein, 2021), manage their time to complete both organizational and academic tasks (Mustaqim & Wahjoedi, 2024), and sharpen their leadership skills (Igbal et al., 2023). These aspects provide real-life practice opportunities for students to develop soft skills that are not always acquired in the classroom. Moreover, the indicators used in this study—such as public speaking, teamwork, problem solving, and critical thinking—all demonstrated high loading factor values, indicating that each aspect of soft skills was well represented by the questionnaire items. Similarly, the Student Activity construct showed strong construct validity, as evidenced by the cross-loading results and the AVE values that met the minimum standard.

Ultimately, the study's findings show that Student Activity Units (UKM) are more than just places for members to come together and explore their passions; they also provide essential opportunities for learning that help students enhance their professional and personal capabilities. Therefore, as part of a comprehensive human resource development strategy, higher education institutions have to encourage student engagement in campus organizations.

Conclusion

Based on the data obtained from fourth-semester students of STIE WWW through a questionnaire and processed using SmartPLS 4, several important findings were revealed.

First, the results of the descriptive analysis show that the majority of respondents are female and come from the Management study program. This provides a general overview of the population targeted in the measurement.

Second, the outer model results indicate that all indicators used demonstrate good validity and reliability. The outer loading values of all indicators exceed the minimum threshold, with the strongest indicators originating from the dimensions of public speaking, problem solving, and leadership. This indicates that participation in student activity units (UKM) contributes most significantly to the development of students' communication, leadership, and decision-making skills.

Third, the R-square value obtained in this research indicates that student activities in Student Activity Units (UKM) are able to explain the variance in students' soft skills. This means that active involvement in UKM has a moderate contribution in influencing the development of soft skills. Meanwhile, the f-square value obtained in this research indicates a large effect of student activity variables on soft skills.

Fourth, the hypothesis testing results show that student activities in UKM have a significant influence on soft skills development. This proves that the more active students are in participating and taking roles in UKM, the higher the level of soft skills development they gain.

These findings indicate that active participation in student organizations is a supplement to academic activities, and serves as a strategic means for developing non-technical skills (soft skills) that are highly valued in the professional world.

Therefore, higher education institutions should continue to encourage and facilitate student involvement in various Student Activity Units (UKM).

Suggestion

Based on the research findings and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are proposed:

- 1. As an educational institution, STIE Wibawa Karta Raharja should further optimize the role of Student Activity Units (UKM) as a medium for developing students' soft skills. The institution can provide more structured training in leadership, communication, and organizational management for both UKM leaders and members. Furthermore, integrating UKM activities into the non-academic assessment system could serve as a positive incentive for students to become more actively involved.
- 2. For students, based on the findings of this research, it is recommended to participate more actively in UKM activities by taking on strategic roles within the organization, rather than merely serving as regular members. These strategic roles can serve as practical training grounds to enhance essential skills such as public speaking, teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving
- 3. For future researchers, this study focuses solely on fourth-semester students at a single institution. Future researchers may broaden the scope by involving students from various academic levels or different institutions to obtain more generalizable results. In addition, a qualitative approach may be employed to gain deeper insights into students' experiences and perceptions regarding the impact of their involvement in student organizations (UKM).
- 4. For curriculum development, the findings of this study may serve as a consideration for university policymakers to integrate student organization activities into experiential learning components within the higher education curriculum. Soft skills are proven to be highly essential in the workplace; therefore, non-academic activities can be positioned as a key part of a holistic education strategy.

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