

# The Impact of Effective Coaching on Sales Performance Mediated by the Role of Soft Skills in the Tourism Industry

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## Abstract

*This research aimed to design a model for the role of effective coaching in achieving sales representatives' performance through soft skills for Iraqi tourism companies using quantitative and qualitative approaches. A questionnaire was designed to collect data to analyze the relationship between the research variables for (427) paragraphs that were randomly distributed to each tourism salesperson. To prove the model, five hypotheses were formulated where the effect and relationship were proven in all hypotheses using (SPSS, SMART PLS) programs. The results emphasize the importance of implementing strong coaching programs aimed at developing self-awareness, personal responsibility and personal skills among employees. Moreover, the study highlights the need for tourism service providers to comprehensively assess and develop personal skills alongside technical competencies during recruitment and performance management processes. It recommends providing value for the potential benefits of implementing coaching programs to support professional development and enhance the performance of front-line sales personnel. The results of this research can help in developing coaching strategies and coaching programs specifically designed to improve salesperson performance, and ultimately improve customer experience in the tourism services sector.*

**Keywords:** *Effective Coaching, Soft Skills, Sales Performance, Iraqi Tourism.*

## Introduction

Coaching practices have flourished effectively in recent decades, with companies spending approximately (50) million dollars annually to develop the skills of managers and employees (Day, 2000). It is estimated that the number of coaches working in companies increased by 500% between (1996 - 2002), with coaches charging between \$1,500 and \$15,000 per day for their services (Berglas, 2002). This growth is attributed to changes in the modern business environment, which have shifted focus towards human capital development, and the need for greater flexibility and adaptability of development processes. Such a technique is allegedly offered by executive coaching (Frisch, 2001; Hollenbeck, 2002). There is no empirical data on the techniques or efficacy of executive coaching, despite this notable expansion and the obvious need for good coaching.

As a result of the strong competition between companies specializing in tourism services, many strategies and methods have emerged that companies follow to maximize the level of sales performance, which is what many tourism services companies in the world have been interested in. (Schwepker & Dimitriou, 2021). Especially in light of the spread of some creative marketing behaviors through the use of methods followed by the sales representative thanks to his possession of soft skills that help him achieve his main goal, which is to convince the customer of the benefits and advantages he gets when completing the sale process to increase market share and compete with other tourism services companies, which is considered within the sales skills. (Bagozzi et al, 2013) (Shehata, 2020). But the real problem of the research lies in the

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imaginary perception that the sales representative forms about himself and some tourism companies for the sake of the tourism industry, which is that the increase in sales performance in the tourism industry lies in the volume of sales and profits he obtains without looking at other indicators, and this results in many negative indicators that affect the reputation and name of tourism service companies and their customers, and build a long-term bad mental image of companies known as (STORE IMAGE), which causes the circulation of bad words about companies and a decrease in their competitive position and the loss of customers and the failure to attract new "potential" customers. Accordingly, many research studies have emerged recently, including the Weber study (2015) and the Service study (2022), which emphasized the need to develop effective specialized coaching strategies to improve sales performance by developing soft skills, and its goal is to improve their soft skills. There is a general agreement through some studies that effective coaching improves the individual and the organization and leads to the development of sales representatives' skills, which in turn leads to achieving ideal sales performance, and the sales representative classifies "coaching skills" as one of the greatest skills. (Martin, 2015), which distinguishes between high-performing (versus low-performing) salespeople (Deeter-Schmelz, Goebel, and Kennedy, 2008). Some business managers also rank sales coaching as the most effective way to achieve sales goals (Sales Management Association, 2014).

Despite the great importance of coaching, many sales managers in companies lack the coaching to effectively train employees (subordinates) or so-called salespeople. (Dixon and Adamson, 2011). A recent survey conducted by Glob Force (2016) revealed that 93% of managers believe they need more coaching on how to train their employees.

The main goal of coaching is not to teach the sales representative how to convince customers of tourism services or influence their purchasing decisions, but rather to develop the soft skills possessed by the sales representative and thus influence their sales performance to create trust and credibility among customers towards the representatives, as the sales representative represents ambassadors for tourism companies and not just for the sales department, thus leading to the achievement of the tourism industry (Harkrider et al, 2013). Despite the importance of coaching sales representatives in influencing their performance, the results of some research studies, including Rossouw (2011) and Soltani (2018), indicated that many customers are not affected by the performance of sales representatives while providing tourism services as much as they are interested in the price and discounts on the services provided, and they are sometimes ignorant of the quality of the services provided. There is no important role for the sales representative in selling. Therefore, the research gap of the current research clarifies whether there is an effect between coaching and sales performance through the role of soft skills for the tourism industry in tourism companies.

### *Conceptual Framework*

#### *Effective Coaching*

Boser and Jones (2018) define coaching as a learning and development intervention that use goal-oriented relationships and cooperative reflections to accomplish desired results. According to Bond and Seneque (2013), the coaching method has been recognized as having the potential to create a sustainable learning process within the relationship by using collaborative facilitation rather than formal instructional prescribing.

According to Jones et al. (2016), coaching "The power relationship between executives and their subordinates" is the opposite. This is due to the fact that a coaches' enabling relationship with an independent coach does not involve a power dynamic. Therefore, one of the most important aspects of coaching is that it is a facilitating and interactive relationship in which assistance is provided to encourage talent to emerge. According to Hamlin et al. (2008), coaching is characterized by "the explicit and implicit intent to help individuals improve their performance in various areas."

(Bond & Seneque, 2013) Coaching is defined as "assistance provided to develop the ability to recognize their troublesome circumstances and come up with remedies," and is defined as "assistance provided to develop the ability to do so." Similarly, coaching is defined by Park et al. (2008) as the practice of helping

workers improve themselves to perform better. In this research, the term “coaching” refers to a collaborative and supportive interaction between two equal individuals that encourages the learner’s learning and development.

### *Awareness*

According to Hambrick (1981), awareness is an individual notion that relates to the extent to which important individuals are aware of the priorities that allow them to perform their jobs. According to CMOE, awareness is something that must evolve and expand with time. According to the researcher's findings, which are reflected in employee performance and attitudes toward the company, all organization members need to thoroughly understand the work to understand the company's current position and future goals. Think tanks are made up of employees from all levels of the organization who participate in decision-making. Think tanks are defined as global organizations that conduct research and analysis on public policy, study any subjects, and have an impact on public and private spheres. (Clark & Rodman, 2013).

Understanding how you affect the world, the people in your life, and the environment is the main objective of developing mindfulness. Trainees who receive private, effective coaching services may be less impacted by criticism they hear from peers, teachers, family members, and communities when these remarks reflect low expectations about their capacity to succeed in life. This is possible if we can foster mindfulness in the coaching environment through inclusion.

Being able to respond to novel, unusual, and interesting situations is a quality that requires constant improvement over time to be effective at the appropriate moment and within the overall context of the organization. This is because it is the outcome of a combination of advanced mental processes and the individual's content of thinking. Therefore, it cannot be learned like a method or tool. As per Awd and Abdullah (2023)

The term "awareness" refers to a broad way of thinking and planning that is open, sophisticated, flexible, and sophisticated. It allows administrative leaders in organizations to be aware of everything that goes on in the internal and external environments surrounding the organization and to take advantage of or eliminate these things to accomplish the goals for which the organizations are there. (Al-Kanani, 2024). Hence, Our hypothesis is as follows:

### **H1: Effective coaching has an impact on awareness.**

### *Responsible*

Performance does not improve when we are urged to take responsibility, expected to take responsibility, or even given responsibility if we do not fully embrace it. Even if there is an implied risk if we do not complete the task, doing so does not always improve performance. True responsibility always involves decision-making. (Whitmore, 2010)

Exercising responsibility is beneficial for progress. Managers are responsible for identifying areas where salespeople have room for growth and setting targets for that growth, as well as developing opportunities for salespeople to learn new skills and improve existing ones to improve their sales performance (Fatien & Otter, 2015). Being responsible in the workplace means being a responsible individual, which is similar to how neoliberal individualism grows to become more individualistic. One of the principles of coaching is for individuals to take responsibility for solving their problems without involving management in the process (FME Team, 2013)

What would you do if you were offered advice, especially if it was unsolicited, and you followed my advice but it did not work? Blame me, of course, which makes it very clear that you are holding me accountable. The failure was probably more due to your lack of initiative than my bad advice. When advice is given as a command in the workplace, ownership is zero, which can lead to anger, covert sabotage, or ownership of the opposite behavior. You forced me to do something because you hurt my self-esteem, and because I

can't make up for it by taking responsibility for an activity I didn't do, I accept responsibility for a different course of action that would hurt you. Of course, taking that action may hurt me too, but at least I will have gotten my revenge! If this (unconscious) slanted sequence seems exaggerated to you, let me tell you that millions of employees with unsatisfactory bosses will readily admit to following this path on occasion. Accountability is undoubtedly one of the most important skills that contribute to achievement in any endeavor. Awareness and responsibility seem to be the two most important behavioral variables of all, and the performer's attitude, also known as his or her state of mind, is the most important component of performance of any kind. This was the case even if there were significant differences in other areas (Whitmore, 2010). Based on this, we put forward the following hypothesis:

## **H2: Effective coaching has an impact on responsibility.**

### *Soft Skills*

The soft skills of a salesperson are a dynamic reality linked to resources and a pre-determined goal; in other words, it is a process that begins with selecting the right human resources and ends with ensuring that the goal is achieved. This indicates that having theoretical, applied, and behavioral knowledge is essential (Susilawati et al, 2021). This indicates that the salesperson's abilities are what enable him to carry out the tasks assigned to him. Using his experience and information to the maximum extent possible (Kreniter and Kenicki, 2007). The soft skills of a salesperson are described as a collection of individual characteristics and abilities that emphasize how well he deals with people at work and demonstrate his level of expertise (Vera, 2020). Soft skills relate to human capabilities and emphasize the individual's competence in the professional environment. Working for a travel agency is another talent that determines a person's success in the workplace. Taylor et al (2016) This means that they are essential competencies for people to work well in the 21st century, as well as being a crucial and successful element in the success of travel agencies and a significant influence on the behavior of representatives. These abilities are considered the new frontiers for evolving companies now and in the future and are essential for dedication and self-control within an organization to achieve its goals (Sadj, 2019).

It is said that possessing certain skills is essential for success in the workplace. Excellence is the way a person deals with people and builds a relationship with them. Some of them, such as behavior, communication, creative thinking, work ethics, teamwork, It might be challenging to identify, evaluate, and develop communication, creativity, work ethics, teamwork, communication, decision-making, positivism, time management, motivation, flexibility, problem-solving, critical thinking, and conflict resolution.(Airaksinen, 2018). It is a qualification that matches the quality of ability, one of the components of overall competence, and the degree of knowledge required to do one's job. Possessing these abilities, or a combination of behaviors, tendencies, and social qualities that make an individual a valuable team member and collaborator, is essential to completing the task (Noah and Aziz, 2020). Often referred to as people skills, they are the set of abilities required for each individual to be successful in life. These abilities, which enable people to find the best possible solution to any problem in life, include interpersonal skills, negotiation skills, communication skills, personality traits, professional traits, social intelligence, and emotional intelligence (Gupta et al., 2019).

Based on the assumed impact of effective coaching on soft skills, the following hypotheses are hypothesized:

## **H3: Awareness has an impact on soft skills.**

## **H4: Responsibility has an impact on soft skills.**

### *Sales Performance*

One aspect of work productivity is sales performance, which looks into possible products to help the business reach its objectives. Performance is a true indicator of an individual's or organization's performance at work or level of achievement due to their diligence in fulfilling their obligations. The work

reference results from a comparison with the standards used by the company, and therefore it is an achievement without a doubt. Sales performance includes two ideas: (1) the behavior of the salesperson; and (2) the salesperson's output (AQMALA, 2021).

According to Tabasum et al. (2014), the behavioral performance of a salesperson is an assessment of the various methods used in performing his duty. According to Akhtar et al (2024), the outcome performance is the assessment of the salesperson's contribution to achieving the organization's goal in the form of sales results. In an effective sales organization, the salesperson's ability to meet pre-set goals and contribute must be taken into account. The results of a variety of salesperson's actions, which change based on the nature of the task and circumstances, determine the success of the salesperson (Lepenioti, Bousdekisa, Dimitris Apostoloua, & Mentzas, 2020). Every effort made by a salesperson affects his performance, the company's sales results, and the good tourism industry (Chinelato, 2022). It is the responsibility of the company to have each salesperson practice its established marketing plans. As a result, salespeople should benefit the company by increasing sales volume, profits, and customer happiness (White et al., 2019).

As for the results of Lepenioti et al. (2020), salespeople with sales skills are better able to achieve their sales goals (White et al. 2019), and salespeople with technical expertise, strong communication skills, and the ability to meet business sales goals are the reasons for their success. This finding is consistent with the research conducted by (Lepeniota et al. 2020), which found that high-performing salespeople are more eager to close deals with customers, communicate with them, and are more interested in building long-term relationships. On the other hand, poor-performing salespeople focus more on closing deals and treating each customer in the same way throughout the entire sales process.

A seller's effectiveness can be assessed using his or her ability to increase the company's market share, increase revenue, and generate significant profit from the items he or she offers. To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of sellers, a company must arrange several relevant initiatives to help team members achieve specific goals (Donassolo & De Matos, 2014). It is often believed that expertise in the product or market is essential. Proficiency in sales-related tasks (Lee et al., 2021).

Sales performance is a measure of how effective or efficient a tourism company is and generally refers to the degree to which employees or subdivisions of the company achieve their quantitative and qualitative objectives. b. Performance can also be considered a measure of how effective or efficient an organization is in its operations. How performance is judged is highly variable from one situation to another. About the subject of the study Because the goals and structures of the organization for each sector differ from each other, for this reason research must adopt appropriate performance objectives (Yeo & Jan 2022).

Oliver and Anderson (1994) classified salespeople's success in terms of two types of behavioral performance: results-based and outcome-based. When we talk about behavioral performance, we are referring to qualitative performance, such as the ability to provide excellent customer service that salespeople and the extent to which one has acquired capabilities directly related to sales. On the other hand, when we talk about results-based performance, we are referring to what is described as the measurable results of salespeople's efforts, such as the amount of product sold or the large profit made. In addition, sales performance takes into account the contribution and effort made by salespeople about the product or service being sold (McKenzie, 1993). To achieve the goals set by the company. As well as the formation of relationships and behavior patterns that can deepen the relationship that develops after the consumer decides to make a purchase (Yu and Gan 2022). On this basis, we present the following hypothesis:

**H5: Soft skills have an impact on sales performance.**

## Methodology

Sales performance cannot be measured and known without knowing the other factors affecting it and related to effective coaching and knowing the soft skills they possess and their function in the travel and tourism sector. In this study, the mixed method was used, which relies on adopting both qualitative and quantitative methods. Through qualitative analysis (qualitative method), the effect of effective Coaching on

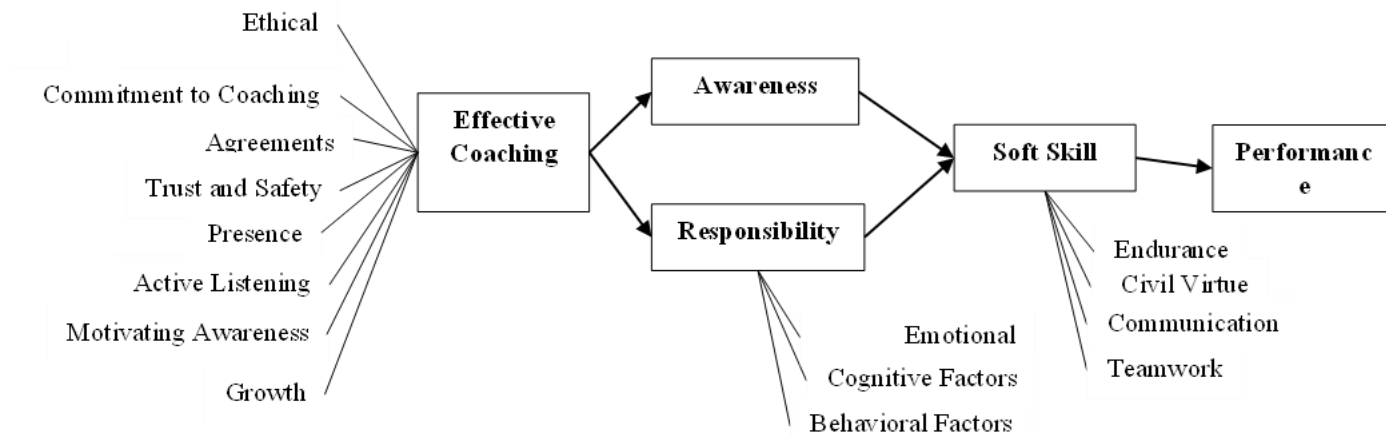
soft skills as a mediator is identified through objective analysis and knowing the dimensions of both variables. In the absence of a definition, the topic must be divided to understand what it consists of before identifying it. A model for variables is also reached through objective analysis by coding. Personal interviews were also conducted with managers in tourism companies and marketing experts, totaling (25) experts and managers. Appropriate in-depth interviews were conducted until theoretical saturation was reached, and the demographic characteristics of the respondents to the qualitative section are presented in Table 1., to identify the important factors for effective coaching and an effective trainer, what are the soft skills that result in effective coaching, and to know the skills that must be available in a good sales representative who achieves ideal sales performance. Based on this, a model was reached for effective coaching and soft skills, and then sales performance and the models that affect it are identified using the quantitative approach through a questionnaire with the help of a ready-made quantitative model that was previously tested. This study attempts to develop and build a model for the role of effective coaching in sales performance through the role of soft skills in the tourism industry.

**Table1.** Demographic Characteristics of Qualitative Part

No	Age	Gender	Experience	Education	Job
1	53	Male	19 years	Bachelor's	Company manager
2	46	Male	9	Bachelor's	Company manager
3	40	Male	14	Ph.D.	Company manager
4	39	Male	16	Master	Company manager
5	47	Male	13	Bachelor's	Company manager
6	52	Male	27	Ph.D.	University Professor
7	37	Male	9	Ph.D.	University Professor
8	42	Male	18	Ph.D.	University Professor
9	39	Male	16	Ph.D.	University Professor
10	50	Male	23	Ph.D.	University Professor
11	33	Male	7	Bachelor's	Assistant Director
12	29	Male	4	Bachelor's	Assistant Director
13	47	Male	9	Master's	company manager
14	34	Female	7	Master	Assistant Director
15	30	Female	4	Bachelor's	Assistant Director
16	37	Female	9	Bachelor's	Assistant Director
17	46	Male	12	Masters	manager
18	51	Male	26	Ph.D.	University Professor
19	48	Female	20	Ph.D.	University Professor
20	47	Male	13	Ph.D.	University Professor
21	56	Male	22	Ph.D.	University Professor
22	42	Female	17	Ph.D.	University Professor
23	45	Male	11	Ph.D.	University Professor
24	49	Male	18	Ph.D.	University Professor & International coach
25	42	Male	12	Ph.D.	University Professor

The figure below shows the construction of the model that was reached:

Fig. 1 Conceptual model



### Data Analysis

Five hypotheses are investigated in this study. The study hypotheses are investigated using the SMART PLS program and the structural equation modeling approach. Research aiming to test a particular model of the relationship between variables employs structural equation model analysis. This model offers a thorough method for evaluating theories on the connections between latent and observable variables (Homan, 2017). Simple and multiple regression by ordinary least squares are combined in an iterative process to estimate structural and measurement parameters in the partial least squares technique. As a result, it is avoided to assume that the observed variables are co-distributed. This method allows for the simultaneous assessment of the validity and reliability of the theoretical construct measurement tool.

### Cronbach's Alpha

Details regarding the research components' Cronbach's alpha are included in Table 2. All latent variables exhibit Cronbach's alpha coefficients larger than 0.7, as seen in the table below, indicating that the measurement models are appropriately fitted.

**Table 2.** Reliability Coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha) Of Research Questionnaires

Variables	Cronbach's alpha
Effective coaching	0.942
Soft skills	0.869
Awareness	0.840
Personal responsibility	0.899
Job performance	0.842

### Composite Reliability

The composite reliability coefficients of the research components are shown in Table 3. The appropriate fit of the measurement models is demonstrated by the fact that all latent variables have composite reliability coefficients larger than 0.7, as seen in the table below.

**Table 3.** Composite Reliability Coefficients

Variables	Composite Reliability coefficients
Effective coaching	0.947

Soft skills	0.893
Awareness	0.876
Personal responsibility	0.915
Job performance	0.880

### Measurement Model

Convergent, discriminant, face, and construct validity have all been investigated to verify the validity of the measurement tool. By making sure that the measurement indicators are compatible with the body of existing literature, face validity has been established. This coherence was attained by surveying the professors. The accuracy and significance of the chosen indicators are assessed using construct validity, which demonstrates whether the indicators offered appropriate factor structures to measure the construct under study in the research model. Assume that the absolute value of the T statistic is greater than 1.96 and that the factor loading value is greater than 0.4. Then, at a 95% confidence level, it can be said that the indicators offer a good factor structure for gauging the structures under study in the research model. The construct validity has been examined using confirmatory factor analysis. (Homan, 1387). The results of the confirmatory factor analysis are shown in the table below.

For examining the factor loadings, the abbreviations related to the research questions are presented in the following table (4):

**Table 4.** Abbreviations Used in the Research and (AVE)

Variables	Dimensions	Abbreviations	AVE Value
<b>Effective Coaching</b>	Ethical Practice	C1-C5	0.400
	Commitment to Coaching Mindset	C6-C10	
	Agreements	C11-C15	
	Trust and Safety	C16-C18	
	Presence	C19-C22	
	Active Listening	C23-C26	
	Motivating Awareness	C27-C32	
<b>Soft Skills</b>	Growth	C33-C36	0.410
	Endurance	S1-S5	
	Civil Virtue	S6-S10	
	Communication	S11-S15	
<b>Awareness</b>	Teamwork	S16-S18	0.440
	--	A1-A9	
<b>Responsibility</b>	Emotional Factors	R1,R2,R5,R7,R10,R15, R18-R20, R22-R24	0.406
	Cognitive Factors	R3,R9,R11,R16,R17	
	Behavioral Factors	R21,R12-R14,R8,R6,R4	
<b>Seals performance</b>	--	P1-P7	0.513



## Findings

### *Descriptive Statistics Results*

Descriptive findings on the demographic characteristics of participants show that out of 427 respondents, 80.6% of the sample are male respondents and 19.4% are female respondents. In terms of age, the largest number of respondents is related to the age group between 30-40 years with the number of 108 people (36.8 percent) and the lowest number of respondents is associated with the age group of More than 50 years with the number of 43 people (10.1 percent). Regarding educational status, the highest number of respondents is related to bachelor's education status with 240 people (56.2%), and the lowest is related to associated education status with 18 respondents (4.2%).

### *Inferential Statistics Results*

#### *Hypothesis 1: Effective Coaching Affects the Awareness*

The hypothesis has a significance level of 25.633, which is higher than 1.96. Consequently, it is concluded that there is a substantial correlation between awareness and effective coaching. Awareness is impacted by effective coaching, and the standardized path coefficient between these two variables (0.689) indicates that, in a direct path, the effective coaching variable accounts for 68.9% of the variations in the awareness variable. Thus, it can be concluded that hypothesis 1 is supported and that there is a significant correlation between awareness and effective coaching because the T statistic value is greater than 1.96.

#### *Hypothesis 2: Effective Coaching Affects the Responsibility*

The hypothesis has a significance level of 7.573, which is higher than 1.96. Consequently, the relationship between effective coaching and responsibility is found to be significant. The standardized coefficient of the path between the two variables (0.407) indicates that the effective coaching variable directly explains 40.7% of the changes in responsibility. Thus, it can be concluded that hypothesis 2 is validated and that there is a significant correlation between effective coaching and responsibility given that the T statistic value is greater than 1.96.

#### *Hypothesis 3: Awareness Affects the Soft Skills*

The hypothesis has a significance level of 10.314, which is higher than 1.96. Therefore, it is concluded that awareness and soft skills have a significant relationship and that awareness influences soft skills. The standardized path coefficient between awareness and soft skills, which is 0.472, indicates that awareness directly explains 47.2% of changes in soft skills. Thus, it can be concluded that hypothesis 3 is supported and that there is a significant correlation between awareness and soft skills given that the T statistic value is greater than 1.96.

#### *Hypothesis 4: Responsibility Affects the Soft Skills*

At 4.758, the hypothesis's significance level is higher than 1.96. The standardized path coefficient between responsibility and soft skills (0.227) indicates that awareness accounts for 22.7% of changes in soft skills in a direct path, indicating that the relationship between responsibility and soft skills is significant and that responsibility influences soft skills. Given that the T statistic value is greater than 1.96, it can be concluded that hypothesis 4 is validated and that there is a significant correlation between soft skills and responsibility.

#### *Hypothesis 5: Soft Skill Affects Performance*

At 6.728, the hypothesis's significance level is higher than 1.96. The standardized path coefficient between soft skills and performance (0.394) indicates that awareness accounts for 39.4% of performance changes in a direct path, indicating that there is a significant relationship between soft skills and performance. Given

that the T statistic value is greater than 1.96, it can be concluded that hypothesis 5 is validated and that there is a significant correlation between performance and soft skills.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The overall success and performance of any organization is directly contingent upon and influenced by the competence, skills, and productivity of the employees that comprise its workforce (Edirisinghe, & Manuel, 2019). Organizations operating in the experience-based economy, such as those in the tourism and hospitality industries, which primarily provide experiential offerings rather than tangible goods or services (Pine, & Gilmore, 1998), are heavily reliant on direct human interactions and face-to-face engagement between customers and staff. These experience-centric organizations are increasingly facing challenges in attracting, engaging, and retaining skilled and talented employees (King et al., 2021). The experiential and interactive nature of the customer-employee interface in these industries amplifies the importance of having a committed, engaged, and capable workforce, further exacerbating the talent attraction and retention challenges faced by experience-oriented organizations (Nickson et al., 2005). Managerial coaching has been recognized as a critical leadership behavior that organizations should actively encourage and cultivate among their managers in order to facilitate employee development and drive higher levels of individual and organizational performance (Pousa, & Mathieu, 2014). Throughout the coaching process, the coach's primary role is to provide meaningful guidance and support to the individuals being coached. The coach aims to facilitate a process of self-discovery for the coachees, whereby the coach helps to awaken and cultivate the coachees' intrinsic and extrinsic motivations through the use of coaching techniques, targeted questioning, and active listening (Whitmore, 2017)

The **First Hypothesis** of this research has investigated the relationship between coaching variables and awareness. This hypothesis states that coaching has a positive and significant relationship with awareness. This hypothesis was confirmed. The cultivation of heightened awareness is widely regarded as a fundamental component of impactful and successful leadership in the contemporary organizational context. Awareness represents a form of contextual or situational knowledge, where new information that was not previously accessible may now be available. This awareness requires the cognitive process of recognition or a commitment to future action (Siminovitch, 2018). The integration of coaching competencies into a manager's skillset has become increasingly prevalent. Through the implementation of regular coaching-based dialogues, managers who adopt a coaching orientation can exert a substantial influence on nurturing trust, awareness, accountability, and learning among their direct reports. Ultimately, this coaching-centric management approach has the potential to positively impact employee engagement and organizational performance (McCarthy, & Milner, 2013). In other words, McCarthy, & Milner (2013) acknowledge that coaching affects awareness. In this vein, Liddy et al., (2015), in the field of health coaching stated that coaches helped patients develop a heightened awareness of their behavior. Therefore, the results of their study are consistent with our hypothesis. Also, James et al., (2020) believed that Coaching enables individuals to bring their internal knowledge and awareness into the forefront of their consciousness. This allows them to consider and work from multiple perspectives, rather than being limited to a single, narrow viewpoint. Salminen-Tuomaala, (2020) also found that simulation coaching is an effective method for situational awareness, therefore, it is consistent with the result of our study.

Concerning the **Second Hypothesis**, which states that effective coaching affects responsibility, it can be said, that the coaching process employs a methodology of inquiry and personal exploration to enhance the client's level of self-awareness and sense of accountability. Coaching provides the client with a structured framework, supportive guidance, and constructive feedback to facilitate this increased awareness and responsibility (Barkley, 2010). Dzingwa, & Terblanche, (2024) found that coaching affects accountability, and coaching practitioners should strive to ensure that their coaching programs incorporate tailored strategies and techniques aimed at assisting women leaders in effectively managing their emotional, professional, and domestic responsibilities. Therefore, it is in alignment with the results of our research. The results of Askhatova et al., (2015) 's econometric analysis confirmed the effectiveness of coaching as a tool in supporting employees' fulfillment of their direct job responsibilities and in advancing their career growth prospects. Their study revealed that coaching interventions enhance the propensity of employees

to engage in self-development and self-improvement activities. This increased propensity for self-improvement subsequently leads to enhanced efficiency in the employees' work activities.

The results of *hypothesis 3* showed that awareness affects soft skills. In this context, Akhtar et al., (2024) highlight the need to improve soft skills awareness and coaching among dental professionals, which is consistent with our study's focus.

Regarding *hypothesis 4* which states that responsibility affects soft skills, the data suggests that when individuals are entrusted with more complex, high-stakes responsibilities, they are challenged to navigate ambiguous situations, make sound judgments, and effectively collaborate with others - all of which serve as catalysts for the cultivation of soft skills. This underscores the importance of designing academic and professional environments that provide meaningful opportunities for individuals to take on greater accountability and ownership over impactful projects and decisions (Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2006). Azim et al., (2010) stated that soft skills are equally vital for navigating the dynamic, social, and complex contexts inherent in most projects. Therefore, it is consistent with our research results.

Regarding *hypothesis 5* which states that soft skill affects performance, the data suggests that soft skills have become a widely used term in recent times, referring to the personal, cross-cutting competencies that individuals possess. These include social aptitudes, language and communication abilities, interpersonal friendliness, teamwork skills, and other personality traits that shape the nature of relationships between people (Cimatti, 2016). Kačamakovic, M. K., & Lokaj, 2021 found that soft skills are important for business development. This confirms the alternative H5 hypothesis. Ibrahim et al., (2017) suggest that employees who are able to effectively develop and demonstrate soft skills, such as communication, problem-solving, and teamwork, tend to exhibit higher levels of overall job performance. In this vein,

The results of multiple regression analysis of soft skills Jantarachot, C., & Lalaeng, 2023 showed that soft skills including self-awareness, managing emotion, self-regulation, recognizing emotions in others, and social skills had a statistically significant positive impact on the work performance of graduates.

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