



DOI: <https://doi.org/10.64672/IJIFR/26.02.13.6.003>

Published on: February 20, 2026

SOFT SKILLS FOR SUSTAINABLE FUTURES: EXAMINING THE ROLE OF LITERATURE IN SOCIAL INNOVATION AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Tanveer Gulab¹, Dr. L.V. Padmarani Rao²

¹ Research Scholar, ² Professor

PG Department of English & Research Centre.

Yeshwant Mahavidyalaya, Nanded, Maharashtra-India

ABSTRACT: *Human beings have been considered as the wisest species on the planet. The human civilization reached its peak with the discovery of language, living in social groups, developing common living standards and societal harmony. And hence it is evident that humans need social living, cultural coherence and harmony. Aristotle has rightly said, 'Human is a social and political animal.' Hence, social innovation and inclusive growth cannot take place without having the proper understanding of the core-needs of the society. Thus, in understanding of the core needs of the society, the role of literature is significant. As it is said that 'literature is the criticism of life' and human life is about living in harmony, believing in prosperity for all. Hence, literature can become the efficient, effective and crucial tools to achieve sustainable futures, social innovation and inclusive growth. Moreover, the paper tries to highlight the role of soft skills as a part of literature in understanding the importance of sustainable future by achieving social innovation and Inclusive growth. The paper uses demonstrative, analytical and critical approach. The paper also addresses the gaps between soft skills in aligned with literature and considering that the subjects are not separate entities to depart the global issues in specific domains. Hence to make this life or the planet more sustainable, inclusive and innovative for all, it is essential to understand the core parameters of the society with the help of Soft Skills and Literature.*

KEYWORDS: *Soft Skills, Sustainable Development Growth, Social Innovation and Inclusive Growth, Communication Skills*

PAPER CITATION:

Gulab, T., Padmarani Rao, L.V.. : "Soft Skills for Sustainable Futures: Examining the Role of Literature in Social Innovation and Inclusive Growth", *International Journal of Informative & Futuristic Research (IJIFR)*, Vol.(13) (6), February 2026, pp. 770-775. IJIFR Paper ID: 2026/02/IJIFR/V13/E6/003



BY-NC-SA 4.0 This article is an open access article published under the terms and conditions of the CC- BY –NC –SA 4.0 Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial- ShareAlike 4.0 International Public License. All copyright Reserved to author Author & publisher. Copyright© IJIFR 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

The human life and tradition is need-based as with needs, human beings have changed their course of actions. Need became the powerful tool to adapt to the situations and hence with evolving time human beings have changed themselves rapidly. As human discovered the language, the medium of writing has flourished, and from tradition to writing artistic literary works have evolved. In Contemporary world, digital communication has connected the world together into a single entity.

Hence rapidly changing world has demanded the employability skills in almost all the professions and domain. Along with technical skills certain other skills were also required to perform well in the career to achieve growth. As human is a very dynamic species and hence continuous learning is the hallmarking feature of human existence. Thus, to achieve sustainability in the life one requires awareness and critical thinking, decision making abilities and communication skills.

As in contemporary world the sustainable future is crucial across the global boundaries and the generations to come. The world after globalization has become more connected hence the need of skills become the urgency of the time. Since the ages, the history has witnessed the progressive civilizations which had standardized sets of values, accepted behavior as their standards of living such as Indus valley civilization marked the social coexistence without any prominent religious hallmark shows its secular features of that point of time.

Thus for the continuity of human civilization, social harmony and with progress certain accepted standards are nowadays crucial to make sustainable future. Hence the role of literature and soft skills for greater and conceptual understanding for the sustainable future is crucial. As literature provides real life based or fictional glimpse of human nature and the behavior through which human can learn the accepted behavior distinctly.

2. ROLE OF LITERATURE IN SOCIAL INNOVATION AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Human life is dynamic, magnificent and diverse. What a human has experienced and can imagine will become the literature in the future. As it is said that literature is the criticism of life and life is the journey of human where essence is lies in the human heart, mind and in action. Literature depicts the reality of life or society and explores imaginative aspects of human mind in other word the former called as non-fictional literature and later known as fictional literature. Literature can be in the oral form or in the written form. It can be explored in various genres such as poetry, drama, novel, short story etc. Role of literature in the sustainable future can be depicted understood ways

- At present for climate change the global agencies such as UNESCO and UN environment, people promoted literature and literary lines as a tools for environmental consciousness, especially on World Environment Day etc.
- UN platforms have published poems and literary reflections related to climate change as a moral and cultural crisis not just a scientific one.
- World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) frequently used and adapted literary lines, parables and emotionally charged storytelling, it also prefers to use metaphor rich language to connect people rather technical or mechanical one.
- Use of eco-poetry, narratives by world organizations shows the role of literature in increasing the awareness.
- Use of slogans and quotes for social awareness and raising issues, role of literature is significant.
- To society more coherent and sustainable, literature can guide the human actions.

Hence literature is the artistic expression of human life. It can be understood in the following ways:

Literature	Social Innovation and Inclusive Growth	Impact
Poetry	Heals human in life, gives courage	Poetry, Ghazal online Programs
Novels	Make individual aware about situations, inspires to take initiatives, gives courage to follow less discovered paths	Real life based movies
Drama	Shows reality or serious issues of society and increases awareness	Street plays, poster presentation
Letters	Precise medium of communication	Standardization of language and formats
Short Stories	Popular form, heal people and refreshes them	Short clips on social awareness issues

Figure 1: Impact of Literature on Social Innovation and Inclusive Growth

Hence the role of literature in sustainable living is essential. As literature brings morality into actions, it widens the role of human and their moral encompass. Literature can become the moral voice for raising 21st century's issues and challenges. Even the guiding pillars of human rationality i.e. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) also cherish the literary aspects such as

- SDG 4 explicitly promotes quality *Education* which asserts reading, critical thinking and literacy on the other hand it also encourages cultural texts, humanities and language learning as well. It also supports access to books and improvement in knowledge system.
- As the Target 4.6 and 4.7 of SDG 4 ensures reading and promotion of literature and ensure learners acquire knowledge which leads to sustainable development which explicitly allows and encourages literature, storytelling, eco-literature and cultural narratives.
- SDG 5 which is about *Gender Equality*, which has directly gave the voice and legitimate relevance to literary world by expanding women's writing, feminist literature and representation.
- SDG 11 mentions *Sustainable Cities and Communities*. It enables to preserve the cultural heritage which works as an inspiration for literature generation.
- Implicitly SDG 13 mentioned *Climate Actions* which also shows the relevance of literature where narratives and storytelling explicitly used (also acknowledged by UNESCO and UN).
- SDG 16 talks about *Peace, Justice And Strong Institutions*, for the sustenance of these abstract values literature can become guiding encompass as past teaches what not to repeat hence rich literary tradition helps to bring values in action. It also promotes dialogue, ethics and empathy.
- SDG 10 talks about *Reduced Inequalities*, which also gives voice to marginalized communities, postcolonial literature, storytelling and folk literature.

Thus it is evident that literature is the artistic form of powerful expression used widely by various organizations and group of people to sensitize humanity, to generate common consensus make the life and future sustainable.

3. SOFT SKILLS FOR SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

The contemporary world with rapid changes in the technology has given the signal to the world's workforce to enhance skills to meet the global demands. Hence the role of literature is wider to enhance the qualities in real life such as communication skills, personality development skills, and empathy etc., here come the role of soft skills. According to the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, soft skills are personal abilities and traits. Soft skills are the personal qualities reflected in the individual behavior. Soft skills are non-technical in nature they are cognitive aspects of human mind.

Soft skills refine the personality and enhance the human behavior. There are dozens of soft skills such as communication skills, personality development, emotional intelligence, stress management skills, leadership skills, empathy, decision making and critical thinking etc. Soft skills are the building blocks of human behavior in the society. The soft skills help in understanding the literary view better as through the literature one can understand

- The society well and the values society accepts and cherishes.
- Through literature visual memory expands and helps to reflect in a better way
- Through the dialogues, poetic lines, and situations of the characters one can understand the skills well.

Hence the role of literature is like a laboratory and a cultural classroom. Hence it is rightly said that literature is the mirror of the society. And soft skills are the flowers blooming on the land of literature. The role of soft skills for sustainable can be understood in the following manner.

- Soft skill such as communication skills is one of the key skills. In communication the internal aspects can understood well. Communication as one of the key soft skills include intrapersonal communication and interpersonal communication in which the former is the communication with oneself and the later is related to engaging with others. Communication helps to deal with the situation effectively and reduces the chances of miscommunication. The world at present requires effective strategies and initiatives to start the communication and resolve the issues. Such as neighbor country's majority of the problems will resolve with effective and proper communication channel. Thus to make the world more inclusive and healthy human actions for all, proper communication as a soft skills is required.
- Emotional intelligence (EI) is one of the key soft skills. EI is required to make the lives more meaningful and effective. EI helps to understand the situation well. It helps to build the balanced life. Emotional intelligence required the deeper understanding of the situation well. It also required to have control over the emotions. EI is simply means an individual having the capacity to cope up with any situation effectively and efficiently. Hence EI is crucial to balance the situation and turn the surrounding into a sustainable future.
- Leadership skill is core aspect of human existence. In all the walks of life almost all the individuals have to take the decision and manage their life. Hence leadership skill provides the ground to take the responsibility of the human life. Leader guides the actions and brings changes into the course of action. In sustainable future belongs to healthy, and vision oriented leaders.

Thus soft skills can become the essential tool to improve the individual behavior and also to make the sustainable future. Even the literature works as a laboratory where soft skills can be easily nurtured. In the following ways one can understand the relation of soft skills, with literature and its effects on sustainable futures.

Hence it can be said that soft skills are essential for future growth. Soft skills are the basic pillars of individual growth. Soft skills crucial for letting the individuals understand their role in the society. Soft skills have greater explicit and implicit impact on the human behavior and actions.

Soft Skills	Literature	Sustainable Futures
Leadership Skills	Samidha by Sadhana Tai Amte	Show leadership skills, how take initiatives for common cause e.g., they built hospitals for poor, taken care of leprosy patients
Communication Skills	Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen	Shows how miscommunication cause social disharmony among family relations and confusions
Personality Development Skills	The Beggar by Anton Chekov	The character of Sergei and Olga has influenced many as emotional attachment changes people
Teamwork	Samidha by Sadhana Tai Amte	A social work started by the couple at early hand later bloomed into the garden of services, many people joined later their projects
Stress Management Skills	Final Solutions by Mahesh Dattani	Stressful situation
Emotional Intelligence Skills	My Financial Career by Stephen Leacock	One relate the importance of control over emotions in public life and confidence building

Figure 2: Role of Soft Skills w.r.t. literature and Sustainable Future

Soft Skills	
Explicit Role of Soft Skills	Implicit Role of Soft Skills
i. Change in behavior	i. Change in the character
ii. Understanding of individual behavior	ii. Greater understanding of society
iii. Works at individual level	iii. Shapes in the society
iv. Cognitive process involved	iv. Social conditioning shapes future
v. Experience shapes personality	v. Shapes Experience and learning

Figure 3: Explicit and Implicit Role of Soft Skills

4. CONCLUSIONS

Soft skills are crucial to shape future actions and can make the life more sustainable. As soft skills are the basic abilities of the individual to make the personal growth. Literature is at the center in understanding the role of soft skills and its effects. Thus to make life more inclusive and sustainable the role of literature and its relation with soft skills is significant. As via the understanding of literature and soft skills one can make future inclusive with growth prospects such as:

- Soft skills help in individual awareness which ultimately leads in understanding of others as well.
- Through soft skills one can understand the needs of others which make human mind more sensitive for others and inclusive in the future.
- Through soft skills one can understand the emotional needs of other
- In critical thinking and decision making soft skills play a vital role hence in future it leads to sustainable decision making
- Ethical and moral reasoning leads to rational decision making
- Leadership skills help to take the actions responsibly and make the work more prosperous
- Empathy leads to understand the pain of others which lead to inclusive actions.

Thus soft skills have wider scope and role to play to make future actions more inclusive and sustainable. Hence in understanding the role of soft skills one has to understand the wider impact soft skills have on actions and also on the future. On the other hand literature has also a role to play in social inclusivity and innovation-driven growth.

References

- [1] Gulab, T. (2025). Practicality and the Role of Soft Skills Development through Literature. *Journal of English Language and Literature*, 12(4), 101–109. <https://doi.org/10.54513/JOELL.2025.12415>
- [2] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2019). *Culture: Urban future—Global report on culture for sustainable urban development*. UNESCO. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org>
- [3] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2017). *Re|Shaping cultural policies for the promotion of fundamental freedoms*. UNESCO. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org>
- [4] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2021). *Indigenous knowledge and climate change*. UNESCO. <https://www.unesco.org>
- [5] United Nations Environment Programme. (2018). *#BeatPlasticPollution: A guide for storytelling and creative communication*. UNEP. <https://www.unep.org>
- [6] United Nations. (2020). *The power of storytelling for sustainable development*. United Nations Department of Global Communications. <https://www.un.org>
- [7] World Wide Fund for Nature. (2016). *Living planet report 2016: Risk and resilience in a new era*. WWF International. <https://www.worldwildlife.org>