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A study on the factors affecting employability skills among college students in Namakkal District of Tamil Nadu

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Abstract
Enhancing the employability skills is considered as the important task within any educational institutions. Skills which are improving the capabilities should be taken into account during the formatting of the future skills requirements. As the market expectations of employers are different from the skills which are possessed by the Arts and Science graduates, this study has been conducted with the objective to find out the factor of the employability skill of the Arts and Science college students. Stratified sampling technique is used for the study. Post graduate students from the selected Arts and Science colleges in Namakkal the district are taken for the study. Two independent factors were identified to make a significant impact on the employability skills of Arts and Science graduates. The study concludes that the educational institutes should work on the path of developing the knowledge and skills of the graduates that will best serve the future era.

Keywords: Unemployment Rate, Employability Skill, Corporate Expectations

Introduction

In the past, few years before the globalization, privatization and liberalization were coming into existence, the problem of unemployment and under employment existed, not only in our country but all over the world. This problem exists due to the lack of right attitude, skills and competencies. Employability is a two sided coin and many individuals need various support to overcome the physical and mental barriers to learn and develops personally. The study focuses in all the 26 Arts and Science Colleges in the Namakkal district. The main successfully earning industrial areas of this district is body builders of trucks, rig units and poultry farm, the above said industrial areas are contributing to the important export of Namakkal district like truck body building industry. More and more private educational/technical institutions are coming up in recent years which flourishes for the district. The arts and science colleges in Namakkal district are witnessing an unprecedented crowd of student's year of 2015. All the seats of Arts and Science courses are filled. The reason for their growing demand is because there are finance companies and start-ups hiring them. Entrepreneurship is also equally growing in the Namakkal district. The job opportunities for arts and science graduates are seen a steep increase because the start-up prefer to recruit them. They don't hop jobs like the B.E graduates and not demand high salaries, arts and science graduate are in demand.

Employability is not about the vocational and academic skills. Individual needs are relevant and usable labour market information about the labor market options are also available to them. As per NSDC (National Skill Development Corporation) the 144 million new job opportunities that the industry and services sector have to create over the nine-year period from 2013-22 is woefully short by around 250 million people who will become eligible to join the workforce over this time period, the report of NSDC. As per analysis of India Skills Report, only 34 percent were employable in the years 2013 to 2014 which increased to 37.2 percent in 2014 to 2015 by the increase of just 1.3 percent. This scarcity of skilled talent makes it difficult for the talent supply chain to operate effectively. Hence one can imagine the enormity of the challenges to be faced in the year 2026, when approximately 64.8 percent of India's population would be in the working age of 15-60 years. Addressing this problem requires the participation from all the stakeholders of the supply chain - the academia, industry, and the government – with the meaningful steps towards a better understanding on the growing needs and expectations in order to manage the gaps in the job market better.

Table 1: Highest Employable Population in India

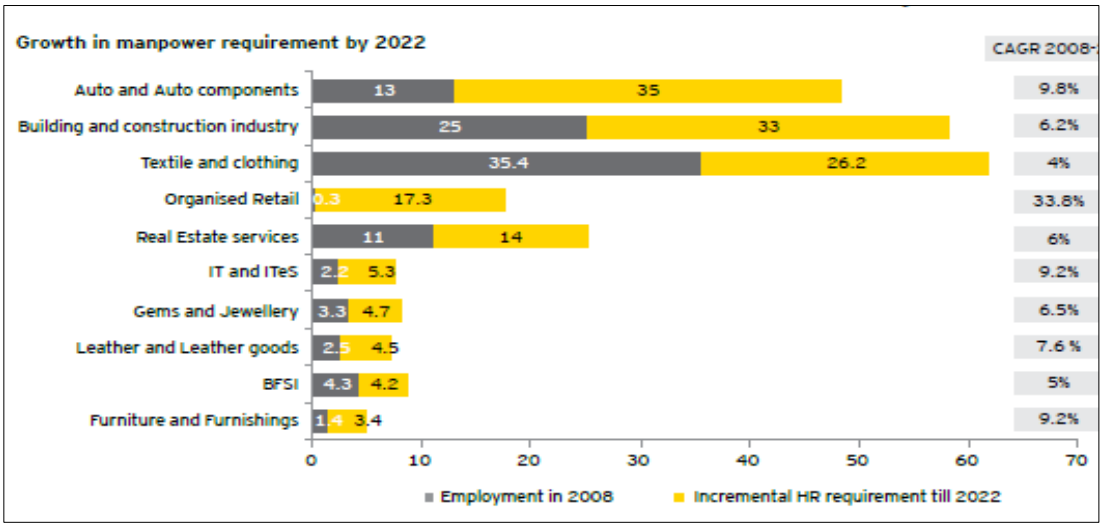
S. No	2015	2016
1	Delhi	Andhra Pradesh
2	Orissa	Uttar Pradesh
3	Uttar Pradesh	Delhi
4	Kerala	West Bengal
5	Bihar	Maharashtra
6	West Bengal	Rajasthan
7	Maharashtra	Tamil Nadu
8	Andhra Pradesh	Himachal Pradesh
9	Pondicherry	Jharkhand
10	Tamil Nadu	Haryana

Source: India Skill Report 2016

Table 1 exhibits the highest and lowest employable population among the leading 10 states of India for the year 2015 and 2016. The spread of this "employable" population is across the length and breadth of India. When the scores of 3 lakh students are analyzed geographically, few states appeared more density employable candidates than others. In the year 2015, Delhi has the highest employable population followed by Orissa, Kerala and Bihar in the year 2015. The lowest employable population

was Tamil Nadu. In the year 2016, Andhra Pradesh emerged as the highest employable state and the lowest is Haryana which compare to the present year's list of top 10 states, there are few new entrants like- Jharkhand, Haryana & Himachal Pradesh and few states which lost their presence in the top 10 states like Punjab & Karnataka.

Growth Manpower Requirement



Source: Transforming India's skill Development-Economic Times

India is expected to grow at the rate of 8%, on an average, in the next 10 years. More than 700 million Indians are estimated to be of in the working age by 2022. Out of these, more than 500 million require some kind of vocational or skill development training. The country has set a tough challenge in the field of vocational education and training in its approach paper in the Twelfth Five Year Plan. It aims to increase the percentage of workforce with formal skills to 25% at the end of the plan. It is estimated that 50–70 million jobs will be created in India over the next five years and about 75%–90% of these additional employment avenues will require some additional vocational training.

Statement of the problem

This article concentrates on why the educational institutions have failed to fulfil the required expectations of the industry. This growing mismatch between the education imparted and education required to enhance the employability needs and to be considered seriously. There are numerous employment opportunities, but the problem is the gap between the quality of higher education and the expectations of the job market. As such employability is affected by both the supply side and demand side factors which are often outside of an individual control. Higher education institutions may provide the subject matter expertise but still lack in imparting the essential skills in graduates to secure, maintain, and advance in the economically and mentally fulfilling careers.

Review of literature

Hofstrand (1996) [1] A possible reason for the higher education institutions which are failing to address the employability skills of its students could be the college faculty do not understand what are the lacking skills and do not possess the necessary resources to teach them. Taylor (1998) [2] While higher education faculty may not know what are the lacking skills but the, corporate employers do, and as such, can have an influence on the enhancement of these skills in education. Paulson, (2001) [3] Further states that, corporates are willing to partner with the higher education institutions in an effort to teach the necessary skills for the industry success. Green and Mc Intosh (2002) [4] found that half of the people are identified in the 2001 skill survey as over qualified for the jobs and also over-skilled. They also find the education–job mismatches do not correspond closely with the skill–job mismatches. Saravanan (2009) [6] the teaching community is positioning ourselves as a neutral ambassador in providing the necessary inputs on the employability of the students through the scientifically designed curriculum and assessments to meet the demands multi nation companies in today' scenario. Rajkumar Paulrajan (2011) [7] the mix of academic qualifications, important vocational skills and personal skills are the selling skills for the entry level jobs. Padmini I (2012) [15] Education and training create the assets in the form of knowledge and skills which increases everyones productive capacity of manpower and this is referred as a human capital.

Rajanibala J. Shah, *et al.* (2014) [8] the major factors are analytical skills and self-understanding, general management and work culture, leadership and problem solving ability and communication. The study suggests that the management institutes should start the continual training and workshop programs for familiarizing the students about the current need and market expectations by the different employers of different sectors.

Rubvita Chadha, *et al.* (2014) [9] the offer is on more practical training, develop their conversational skills, outsource to professional organizations specializing in improving the employability skills, send their students to visit the industries periodically, invite the experts from industries to interact with the students - taking steps to train their teachers to orient them on the skills demanded by the industry, take measures to enhance the students' confidence level, organize frequent personality development workshops and encourage institute-industry interaction.

Subhendu Kumar Rath, *et al.* (2014) [10] the growing

demographics unequivocally illustrates that India will continue to be a youthful nation and the principal supplier of human resources to the global workforce over the next few decades. A youthful populace is India's irrefutable demographic dividend. The study concluded that, bridging the gap between existing skills and what employers demand in the coming days, is the high time for the appropriate authorities to pay heed and make combined efforts by all the actors of the system.

Anjani Srikanth Koka *et al.* (2015) [11] the needs of IT MNCs in terms of employability skills and in turn prepare their students so as to acquire the better employability skills. Considering the fact that the global demand for soft skills has increased significantly, it is now necessary for the engineering students to equip them with the adequate Soft-skills besides acquiring the academic and technical knowledge.

Harvey *et al.*, (2015) [12] most employer is looking for the graduates who are proactive, can use higher level skills including analysis, critique, synthesis and multi layered communication to facilitate innovative teamwork in catalyzing. In this report by the CBI, UK, the decision on employability defined the employability skill as a Positive attitude, Self-management, Team working, Business and customer awareness, Problem solving, Communication and literacy, Application of numeracy and Application of information technology.

Confederation of Business Industry (CBI) [13] "Businesses want graduates who not only add the value but who have the skills to help to transform their organization in the face of continuous and rapid economic and technological change. All graduates - whatever their degree and discipline - need to be equipped with the employability skills."

Higher Education in India – Vision 2030, (2016) [14] worldwide talent shortages are more acute in the Asia Pacific region including India. India stands third in the index with close to 61% difficulty in filling the jobs and the global average is around 35%. Various surveys in the recent years have revealed that not more than 30% of the young generation are getting ready to join the workforce has the employability skills that the industry is looking for. There is a huge gap in the curriculum and teaching methodology followed by the majority of the educational institutions offering the professional courses and what actually is required by the employers. A report on Higher Education in India – Vision 2030.

Research Gap

Through a portion of research has been done in this problem, the present article attempts to link the type of questions with the effective learning from the student's point of view. The impact of the type of questions on the employability skill required in practice are related first time in this article. The broad objectives of this study are as follows

Objectives of the study

- Finding the factors of employability skills for the Arts and Science College students.
- The study gives suggestion for the appropriation of the employability skill among the college students.

Research Methodology

Sample size determination

In consultation with the guide, experts in educational and management field and earlier studies. The sample size for arts and Science College, students was decided. It was based on principles of stratification and proportion. The sample size for arts and Science College was based on stratified sampling. The population i.e. total arts and Science College was stratified based on strata like area of college. The sample size of post graduate students was based on simple random sampling on selection by arts and science college authority.

Sampling procedure

The proportional and incidental sampling techniques have been implemented to decide the sample. The students i.e. samples were selected as instructed by the respective college authority. Further 40% of the population on proportional representation from each selected college were taken and it was incorporated as 500 in total.

The following tools were used for analyzing of research data

- Percentage analysis
- Factor analysis

Analysis and interpretation

The purpose of this research is to present the factors affecting the employability skills in the arts and science college students in Namakkal district, Tamil Nadu and to find the factors of the employability skills for the arts and science college students. The factors studied are age, gender, nativity, schooling, parent's education, course of study, nature of admission, medium of instruction and nature of institution. All these factors and their relationship with the students' and employability skills are presented in this study.

Percentage analysis

Demographic features of arts and science college students in Namakkal district, are exhibited with the help of frequency and percentage analysis, the below table 4.1.1 depicts the demographic insights of the sample respondent.

Table 1: Demographic Profile

S. No	Description	Details	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	Up to 22	242	48.4
		23 to 24	181	36.2
		Above 24	77	15.4
		Total	500	100.0
2	Gender	Male	186	37.2
		Female	314	62.8
		Total	500	100.0
3	Nativity	Urban	79	15.8
		Semi urban	83	16.6
		Rural	338	67.6
		Total	500	100.0

4	Schooling	Urban	85	17.0
		Semi urban	88	17.6
		Rural	327	65.4
		Total	500	100.0
5	Father's Education	Illiterate	25	5.0
		School	385	77.0
		Diploma	45	9.0
		College	40	8.0
		Professional	5	1.0
		Total	500	100.0
4	Mother's Education	Illiterate	36	7.2
		School	398	79.6
		Diploma	15	3.0
		College	40	8.0
		Professional	11	2.2
		Total	500	100.0
5	Course of Study	Arts	122	24.4
		Science	378	75.6
		Total	500	100.0
6	Nature of Admission	Merit	34	6.8
		Government Set	188	37.6
		Donation	4	0.8
		Management	274	54.8
		Total	500	100.0
7	Medium of Instruction	Tamil	291	58.2
		English	209	41.8
		Total	500	100.0
8	Nature of Institution	Government	185	37.0
		Aided College	269	53.8
		Self-financing	46	9.2
		Total	500	100.0

Source: (Collected and computed through questionnaire)

From the above table it is found that the majority of the respondents i.e. 48% belongs to the age group of 23 to 24 years, hence most of the students believe that joining in the institutions helps to improve their career. 62.8% of the respondents are female, hence the inequality is a real problem in some of the workplaces; studies have shown that women who are doing the same job as men are often paid less and 67.6% of those respondents live in rural areas, this means that the rural areas are unable to give adequate exposure as the urban areas can give due to the inaccessibility of certain facilities. 65.4% of the respondents' school studies is from rural areas, it means that the urban area students are exposed a lot of the modules and they have the privilege of learning English through different methods. Special training is also available in the city schools to improve the students' Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing skills which are the basic skills for learning any language whereas the rural students have only limited exposure to learn English.

It is found from the survey that 77% and 79.6% of the respondent's parent only have father school level education. This results prove that; the students choose the courses due to the compulsion of their parents. 75.6% of the respondents are science students, it means the job opportunities for the science graduates have seen a steep increase because the start-up prefers to recruit them. 54.8% of the respondents are management students. It is believed that the students admitted in the management quota are not having good marks as compared to the counseling students. 58.2% of the respondents are Tamil medium students, it is worth to note that, the Tamil medium students' exposure to English language is extremely limited and 53.8% of the respondents belongs to the government aided colleges.

Factor Analysis

Factor analysis is statistical method used to describe the variability among the observed, correlated variables in terms of potentially lower number of unobserved variable.

Objectives 1; Find the factors of employability skills in the Arts and Science College students.

The following table illustrates the employability skill that is considered important by the students. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity have been used as the Pre-analysis testing for the suitability of the entire sample for the factor analysis. The result of KMO and Bartlett's Test is found greater than 0.70. Hence, the collected data is fit for factor analysis. Further, the large values of Bartlett's sphericity test (4.7853, df=91, *Sig*=0.000) and KMO statistics (0.954) indicated the appropriateness of the factor analysis i.e., the sample is adequate. Table 1 shows the results of factor analysis carried out using the employability skill among the college students.

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		**.954**
Bartlett's Test of Sohericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4.7853
	D.f.	91
	Significance	.000

Source: (Collected and computed through questionnaire)

Table 3: Factors of employability skill

Impediments	Factor 1	Factor 2
Communication	0.212	0.777
Listening	0.376	0.733
Learning	0.316	0.691
Basic Literacy and Numerical Skills	0.162	0.801
Time Management	0.602	0.532
Creativity	0.511	0.539
Computer Skills	0.822	0.242
Organizations Thinking Skills	0.734	0.361
Team Work Skill	0.658	0.456
Problem Solving	0.826	0.245
Work Ethics	0.682	0.350
Leadership Skill	0.875	0.188
Management Skills	0.786	0.277
Self-Management	0.646	0.529
Eigen Values	8.094	1.244
% of Variance Explained	57.813	8.882
Cumulative % of Variance	57.813	66.695

Source: (Collected and computed through questionnaire)

Two factors are identified by locating the Eigen values greater than unity. Employability skills which have a component loading of 0.5 and above are said to be the significant factors of employability skills. From the rotated component matrix in the table 3 can be seen that the "Leadership Skill" (0.875), "Problem Solving" (0.826), "Computer Skills" (0.822), "Management Skills" (0.786), and "Organizations Thinking Skills" (0.734), have a component loading of 0.5 and above. Hence, these five variables form the first factor. In the second factor, "Basic Literacy and Numerical Skills" (0.801), "Communication" (0.77), and "Listening" (0.733), are found to be significant.

Factor one contributes to a tune of 57.813 per cent towards the factors of employability skills. The other factors contribute namely, 8.882 towards the employability skills in their order. The total cumulative percentage of the contribution by these two factors towards the employability skills are 66.695per cent.

Limitation the study

The study is conducted among the post graduate student in the selected institutions in Namakkal district. The result could have been different if the scope of study was extended to other students as well. The review is restricted to a minimum sample size which reduces a grate volume of responses. Difficulties are faced in getting the approval to distribute the questionnaire directly to the students by the researcher. However, the study succeeds in distributing the questionnaire by the using personal communication and relationship with the faculties and students.

Findings of the study

Findings of Demographic Profile

Majority of the respondents i.e. 48% belongs to the age group of 23 to 24 years, 62.8% of the respondents are female, 67.6% of the respondents live in rural areas, 65.4% of the respondents' school studies in rural areas, 77% respondents belongs to the students' father are school level education and 79.6% of the respondent's mothers have school level education. 75.6% of the respondents are science students. 58.2% of the respondents are Tamil medium students, and 53.8% of the respondents belongs to the government aided colleges.

Findings of Factor Analysis

Objective 1: Finding the factors of the employability skills in the Arts and Science College students

The factors which are identified are leadership skill, problem solving, computer skills, management skills and organization thinking skills which have a component loading of 0.5 and above. Hence, these five variables form the first factor. In the second factor, basic literacy and numerical skills, communication and listening, are found to be significant.

Suggestions and Conclusions

Beside the functional skills, the employers are giving a lot of importance to soft skills, especially communication, tenacity, teamwork, collaboration, self and social awareness, networking and many more. To excel in the job, the students need to be articulating their views effectively, having the clarity in thought. The structured thought process, interpersonal and real problem solving skills also help in their jobs. Soft skills are must to enhance the career in today's world of work but unfortunately very few educational institutes have realized this. Focus should be more on the industrial training, live projects, mentorship programs with industry experts and interest alignment. Self-awareness and personality development helps the students to be authentic and successful. Most importantly students should be given the career guidance at an early stage to identify their strengths and discover their areas of passion before deciding a career.

The study concluded that the educators need to integrate the employability skills into courses and work more closely with the employers to complement the academic learning while to society and policy makers need to ensure that they have the right data to make decisions and the stimulate economy and foster the job creation and also ensure young people have skills which employers expect and link education with business. The curriculum is still focused on academic rather than the experiential learning.

Future scope of the study

The study will help others to conduct further research in the same area in different districts. Researcher studied only selected Arts and Science colleges but further research can be strengthening by adding all the Arts and Science colleges as well as the other discipline colleges.

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