

# Research Study on Perception of Employers on Employability skills of college Students in Tamil Nadu

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## **Abstract**

*Employers and HR managers expectations are the student's capacity potential to meet the needs of the business, work and work environment. Educational institution is having significant role to play in enhancing the student's knowledge in curriculum updation coupled with shaping the student's employability skills for their placement. There is a need of the hour for co-ordination between students, faculties, educational institutions, employers and HR managers to update the skill knowledge of college students to enter into Indian corporate houses. This paper is focus on the employers and HR Managers perception of college student's employability skills which are statistically tested with the help of empirical model by using structural equation model.*

**KeyWords:** *Employability Skills, Employers Expectation, Skill Development, Employment motivation of students*

## **Introduction**

Higher education is the Process of teaching learning evaluation and Placement of students which are essential to enhance the quality of education in Colleges. Preparing young graduates to succeed in education and take up a career is based on skill sets and talents of college students. Skills of the college students are vital for educational institutions which can be imparted with the help of faculties and support of employers and HR managers today. In this direction, employability skills of college students are studied and analyzed in depth with the help of empirical model of Employers and HR managers.

The aim of this paper is to develop and highlight the statistical analysis by constructing empirical model of employers and HR managers perception of college students and their employability skills.

## **Students Entry into Corporate Houses**

In a country like India, the population contributes to the demographic dividend, where huge man power resource is available. Institutions ought to come forward to take active part to grab this opportunity according to Patil B.M.B. The corporate world continues, to expand globally, sponsors

the employees for many executive programmes and training to probe into the matter of finding out the source from which they could “pick up the impeccable gems to adorn their official chambers”. Tanya Hall says that “there is the robust involvement of the employers to the college level, business leaders as adjunct professors or even close collaborators in developing courses to train students on skills needed in the workforce”. The grooming process starts not in the organizational chambers or in the so-called Business Schools. It could very well start in the educational institution which forms the very source to pass on quality education otherwise known as the skill needed to place them (students) in the corporate world. In tune with this, the corporate sector, in search of employees, has to define its geographical limits inside the horizon of the educational institutions. Again, it should not be misinterpreted in the campus interview.

To quote the words of Hart Research Associates “Employers recognize capacities that cut across majors as critical to a candidate’s potential for career success, and they view these skills as more important than a student’s choice of undergraduate major”. Instead of selecting a person on the verge of course completion or the victory stand, the employers could focus their attention on the first-year students, where the young minds may have inhibitions and hidden fear of being exposed to a new environment at the college campus. The organizational facilitators apply the ROI (Return on investment) for the training offered to the students and the enterprises would benefit more where they have to calculate the ROI of its learning investment. In an educational context, ROI is difficult to calculate and usually the effect of learning takes years to exhibit the results. In view of the aforesaid points, the corporate magnates might be doubtful of reaping the economic benefits for the training imparted to the young graduates, whereas Employer Engagement Guide insist on for the scheduled time allotted for the employers where they look for suspended timetable activities such as enterprise days and work experience. Securing a degree, at the same time virtually undergoing corporate issues in which he is going to be placed, make the students to strike a balance between their educational curriculum and the practical aspects of the syllabi which would break the ice of being a new entrant.

### **Corporate glory in the educational chambers on student’s employability skills**

Kevin Lowden (2011) writes that the higher educational institutions (HEI) and employer partnerships should be encouraged and strengthened with employers having a more active role in HEI employability strategies and policies and further he addresses this strategy as the meaningful employer participation. Nye Cominetti (2013) remarks that to have the realistic approach of the placement of the graduates, contact with employers while at school – through work experience, career days, mentoring, as well as other activities – improves the job prospects and earning potential of the young people once they leave their education. “Employers are also encouraged to communicate with educators about the nature of the skills that graduates are expected to work in the beginning in order to reduce the gap between skills and expectations” Shirley Gibbs et al. (2011). When the corporate people enter the educational premises, it could pave the way for the students to understand the corporate culture.

Employer Engagement Guide (2014) thrusts the need for the students “to have the visits in their places of work beyond the educational institutions which include site tours to extend a great understanding among the students’ in so kinds of jobs which are available in the business organization”. Learner First (2012) emphasizes the need “to develop an advanced curriculum framework derived from industry best practices”. The corporate persons can step in to the institutions or the students can step out to their workplace environment. This will tie up between the

Industry and institution would fetch a realistic approach in providing the employability skills. In his research done on vocational training in China, Xu Ying (2009) “criticizes the practical approach provided for the trainers and have always proven to be a bottleneck for vocational education reform. Most of the vocational education trainers are divided into theoretical trainers, and practical trainers. Generally speaking, theoretical trainers know nothing about practical training, while the practical trainers lack in training methodology and psychology”.

For the effective implementation of the strategies, “the institutions’ initiative must start on their part. It is possible that the Higher education institutions will have to be the initiators of partnerships with employers says Kewin Lowden (2011). It is also suggested in the same report that the employer membership of HEI committees should not be a token measure: “academic staff should be prepared to listen and respond to employers’ ideas about course design, content and delivery”.

### **Employers Expectation of the Students Employability skills**

The basic expectation of the employers is the basic skills. Education and skill survey (2011) states that “employers recognize that, it is their responsibility to train employees to do specific jobs, but they expect young people to enter the labour market with knowledge in core skills- literacy, numeracy and wider employability skills which enable them to operate effectively from the very outset of their working lives”. Further, they voice out that the shortfalls in these skills is reflected in business concern within the workforce over literacy and numeracy skills.

According to Nicholas Burnett, et al. (2012) “Employers believe that the theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom is just the ‘tip of the iceberg’, and that it is insufficient by itself.” Employers look for a varying mix of non-cognitive or technical skills (depending on the sector). Employer- Educator interface must be devised in a way to reflect the expectation of the employers in the curriculum framework of the institutions itself otherwise skill expectation of the employer would be an unfulfilled dream. Employers’ perspective on many graduates is that they cannot fill the vacancies because even highly-qualified candidates have the wrong skills. They claim “education systems educate graduates of tomorrow in the skills needed in the industry yesterday” European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, CEDEFOP (2014). Nidhi Gupta (2014) argues the role played by the management institutions, with regard to mushrooming growth of institutions engaged in imparting management education to the younger generation. Employers complain that they are unable to find employable candidates among the job-seekers. Tristram Hooley (2015) states that the value of providing students at schools with an opportunity to consider their futures and then advice and support to realize their ambitions is also well recognized by employers and employer bodies.

Nowadays, the employers’ expectations have enlarged the parameters of skill development. “Long gone are the days when a company had loyalty towards employees, specifically keeping them on-board for decades and providing a healthy pension after retirement and further he adds that the idea of an employee managing her own career has always been the pink elephant in the room” Jason Alba (2011). Where the intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation are considered for the overall development of an employee, indirectly alerting the stakeholders of the education to infuse the same in the training realm because the employers generally expect to develop new recruits with knowledge, skills and qualities. They see graduate employability as a state of readiness rather than a finished article.

The stakeholder's perspectives on education have to be changed into qualification and is considered merely as the word 'sugar' written on the paper, as it is just a documentary evidence of a student's life in an educational institution. To correlate the same in the report of Padmaja (2010) "it is not qualification alone that translates into employability, while qualification constitutes 40%, it is the skills and attitude that constitute the remaining 60% of employability chances". The issue which is being stated by the Blue print which alarms many employers is the poor communication of the English language among the fresh graduates. Even though they are qualified highly, the local graduates have less proficiency in English.

## **Review of Literature**

The Research studies pertaining to skill development by college students are enumerated in order to develop the research frame work in this study.

### **The Confidence of getting employment in learning Skills by Students**

**Louise Gracia (2009)** – The employability skills development is not a gender neutral activity. The students do not receive any preparation or support. The use of compliance strategy and accepting the position as 'normal' and colluding with the reproduction of gender in equity by majority of students. Many reduce their expectation of success, restricted their view of Personal employability an erosion of self-confidence. The silence of higher education was commented on the issues of gender and impact on employability development.

**Freshminds (2009)** - The impact of internet in terms of their skills development, which access to new employment opportunities and to get job. The study reveals that the internet users rightly use their skills to get a new job than the non-users. One third of the internet users felt confident in their skills and can be concluded that the internet is a factor to help in finding and doing a job.

**Mel Fugate(2008)** - To develop and Validate a dispositional measure of employability (DHE) to investigate the relationships of DHE. The dispositional employability is presented as a multi-dimensional construct reflected in five latent dimensions. The employability related to employees' Positive emotions and effective commitment gives Organizational charges and it is found that beyond tolerance for ambiguity, work focus of control, self-esteem and optimism.

**Chia-Hsiu Tsao (2008)** - There is a close relationship between motivational intensity and learning channels, motivational Orientation, English Proficiency. It concludes that student who have stronger motivational intensity tend to have higher index Scores in motivational orientation which is developed more through autonomous learning and easily attain by Proficiency in English.

## **Research Gap**

The review of literature provides an in depth understanding of research and based on that Employers opinion on student's employability skills are tested with the help of model.

## **Research Methodology**

This research study is analytical and empirical nature. The questionnaire is designed to collect the opinion of the employers and HR managers on college student's employability skills. The data collected from 492 respondent ants under convenient sampling method. This data is analyzed with the help of statistical analysis of structural equation model in order to test the employers and HR

managers perception of student's employability skills.

### **Data Analysis**

This research study focuses on developing empirical model of college student's employability skills as per the perception of Employers and HR managers which are analyzed as under:

### **Empirical Model**

#### **A model of HR employees on employability skills of students.**

As per as the employers and HR managers are concerned, they are having intimate relationship with the students during the recruitment and selection process. They recruit many fresher students to accommodate them in the talented pools of their employees. In order to identify a model, especially for the employees as HR managers in talent acquisition process, the researcher identified that the employability skills of the students in the HR perspective depends upon 25 skills. All the 25 skills are thoroughly investigated by the HR managers then only they will give the opportunity for the students to work in the organization. In particular there are different types of organization and nature of organization, designation of the employers recruiting the fresher student's frequency of recruitments, sources of recruitment and the recruitment process are considered as independent of variables. Whereas the dependent variables are HR manager perception on required HR skills for the employability of the students.

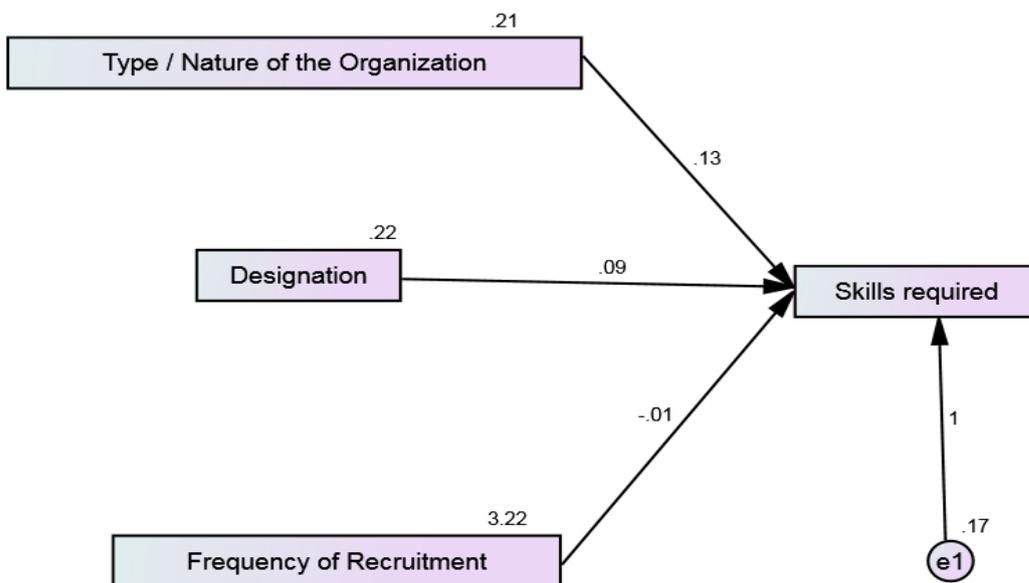
Therefore, in this case of also the researcher used the structural equation model to derive a specific model of HR employee's perspective on employability skills of the students. In this case all the 25 variables are considered as explanatory variables whereas the designation, nature of organization, recruitment process, recruitment frequency is considered as independent variables. So, the structural equation model again subsequently uses confirmatory factor analysis and linear multiple regression analysis. The required employability skills for students are considered as unobserved factor and all the 25 variables are taken up as observed factors due to the responses of the employer or HR managers. These 25 variables are able to surmount the employability skills of the students in prospect of the HR Managers where else this is being influenced by the independent variables nature of the organization type of the organization, designation of the HR managers, frequency of recruitment, sources of recruitment and recruitment process, these variables and the significant influence on the employer or HR managers perception on employability skills is derived through linear multiple regression analysis. The 25 skills acquired by the students are taken up for confirmatory factor analysis. The use of structural equation model brought the following diagram which is explaining about the HR manager or employer perceptive on employability skills and this model as given out the table which is comprising of fit indices. These fit indices and their benchmark values are also given here, in this case the researcher intended to verify the following research hypothesis.

- There is no significant influence of nature of organization on their perception towards employability skills of students.
- There is significant influence of designation of a employer and their perception towards various employability skills of students.
- There is no significant influence of frequency of recruitment on the perception of employers towards employability skills of students.
- There is no significant influence of source of recruitment on employer perception on employability skills of students next one.

- There is no significant influence of recruitment process on the employer’s perception over employability skills of the students.

**Fit indices for HR.**

S.NO	Fit indices	Values	Bench marks
1	P-value	0.541	>.05
2	Goodness of Fit index	0.957	>0.9
3	Comparative index	0.962	>0.9
4	Normed fit index	0.959	>0.9
5	Root mean square error of approximation	0.07	<0.08



The fit indices very much satisfy the bench mark values. All these hypotheses are verified through this model and all of them are rejected at 5 percent level. The results are clearly presented below.

- There is a significant influence of nature of organization on their perception towards employability skills of students.
- There is a significant influence of designation of an employer and their perception towards various employability skills of students.
- There is a significant influence of frequency of recruitment on the perception of employers towards employability skills of students.
- There is a significant influence of source of recruitment on employer perception on employability skills of students next one.
- There is a significant influence of recruitment process on the employer's perception over employability skills of the students.

### **Conclusion**

Employers and HR managers are of the opinion that the employability skills are must for employment in the corporate sector with the help of communication skills, attitude skills, leadership skills, decision makings and Team building skills. The empirical model tested the hypothesis that there is a strong relationship between the student's employability skills and the corporate organization as well as human resources department strategy coupled recruitment and training process. This study concludes that employers and HR managers are giving vital importance to the skills of students for their knowledge, aptitude, skill and placement in business organization.

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