

# ACADEMIC LEARNING OUTCOMES AND EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS OF VISCUM STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PRINT MEDIA IN CHENNAI – AN ANALYSIS OF SKILL GAPS

**S. BACKIARAJ**

Research Scholar, AMET Business School, AMET University, Chennai.

**Dr. D. ARIVAZHAGAN**

Professor, AMET Business School, AMET University, Chennai.

## **Abstract**

A major factor in graduates' failure to find work and placement after graduation appears to be that university processes, disciplines and educational materials fall short of the competencies demanded by the labor market. The lack of applicability of university-taught processes and disciplines to the job market may be the cause. A quantitative research design was chosen. Primary and secondary data collecting was a segment of the research. Using a systematic questionnaire with both closed- and open-ended questions, the primary data was gathered. The sources of secondary data included books, periodicals, theses, journals, and websites. Utilizing stratified disproportionate information was gathered from a sample of one hundred students using random sampling. Descriptive, paired sample t test, and reliability test analyses were performed. The study's findings demonstrated that students' theoretical learning objectives and their acquired employability skills do not align. There were conclusions and recommendations made.

**Keywords:** Analysis of Skill Gaps, Academic Learning Outcomes, Employability Skills, Viscom Students, Print Media, Chennai.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

All governments want to see economic growth, because education is the most crucial factor for the advancement of the economy and society. Because it produces the skilled labor that will guarantee future prosperity, higher education is crucial to the contemporary, post-industrial economy (Aken et al., 2009). The main objective of institutions of higher learning is to give students opportunities to secure appropriate jobs upon graduation. Through the use of fresh data sources and analytical methods, students can find work based on their skills, experience, and qualifications (Woolridge, 2016). To stay up to date with the labor market, data collecting, analysis, and filtering from job advertisements on the internet is required (Khaouja, Kassou & Ghogho, 2021; Smith & Ali, 2014). However, to ensure a seamless transition their knowledge from higher education to the skills required for employment, students must invest time and energy in this process. It is the obligation of universities and other higher education establishments to modernize their courses to align with industry norms. Many educational institutions invest several hours and materials in their courses and training programs to guarantee the academic success of kids in the workforce. An analysis carried out in India suggests that between 2014 and 2018, there was a rise in the employment-zone growth ratio. For academic establishments, equipping learners for the demands of the job market is a challenging

task, which is genuinely going through a recession, because of COVID 19. The labor market has experienced an unparalleled shock, necessitating the learning of new professions and abilities. To become more competitive edge, companies are seeking recent graduates, with a variety of talents. It is projected that 600 million qualified workers would be required by 2022 to sustain the growing Indian economy. However, India only does mediocrely regarding employment and education. Despite India's transition to a knowledge economy, a major issue still exists: unemployment. Consequently, the study's main objective is to evaluate the knowledge that students majoring in visual communication learn in school and the degree to which they are able to use that understanding in the workplace.

## II. PROBLEM DEFINITION

Because of the competitive job market, finding a safe and respectable employment that matches one's qualifications and abilities can be quite difficult for recent grads these days. Students encounter numerous difficulties and barriers throughout the hiring process, and it could be challenging for them to get the skills that companies and the service industry need. Past reports and research have demonstrated that a new college graduate is lacking in the abilities and competences that employers are seeking in a candidate. Companies are searching for applicants with a variety of possible skill sets, character attributes, and competencies to meet various job needs.

Companies seek candidates who can "plug and play" to satisfy industry requirements. Too much focus is placed on theory in educational institutions, and their aim is to give students theoretical inputs and information, which is very different from what companies desire in the workforce.

The result is a discrepancy in skill between the anticipated and actual skill levels in the industries, which is mostly caused by students' ignorance of employability abilities. Another explanation for this can be the colleges and other educational establishments' poor and ineffective course design and academic program. This could also occur if institutions neglect to give pupils the necessary training to meet the demands of the job market. Consequently, India faces greater challenges in realizing its full economic potential and producing fresh graduates with the marketable skills that companies require. However, Students are struggling as well bridging the competency gap that separates their desired level of learning from what companies require of them. Thus, this study illustrates the disparity in the employability skills and learning outcomes of students majoring in visual communication at private colleges in Chennai.

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

**Aljohani, N.R., et al. (2022)** provided a detailed, original, comprehensive, and data-driven analysis of talks on "curriculum alignment" in regard to "learning skills" and "acquired abilities." The article corpus used in the discussion of this study is drawn from Scopus databases spanning the years 2010 to 2021. It provides information on research

productivity in addition to recent studies themes, countries, and authors. In an effort to completely understand the problems, figures, and themes that have inspired the industry during the previous 10 years, as per a ten-year investigation, bibliometric studies are getting increasingly beneficial and valuable in the sector. As stated in the report, the psychological problems that students encountered throughout COVID-19 were depression, anxiety, suicide, and worries regarding their job prospects. The survey also discovered that university students view entrepreneurial education and aim as key topics, and that these themes are connected to the growth of soft skills, which the industries seek.

**Vaishali N. Rodge & Dr. Rashmi Gupta (2020)** highlighted the numerous perspectives from the employer, on the number of job-fit criteria that are pertinent to and required in newly graduated professionals in various degrees of business scenario. A comparison of the comments received from multiple job providers on the proficiency or skills they consider an important key factor when appointing a fresh business graduate, validating the job responsibilities with business skills, is made with what is actually the set of competencies that fresh business graduates maintain across several higher education centers. It also examined the relative significance of the diverse. The skill sets needed by professionals who have recently graduated to operate in various industry service areas. The study's findings indicate that employers who have taken on recent graduates in their fields believe they are undeserving of employment for the initial several years following their tenure. This implies that the highly dynamic job market, which calls for considerable alterations to recent graduates' skill set, is the reason why new business graduates lack competence abilities.

**Charu Sarin. (2019)** analyzed what the students perceive as important skills that such students need to have when they are learning, as well as how to acquire these abilities while studying. Structured questionnaires were employed to collect information from HR executives and students alike. The major competencies for employment were identified. Then, after a review of the literature, split into three groups: technical, non-technical, and behavioral competencies. The study's conclusions indicate that a disparity exists in the abilities that companies and students believe are essential to getting employment. It also concluded that, to be able to better prepare themselves for the industry, students should focus on honing their technical and behavioral skills.

**Abbasi, F.K., Ali, & Bibi (2018)** emphasized the disparity in the abilities that business graduates employed in the banking sector possess compared to those expected of managers. Bank supervisors of newly hired business grads participated in an online survey. They were to assess the credentials of business graduates who worked for them, in addition to the meaning of twelve employability skills in the sector. The study's findings indicate that managers' expectations about graduates' employability abilities are not met. Critical thinking, numeracy, leadership, interpersonal skills, analytical self-management, listening, and problem-solving were also found to be severely lacking in skills. The study's

findings demonstrated that male graduates are better at addressing problems than female graduates.

**Unni, J. (2016)** addressed the increasing discrepancy in employment, education, and skills. The study outlines the many forms of skill mismatches in the labor market and classifies high technology and knowledge-intensive industries (KII). It looked at where higher educated individuals work and whether there has been a significant shift in the past several years in the quantity of more educated workers being absorbed into different industries and occupational groupings (HE). The study's conclusions suggest that policies that assist holders of non-graduate technical and nontechnical diplomas or certificates in obtaining lower graduate-intensity employment may help close the skills gap and reduce the demand on graduate higher education.

#### **IV. THE STUDY'S OBJECTIVES**

- 1) To research the demographics of students at five private institutions in Chennai who are pursuing final-year degrees in visual communication.
- 2) To assess the students' proficiency with print media Regarding both learning outcomes and employability abilities.
- 3) To determine the considerable discrepancy between students' employability abilities and learning outcomes in print media.

#### **V. SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

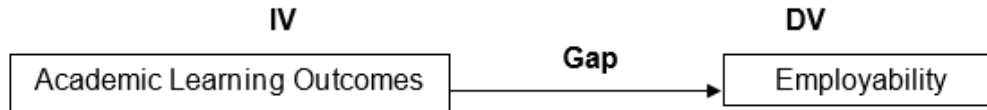
The study's scope is limited to gap analysis of final-year visual communication students at private colleges' academic learning outcomes and employability abilities, Chennai. The study has selected five autonomous colleges namely Loyola College, Madras Christian College, Agurchand Manmull Jain College, Gurunanak College, St. Thomas College of Arts and Science to evaluate the students' comprehension of the learning objectives and their employability regarding print media. Based just on the data gathered from the respondents, inferences, suggestions, and discoveries can be made.

#### **VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study design is quantitative in nature. Primary and Secondary information has been collected for the study. The primary data is collected through the use of a systematic questionnaire that includes both closed- and open-ended questions. We obtained secondary data by looking through literature., periodicals, theses, journals, and websites.

The stratified disproportionate random sampling approach is utilized to get data from a sample of one hundred students. The correlation between students' academic learning results and their gained employability skills is determined through analysis using the reliability test, descriptive test, and paired sample t test.

## VII. CONCEPTUAL STUDY FRAMEWORK



## VIII. Hypotheses

H<sub>11</sub>: A substantial disparity exists between the educational objectives and employability abilities of pupils with print media.

### Analysis and Interpretation

To evaluate the instrument's dependability, the study used Cornnach's Alpha; descriptive statistics to gauge students' attainment of learning outcomes and employability skills in relation to print media; and a paired sample t test to ascertain the disparity in print media between students' learning outcomes and employable abilities.

#### a). Reliability Test

It is essential to confirm the validity of the scales utilized in the questionnaire. Verifying the consistency among the data's dependability test's primary goals. Cronbach's Alpha is used to assess the reliability of the questions on the questionnaire. According to Pallant (2010), a scale's Cronbach's Alpha coefficient should preferably be .7 or higher.

**Table 9.1: Test of Cronbach's Alpha Reliability of Students' Learning Objectives and Employability Proficiencies in Print Media**

Sl. No.	Scale	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
1.	Students' Learning Outcomes	10	0.965
2.	Students' Acquired Employability Skills	10	0.953

[Source: Primary Data]

As you can see from the previous table, that each factor's Cronbach's Alpha reliability is greater than 90%, meaning that repeating the measurement of each construct in the variables will produce consistent findings.

#### a) Characteristic Statistics

One uses descriptive statistics in order to evaluate the level of learning objectives and the acquired employability skills with regard to print media.

**Table 9.2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Students' Learning Objectives and Employability Skills in Print Media**

Sl. No.	Scale	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	Students' Learning Outcomes	3.46	0.944
2.	Students' Acquired Employability Skills	2.76	1.187

[Source: Primary Data]

Considering the data from before, it can be deduced that students' learning outcomes have a mean value above 3.00 but below 3.50, meaning that their level of visual communication learning outcomes is average. The students' mean value of employability skills from their academic curriculum is less than 3.00, indicating a low level of employability skills obtained during their higher education. Therefore, it can be said that although universities offering courses in visual communication give their students solid theoretical understanding, students struggle to use what they've learned in class and acquire the employability skills required by print media.

### a) Paired Sample T Test

**Null Hypothesis:** The learning goals and employability abilities of students in print media are significantly apart.

**Alternative Hypothesis:** Nothing noticeably different, between students' employability abilities and learning results in print media.

**Table 9.3.a: Mean, Students' SD and Correlation Learning Objectives and Employability Skills in Print Media**

Factors	Mean	SD	Correlation
Students' Learning Outcomes	1.98	0.673	0.620**
Students' Acquired Employability Skills			

[Source: Primary Data] \*\* suggests significance at the 1% level...

The previous data indicates that students' employability skills and learning outcomes in print media differ statistically significantly ( $M = 1.98$ ,  $SD = 0.673$ ). Given that the P value is less than 0.01 at the one percent significance level, the null hypothesis is rejected. Consequently, it can be said that there is a positive association (0.620\*\*) between the learning results and students' employability abilities.

**Table 9.3.b: Gap between Learning Outcomes and Employability Skills in Print Media**

(T-test for Paired Samples)

Factors	Paired Differences				t-test	P value
	Mean	SD	95% Difference Confidence Interval			
			Lower	Upper		
Students' Learning Outcomes	0.353	0.594	0.306	0.401	14.579	<0.001
Students' Acquired Employability Skills						

[Source: Primary Data] Note: \*\* indicates significance at the 1% level.

Given that the P value is less than 0.01 at the one percent significance level, the null hypothesis is rejected. Consequently, it may be said that that learning outcomes in print media and students' employability abilities differ noticeably. The mean difference between



students' learning and employment skills outcomes is 35.3%, with a 95% confidence interval covering 30.3% to 40.1%.

**Table 9.3.c: Value of Eta Squared Statistics**

Factors	Eta value
Students' Learning Outcomes	0.26
Students' Acquired Employability Skills	

[Source: Primary Data]

The difference between learning outcomes and the pupils' employability skills in print media has a substantial impact size, as demonstrated by the Eta squared statistics value of 0.26 ( $>0.14$ ) for both variables. (3)

## IX. FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

Graduates from universities and higher education institutions need to be able to demonstrate a variety of abilities and characteristics, some unique to their higher education, in order to be competitive when applying for jobs. Based on the results, Descriptive statistics' mean and standard deviation clearly show that, although visual communication courses provide students with a strong theoretical foundation, they may struggle to translate their academic knowledge into the kind of employability skills needed by print media. Thus, it is advised that educational establishments provide technical abilities that demonstrate mastery and competence in a certain field of print media. Apart from technical proficiency, it is advisable to provide soft skills that facilitate relationship-building and problem-solving. This way, people's technical abilities can be fully utilized and they can succeed in a particular function at a business. The findings of the paired sample t test show that there is a considerable discrepancy between students' employability skills and learning outcomes in print media. Thus, the higher education institution should offer practical training sessions, workshops, and field training in designing, newsletter preparation, banners, posters, photos, animated videos, marketing images, and turning a person's ideas, concepts, and technical concepts into incredibly imaginative timelines and diagrams. In order to help the students acquire the abilities and information required for the position, it's also critical to draw their attention to any potential inconsistencies between what they were taught and the standards established by the print media and printing technology markets.

## X. CONCLUSION

Technology and creativity are combined in visual communication to produce captivating content for various platforms. Every business, from social media to advertising to fashion, relies on visual content to reach the right audience. Every industry participates in the visual environment in today's technologically advanced world as more businesses look for creative methods to engage with consumers. The discipline of visual communication is also being impacted by technological improvements as brands are more eager to

highlight automation, robotics, A.I., cybersport, and other technologies. Viscom offers a variety of job opportunities, opportunities, including motion designers, online and app designers, and video directors. It also has a significant presence in print media. In printing technology, With little computer or technical expertise, it provides diploma, engineering, science, and art students with pre-press, press, and post-press jobs, among other positions. In the current challenging economic situation, A recent graduate's academic background is no longer adequate; In order to improve their chances of getting hired, students must possess a greater variety of employable skills. A comprehensive approach is required to alter the higher education system's perspective and vision. Graduates must be prepared with both job-specific skills and outstanding academic credentials in order to be prepared for the workforce. Numerous factors that fall outside the jurisdiction and control of higher education also have a major impact on graduates' employment prospects. Learning outcomes are designed to give students the confidence to pursue leadership opportunities such as internships and jobs that personally appeal to them, additionally to assist them in determining their skills and areas of interest and exposing them to a variety of encounters that will benefit them gain perspective on their goals. As a result, the curriculum should aim to promote long-lasting and sustainable methods of thinking, acquiring knowledge, and solving problems. It's time to reconsider how well all education strengthens the connection between the acquisition of transferrable skills and subject-matter expertise, thereby preparing students for the workforce.

### Limitations of the Study

- 1) The study is limited to skill gap analysis between learning outcomes and students' employability in print media.
- 2) The study is limited to 100 respondents.
- 3) Other elements influencing students' employability skills—such as credential programs, demographics, value-added courses, self-efficiency, etc.—are not taken into account by the study.

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