

STUDYING THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE AND EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS IN CHENNAI WITH A FOCUS ON PRINT MEDIA

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Abstract

Employability skills are used to build a successful career and work as innovative employers who can build wealth and create jobs, this may be connected to the qualities of graduates who are resilient and persistent in reaching their own professional objectives... Creation, innovation, printing skills, strong communication skills, writing skills, photography, artistic skills, retouching pre-media skills, packaging, typography, etc., are the crucial talents for employment that print media need. The main objective of the study is to ascertain the degree of academic knowledge that aids students in improving their employability skills with regard to print media. It also calculates the difference between the students' employability abilities and academic knowledge in the last year of their diploma program in printing technology in Chennai. To ascertain the correlation between the development of employability abilities and the level of academic knowledge, the study used a quantitative research approach to gather data from the students. Only Siga Polytechnic College and the Institute of Printing Technology are included in research region. The study's sample size found to be 100, with 50 participants from each college, with the application of a simple random sampling method. Likert, ratio, dichotomous, and category scales were employed in the construction of a structured survey. Using the Cronbach's Alpha reliability test, the data's dependability was examined. The data were analyzed using correlation analysis and descriptive statistics. The survey's results indicated that while the students' academic knowledge is thought to be high, their employability skills have not fully developed. Furthermore, a moderate gap between students' academic understanding and employability talents is found. The study finds a positive correlation between students' academic knowledge and the development of employability abilities.

Keywords: Students' Academic Knowledge, Employability Skills, Print Media, Chennai.

I. INTRODUCTION

The expectations for higher education and its organization are changing quickly due to changes in the labor economy (Choi & Kang, 2019); Kovoov-Mishra, 2020). Employability is the capacity to stay in one's current position or land a dream job in the precarious labor market of today. According to Rothwell and Arnold (2007), it is also essential for long-term economic stability and success. Individuals view it as opportunities for both finding and keeping a job (Vanhercke et al., 2014). Because of shifts in career systems and the psychological contract between employees and firms, employability has become increasingly important for a sustainable society (Baruch and Rousseau, 2018). While there are numerous factors that influence employment, education is a major one, particularly for recent graduates. The main goal of higher education is to prepare students

to be critical, reflective thinkers for the rest of their lives (Harvey 2001). Universities are being challenged more and more to demonstrate how they educate their graduates for the workforce. (Tholen, 2014). Numerous studies (Benati & Fischer, 2020; Bennett, 2020; Reid et al., 2011; Saito & Pham, 2020; Warnock & Mohammadi-Aragh, 2016) give proof to support the claim that curricular and pedagogical improvements at universities have improved students' ability to develop employable skills, alumni involvement, work-integrated learning, and explicit career development initiatives. Increasing student participation in lectures and making other changes to the curriculum may aid students in acquiring employable abilities such as critical thinking (Garcia-Aracil et al., 2021). To assist Students make a smooth transition into the workforce, there has also been a greater emphasis placed on helping them develop their employability through extracurricular activities, volunteering, and part-time work (Muldoon, 2009; Thompson et al., 2013). Many industries are in need of fresh graduates with knowledge and skills in both technical and non-technical areas. Because the media sector is so welcoming to people from different origins, It has given people from different backgrounds new opportunities in the workforce.. New it has also established avenues for scientific communication., health, and documentaries in addition to new ones for broadcast, advertising, multimedia, and animation (www.leverageedu.com/blog/print-media). Determining the students' academic knowledge and employability skill development in regard to print media in Chennai is, thus, the main objective of the study.

II. PROBLEM DEFINITION

The competitiveness of today's job market emphasizes how important it is for students to possess the skills necessary to distinguish oneself in a fiercely competitive market (Leitch, 2006). It is stressed that in order to respond to evolving conditions and actively take part in the management of ongoing education, students must develop flexibility and adaptability. Clarke (2018). According to the most recent official evaluation of the skill gap, 24 important economic sectors would require an additional 109 million trained people by 2022. This skill evaluation demonstrates unequivocally how few qualified workers are available in India to fill open positions. Although most universities have excellent academic and physical infrastructure , they struggle with other issues like hiring unqualified faculty, failing to align their courses that match the positions that employers are seeking, and not having adequate time to prepare and develop students for future jobs (Sinha., V., & Subramanian, K. S., 2013). In addition to the study program, institutions and colleges must also emphasize employability skills, such as personal appearance, behaviours, patterns and actions, communication strategies, Making decisions and solving problems, management and organizational processes, and organizational management. There are more jobs every day opportunities in the growing industry of print media. For students with literary talent, finding a suitable opportunity in the print medium is less challenging, graphic design or photography abilities, curiosity, and perseverance in addition to those who possess a strong educational and training foundation. Young people with aspirations to work in print media have a range of options, including those as

photographers, painters, editors, computer specialists, librarians, cartoonists, editing, reporting, freelancing, writing columns, writing comments, drawing cartoons, working as an artist, photojournalism, etc. Apart from these, jobs related to online website designing, film making, photography, editing in entertainment media are widely available for fresh graduates under arts, science, diploma and engineering streamline. But, the question arises, to what extent do they know about jobs in print media, and its wider scope of career opportunities with good package available for under graduates (http://www.employmentnews.gov.in/career_details-career-in-print-media). Hence, the study has been undertaken to identify the connection between students' academic knowledge and employment abilities, with a focus on print media in Chennai.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Bennett, D., et al. (2022) studied the impact of year of study and gender on the perception of employability among undergraduate business students. In order to evaluate their own academic achievement and confidence over their careers, 6,004 undergraduate business students from various Australian universities employed an online verified employability assessment instrument. Based on their year of study and gender, students' assessments of their employability skills for future careers differed, according to the survey results. The capacity of pupils to apply what they have learnt in the classroom to their professional world is also shown to be highly confident.

Ho, T.T.H., et al. (2022) examined the link, with human capital acting as a mediating factor, between students' assessments of their employability (SPE) and career development learning (CDL). Prior to the commencement of their internship at businesses, 512 Vietnamese students had their data collected through a standardized questionnaire. Partial least squares analysis revealed that CDL has a sustained, beneficial impact on SPE based on the structural equation model. Moreover, it was discovered that scholastic capital, cultural capital, and social capital all acted as mediators in the relationship between CDL and SPE.

Mainga, W., (2022) determined the relative importance of different employability skills for recent business graduates searching for their first job. The information was gathered from industry representatives of human resources, faculties and students pursuing business management through semi-structured survey questionnaires. The poll revealed discrepancies in the viewpoints of faculty members, students, and industry representatives of human resources. The study shows some variation in the three stakeholder groups' perceptions regarding the relative significance of different employability skills. Additionally, it is discovered that employers and graduating students have rather different perspectives on how important interpersonal, teamwork, and communication skills are. Furthermore, companies express great satisfaction with the academic proficiency of business students at the time of graduation.

Dr. Manjunath D.R (2021) examined how employability is impacted by strong academic achievement. Using a Google form, information from students pursuing their last year was

collected for the study. An analysis using the t-test and ANOVA was conducted to ascertain the effect of high academic success on employability. The study's conclusions showed that employment and academic success are strongly correlated..

Singhal, V., & Saini , R. (2020) as well as the total employability skills held by management students registered at National Capital Region institutions determined to be associated with Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam Technical University, Lucknow, India. The research design used in the study was inferential statistics. The study's sample size consists of 200 professors and students pursuing their last year. Data was gathered from academicians and management students using a structured questionnaire. The Friedman Test, t-test, frequency distribution, and ANOVA statistical methods were used to examine the data using SPSS.. The findings of the study demonstrated that opinions among academics and students regarding how much teaching approaches help management students develop employability skills were at odds. Furthermore, based on their Academicians and students in the management program differed greatly from one another in their assessments of the extent of growth they observe in a variety of distinct skills.

Ahuja Anita (2019) established the discrepancy between the employability skills that Madhya Pradesh's technical graduates actually possessed and the expectations of the employer, based on the state of technical education in India at the time. 36 managers and employers from Jaro Education, Infosys, HCL, and other companies provided the data when they came to the several Indore engineering and management institutes for placement. A structured questionnaire and a non-probabilistic convenient sampling strategy were used to collect the data. The study's findings demonstrated that the real and expected skill sets of Indian technical graduates differ in terms of employability.

Tentama, F., & Hasan Abdillah, M. (2019) established the connection between students' self-concept in their employable skills and their academic accomplishment. Using the cluster random selection method, the study selected 85 students, and structured questionnaires were used to collect data. To investigate the relationship between students' academic achievement and their self-perception of their employability, the study uses multiple linear regression analysis. The research findings indicated that students' employability is significantly impacted by their academic performance and self-perception.

William E. Donald, et al (2018) acknowledges the steps the university takes to prepare students for the global work market and the perspectives that students have about their future jobs. It also looked at how different students saw the benefits and drawbacks of attending college (HE). Data for the study were collected through semi-structured questionnaires and interviews with 387 final-year UK university students. Students today see a college degree as having a positive financial impact, but this perception is becoming less common due to rising tuition costs, mounting student loan debt, and interest payments that reduce future earning potential. Because of the competitive nature of the graduate job market and the trade-off between the costs and benefits of graduate school,

the study concluded that while undergraduates become more employable from a personal standpoint as they progress in their studies, they become less employable from a market perspective.

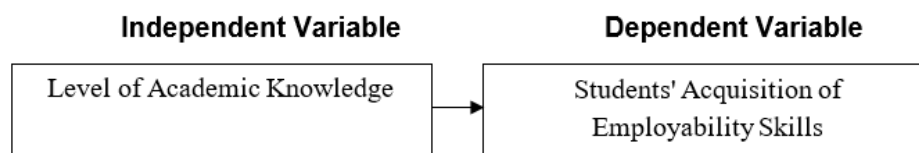
Rahmat, M., et al. (2017) FTSM graduates' employability skills were assessed using the skills they had while pursuing their degrees. Based on their soft skills, entrepreneurship ability, and foundational understanding of programming and development from their degree, these skills are evaluated. Five months following their graduation, the graduating students' there was data collection. The study was examined through the application of statistical inference and descriptive analysis. The study's findings demonstrated a connection between students' perceptions of their own abilities and employability skills. The study came to the conclusion that graduates' academic skills are extremely acceptable and help them function in the labor market.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

- 1) This study's objective is to evaluate the employability skills and academic knowledge of final-year diploma students at two specific colleges in Chennai...
- 2) To examine the connection between students' employability skills and academic knowledge.

V. THE STUDY'S CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Independent and dependent variables are included in the investigation. A dependent variable is the students' growth of employability skills, whereas their assessment of their academic understanding serves as the independent variable. The diagram below illustrates the same: -



VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design: Using a quantitative research approach, the study collected data from students to ascertain the relationship between academic knowledge and the development of employability skills.

Study Area: The study area is restricted to select two colleges offering Diploma in Printing Technology in Chennai namely Siga Polytechnic College and Institute of Printing Technology.

Study Population: Students from two specific colleges in Chennai who are enrolled in final-year diploma programs in printing technology comprise the study population.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique: A sample size of 100 individuals, with 50 participants from each college, was chosen for the study using a simple random selection procedure.

Instrumental Design: A structured questionnaire was designed by using categorical, dichotomous, likert and ratio scales.

Data analysis: We evaluated the data's dependability using the Cronbach's Alpha reliability test. Data analysis techniques employed included correlation analysis and descriptive statistics.

VII. HYPOTHESIS SETTING

H₁₁: Students' employability abilities and academic knowledge are significantly correlated.

a. Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test

The Cronbach's Alpha reliability test is used to evaluate the dependability of instruments intended as independent and dependent variables.

Table 7.1

SI. No.	Variables	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
1.	Students' Academic Knowledge Level.	10	0.832
2.	Development of Employability Skills of Students.	10	0.840

[Source: Primary Data]

It is evident from the following table that every variable has a Cronbach's Alpha value greater than 80%, indicating a high degree of internal consistency and strong correlation between the variables.

b. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics are utilized to gauge pupils' academic proficiency and employability skills development.

Table 7.2

SI. No.	Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	Students' level of academic knowledge.	3.56	0.944
2.	Development of Employability Skills of Students.	2.93	1.013

[Source: Primary Data]

Given that the mean value of the students' academic knowledge is higher than 3.50 in the aforementioned table, it appears that the students have significant academic knowledge. Furthermore, the mean value of the employability skill development of the students is found to be less than 3.00, indicating a below average degree of development. Furthermore, the average score shows that students' academic knowledge exceeds their employable skills. Therefore, it may be concluded that there is a moderate gap between students' employability skills and academic knowledge.

c. Bivariate Correlation

The significant relationship between students' employability skills and academic knowledge is found using bivariate correlation.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the academic knowledge and employability skills of students.

H₁₁: A significant link exists between pupils' academic knowledge and employment skills.

Table 7.3

Variables	Analysis	Level of Academic Knowledge of Students	Students' Acquisition of Employability Skills
Level of Academic Knowledge of Students	Pearson' Correlation	1	0.919**
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.000	0.006
	N	100	100
Students' Development of Employability Skills	Pearson' Correlation	0.919**	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.006	0.000
	N	100	100

[Source: Primary data] Note: ** Denotes correlation is significant at 1% level.

Since 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 students' academic knowledge and the growth of their employability abilities have a positive and significant link (0.919). This demonstrates that students' level of employability skill development rises in tandem with their academic knowledge.

VIII. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Today, students have evolved from being independent, self-sufficient, and self-motivated individuals to working in an interdependent team in the corporate environment. Therefore, it is not only necessary for the students to graduate with strong technical skills. Instead, they must have a wide range of knowledge as well as social and behavioral abilities, which are essential for employability. The average and standard deviation indicate that while the students' academic knowledge is considered good, their employability skills have not developed to the fullest extent. Additionally, it is found that students' employability skills and academic knowledge differ by a moderate amount. Therefore, it is advised that universities implement value-added courses such as pre-press, art development, quality control, printing services, and proofing, as well as on-the-job training, Photoshop, retouching, and other skills to help students become more employable. The correlation study's findings show a strong and positive relationship between students' academic knowledge and employable skills. Thus, it is suggested that polytechnic institutions modify their curricula by adding fresh content on employability and the expertise that recent graduates need to know about the print industry.

IX. CONCLUSION

India is a young nation, with about 54% of its younger population currently preparing to enter the workforce. But the main problem, according to the India Skills Report 2018, is a shortage of skilled labor, which would impact the manufacturing industry. Despite their strong academic background, they don't possess the abilities and expertise that the industries want. According to the demands of the jobs, the industries are expected to supply and pay for the candidates' training. Furthermore, it can be very challenging for fresh graduates to cope with the disappointment of having their employment terminated due to unfulfilled expectations. Thus, employability has expanded beyond a strict focus on skills to include social cognitive, dynamic, and environmental factors (Clarke, 2018; Dacre-Pool & Sewell, 2007; Tomlinson, 2017). Garcia-Aracil et al. (2021) propose that self-belief and confidence are essential elements of a successful transfer to the workforce, despite the fact that these characteristics could be seen as temporary rather than persistent traits (Tymon et al., 2020). Consequently, it is essential that universities offering both technical and non-technical studies also offer value-added courses that concentrate on enhancing employability skills. Especially, it is advised for the polytechnic colleges offering diploma in printing technology and print media to modify their syllabus focusing on career development subjects and overall competency development which support the students to perform effectively in their respective fields.

X. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- 1) Therefore, it is imperative that universities offering both technical and non-technical degrees provide value-added courses focused on improving employability skills.
- 2) The study's sample size is restricted to one hundred pupils.

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