

“ENHANCING EMPLOYABILITY OF MANAGEMENT GRADUATES THROUGH SKILL DEVELOPMENT”

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Abstract:

Employability is more than about developing attributes, techniques or experience just to enable a student to get a job, or to progress within a current career. It is about learning and the emphasis is less on ‘employ’

and more on ‘ability’. In essence, the emphasis is on developing critical, reflective abilities, with a view to empowering and enhancing the learner. The present research is an attempt towards the analysis of employability skills, viz., the survival skills, for the young business graduates who may pursue their professional life. The study tries to answer a few questions like 1) What is the role of business schools in producing useful graduates for recruiting organizations with employability skills (survival skills) and, 2) How can classroom knowledge be integrated with workplace knowledge in the education process. It is well understood from the research that there is significant relationship between survival skills imparted by the educational institutions, during their academic tenure and employability options.

Introduction:

A strong Indian economy which is vying to be an economic superpower by the year 2020 means a robust industrial growth, strong pool of foreign capital pooled with RBI, sound infrastructure, better standard of living, better per capita income, better employment opportunity for all, mature financial markets, 100% financial inclusion, better amenities and hygiene facilities. India with a steady growth and the right environment has been and will continue to attract the world business community. But it is the HR eco-system that will make the wheels of industry turn. Without it, start-ups can’t get started and established companies can’t weather the tough times or make the investments needed to gear up for the boom times.

In this paper the focus is on six of the most important characteristic necessary to enable India to climb the pinnacle of success – a right hiring process, effective training programs, motivated engaged workforce, steadily developing global-class leaders, efficiently managing crisis and wholeheartedly undertaking change initiatives.

With a meagre 2.4% of existent landmass, India has been a homeland for 17.5% of total population of the globe. The distribution of Indian population is concentrated more in urban landscapes throughout the country. After almost eight decades after independence, though India is gradually making her way to be among economically developed nations, the pace of development can be accelerated largely with a right approach to an all-inclusive progress. Diversity has been a unique identity of the nation, but the populace is largely diversified being clustered based on multiple verticals such as economy, education, location, caste and community.

The 2001 census indicated that 72.2% of the total population is distributed in about 638,000 villages while the remaining 27.8% lives in more than 5,100 towns and over 280 urban agglomerations. From these demographics, the diversity of distribution in rural and urban localities is quite evident in India. While national leaders of pre-independent India such as Mahatma Gandhi emphasised on rural empowerment, post independent reorganisation of the country has been quite ineffective to convert such ideas into reality. Government

initiatives for a developed India are not apathetic to rural peripheries, but the process is apparently inadequate. Either the functioning of government initiatives is with glitches or with serious setbacks on policy fronts. Issues such as farmer suicide still rage the country when the brighter face of a rich India shine abroad in other nations.

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After ‘Digital India’ and ‘Make in India’, the Government has launched yet another programme. This one is a revised version of programmes launched earlier under the skill development policy. This new programme, called ‘Skill India’, is supposed to be a multi-skill programme.

Objectives of ‘Skill India’

The main goal is to create opportunities, space and scope for the development of the talents of the Indian youth and to develop more of those sectors which have already been put under skill development for the last so many years and also to identify new sectors for skill development. The new programme aims at providing training and skill development to 500 million youth of our country by 2020, covering each and every village. Various schemes are also proposed to achieve this objective.

Features of ‘Skill India’

- The emphasis is to skill the youths in such a way so that they get employment and also improve entrepreneurship.
- Provides training, support and guidance for all occupations that were of traditional type like carpenters, cobblers, welders, blacksmiths, masons, nurses, tailors, weavers etc.
- More emphasis will be given on new areas like real estate, construction, transportation, textile, gem industry, jewellery designing, banking, tourism and various other sectors, where skill development is inadequate or nil.
- The training programmes would be on the lines of international level so that the youths of our country can not only meet the domestic demands but also of other countries like the US, Japan, China, Germany, Russia and those in the West Asia.
- Another remarkable feature of the ‘Skill India’ programme would be to create a hallmark called ‘Rural India Skill’, so as to standardise and certify the training process.
- Tailor-made, need-based programmes would be initiated for specific age groups which can be like language and communication skills, life and positive thinking skills, personality development skills, management skills, behavioural skills, including job and employability skills.
- The course methodology of ‘Skill India’ would be innovative, which would include games, group discussions, brainstorming sessions, practical experiences, case studies etc.

Employability skills

The 2002 report, *Employability Skills for the Future*, published by the Business Council of Australia and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, outlined an ‘Employability Skills Framework’ which identifies eight employability skills. They are: Communication skills, which contribute to productive and harmonious relations between employees and customers; Teamwork skills, which contribute to productive working relationships and outcomes; Problem-solving skills, which contribute to productive outcomes; Initiative and enterprise skills, which contribute to innovative outcomes; Planning and organising skills, which contribute to long-term and short-term strategic planning; Self-management skills, which contribute to employee satisfaction and growth,

Learning skills, which contribute to ongoing improvement and expansion in employee and company operations and outcomes, Technology skills, which contribute to effective execution of tasks.

It is observed that employability skill enhancement program must ensure both employment opportunity and 'ability' enhancement modules in the academic curriculum. The ability enhancement program which includes the survival skills, both hard and soft skills that are to be induced through integrated curriculum. It is rightly pointed out by the Harvey (2003) that employability is not just about getting a job. Conversely, just because a student is on a vocational course does not mean that somehow employability is automatic. Employability is more than about developing attributes, techniques or experience just to enable a student to get a job, or to progress within a current career. It is about learning and the emphasis is less on 'employ' and more on 'ability'. In essence, the emphasis is on developing critical, reflective abilities, with a view to empowering and enhancing the learner. It has been well defined by Hillage and Pollard's (1998) that employability as an individual's ability to gain initial employment, maintain employment, move between roles within the same organization, obtain new employment if required and (ideally) secure suitable and sufficiently fulfilling work. In this context the major expectations of the HR managers include the student's ability to get a job, maintain a job, and move between the roles and successful accomplishment of tasks. The HR managers are having greater concern on the multi-skills. A person having multi skills meet the expectations of the HR managers more compared to others. The objective behind such multi skilled selection is to rotate the person to different roles and responsibilities so that the work does not get affected due to manpower inadequacy. More over one can take better and higher responsibilities in the later days. The management education in business schools should ensure the design of a curriculum which meets the survival skills suggested by the HR managers of the industries. If business schools are to survive and prosper in the future, they will need to be structured around 13 core integrated survival skills like; communication skill, working with group, adaptability, responsibility, interaction skill, proactive and initiation skill, customer orientation, appearance, task perseverance, operational skill, creativity and problem solving, work performance and technology skills. Though debate about whether education is an art or a science is going on (Rusk, 1919) this particular paper thus envisage a paradigm shift in the educational approach from traditional knowledge based one to skill and aptitude based approach which ensure more employment opportunity to the young graduates.

The present study has been taken up to interlink the three stages in the context of enhancing employability of the students namely identifying the student requirements through SWOT analysis, providing the appropriate training and thereby enhancing the employability which is evident in the placement.

Need for SWOT:

In the present day management education, it becomes imperative for the students to identify their strengths, weaknesses and challenges to overcome their weaknesses so as to realize and benefit from the wide spectrum of opportunities that open up. In this direction, an effort is made from the institute towards facilitating the process of self awareness and introspection.

Process:

- The assessment is done to identify the Strengths & Weaknesses of all the 1st sem students to understand their future opportunities or probable threats they may encounter in their career.
- The Weakness of the students are expected to be on the academic level or related to their personality. The institute will plan for

proper corrective measures to overcome the weaknesses of the students that have been identified.

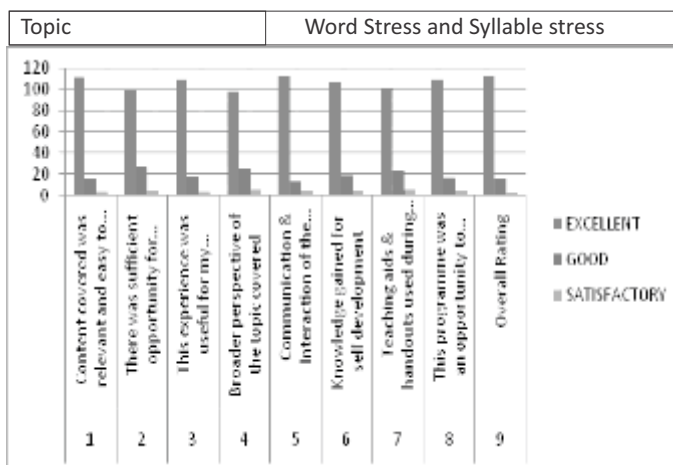
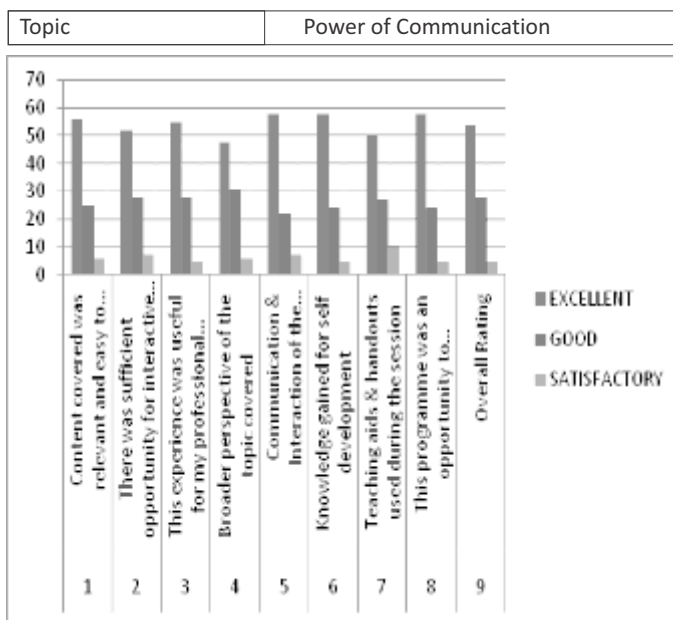
- The institute will also plan Motivational measures for all students that will enhance their personality for better future.
- Future course of action in form of various activities are to be executed as an ongoing process.

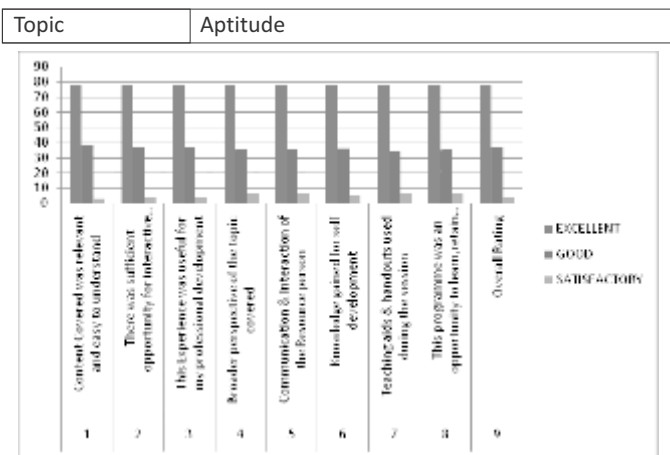
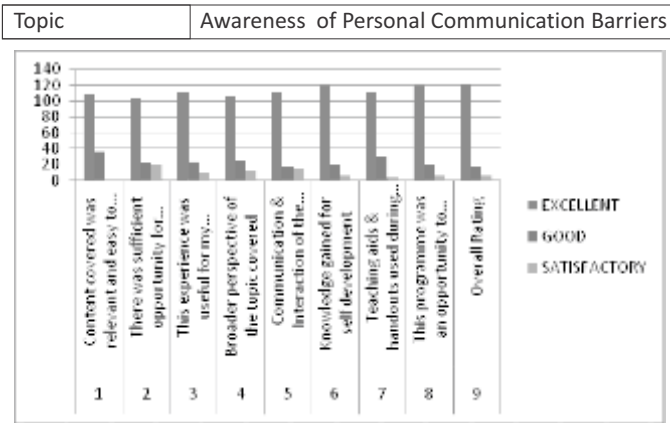
Grading and its Implications:

The 'C' grade students will be given future academic guidance by the concerned subject teachers, additional library & digital library hours to be given. There are certain critical weaknesses identified that are mainly related to their personality, where professional counseling will be recommended.

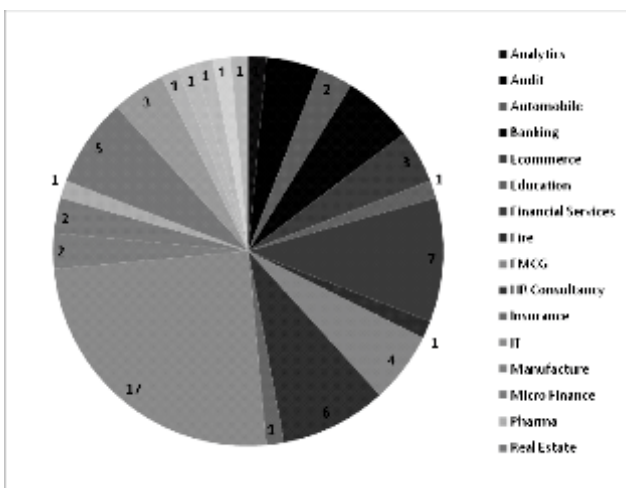
The 'A' & 'B' grade students will be given a more intensive training program on various issues as Aptitude training, Stress management, Self Management, Critical thinking, Analytical thinking, Presentation skills, Group Discussions, Confidence Building, Motivational skill, Resume writing & Soft skill training etc. Special help will be given to Non - accounting background students for subjects like Accounting for Managers, Financial Management; Finance background students need help in Bumastics.

The training activities have been organized in accordance to the requirement of the students. The feedback of the students pertaining to these training programmes have been presented below.





The result of the training sessions has been witnessed in the form of excellent placements. The results have been presented below:



Conclusion:

The present research is an attempt towards the analysis of employability skills, viz., the survival skills, for the young business graduates who may pursue their professional life. The study tries to answer a few questions like 1) What is the role of business schools in producing useful graduates for recruiting organizations with employability skills (survival skills) and, 2) How can classroom knowledge be integrated with workplace knowledge in the education process. It is well understood from the research that there is significant relationship between survival skills imparted by the educational institutions, during their academic tenure and employability options. The analysis and findings indicate that management education could play a vital role in synergizing the efforts of industry and institute in grooming young graduates towards better employability options in management professions. The role of business schools has to be reinforced with skill based academic curriculum and have to adapt themselves and be able to make a positive contribution towards employability. The business schools will have to re-think their program, curriculum, approach and training in order to develop future generations with industry expected professional skills.

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ASIAN JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT RESEARCH
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