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## A Study on Tertiary Education's impact on Employability Skills of Graduates in the Job Market Concerning Chennai City

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### Abstract:

*This study examines the employability skills that graduates possess in the workforce. This research also aims at studying the impact of tertiary education institutions and their initiatives to improve the employability skills of graduates. The target group of the study comprises graduate employees between the age groups of 20 and 50 years. The period of study is two months, with a sample size of 100 respondents collected through a questionnaire. The research makes use of statistical analysis tools like ANOVA, chi-square, and correlation tests to study various factors and determine the relationship between the variables. The study focuses on whether there are any initiatives taken by tertiary education institutions to develop employability skills and the satisfaction of the graduates on the same.*

**Key Words:** Employability Skills, Graduates, Labour Market, Tertiary Education.

### INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental component of both professional and personal growth, and it is essential for giving people the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the workforce. The necessary employable skills, such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, teamwork, and time management, can be taught to graduates through a high-quality education. One definition state that in order to be "employable," a person must possess certain adaptive skills. In addition to a solid technical understanding and subject knowledge, employers frequently list a specific set of abilities they seek from candidates. They believe that having these skills will allow a person to do their job as effectively as possible. Nonetheless, there has been an increase in worry over graduates' employability, with many businesses claiming that recent graduates lack the abilities needed for the workplace. This can be linked to a variety of things, such as the evolving nature of labour and a mismatch between the demands of industry and the educational system. Many educational institutions have begun to concentrate on helping students acquire employable skills through both academic and extracurricular activities

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in response to this problem. For instance, several universities have begun incorporating real-world, hands-on learning opportunities into their curricula, such as internships and industry projects. Institutions are also encouraging students to get involved in clubs and societies and other extracurricular activities to assist them build a variety of transferable skills.

On the one hand, it is frequently asserted that graduates' employability abilities are intimately related to the job market that are frequently necessary for professional success. Also, graduates with good employability skills are more likely to find employment prospects and are frequently better prepared to handle the demands of the modern workforce. On the other hand, some contend that other factors can play a more substantial role in predicting employment outcomes and that graduates' employability abilities are not necessarily tied to the labour market. However, some contend that the labour market is not always in line with the requirements of the workforce, which means that graduates with great employability skills might not always find job openings that are compatible with their qualifications. The job market and employability abilities have a complicated and varied relationship. While there is unquestionably a connection between the two, it is also crucial to consider other elements that may have an impact on employment outcomes, such as the general health of the economy, social connections, and the compatibility of the labour market with workforce demands.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To study the impact of initiatives taken by colleges to improve the employability skills of graduates.
2. To find out the relationship between gender and assessment skills of graduates after getting employed.
3. To study the satisfaction of graduates' employability skills with educational qualifications.
4. To examine the relationship between gender and work experience of graduates.

## **NEED FOR THE STUDY**

This special investigation shows the effect of tertiary education in the labour market. This study investigates the educational mismatch of graduates in the labour market. This research helps the readers to know about the avenues and initiatives the college and universities are taking to develop the employability skills of graduates. The study will allow readers to reflect on their understanding of the impact of tertiary education on the life of graduates in order to find appropriate ways to conduct future research effectively.

## **SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

A sample of graduates from different disciplines and educational institutions in Chennai is included in the study. The study evaluates the present degree of employability skills that graduates in Chennai city currently possess. The study also looks for any efforts made by colleges to increase graduates' employability skills in the labour market. The study also analyses various variables, like gender, age, and educational qualifications, that influence the employability skills of the graduates.

## STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The problem of this study is to identify and evaluate the effectiveness of the tertiary education in producing graduate employees with necessary skills and competencies to meet the demand of the labour market. This research also aims to provide insight into current state of employability skills of graduates.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study makes use of primary information gathered from graduate workers. 100 respondents provided the information, which was then gathered and entered into the SPSS software for analysis and interpretation. On Google Forms, a structured questionnaire form was created and distributed among the graduates who are employed in the labour market. A survey strategy using Simple Random Sampling and Snow Ball Sampling was used to acquire the data. ANOVA, Chi-Square, and correlation have all been employed to examine the data that was gathered. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used to understand & probe the statistical truth of data collected from respondents through survey conducted.

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

1. H0: There is no relationship between gender and the self-assessment skills of graduates after they get employed.  
H1: There is a relationship between gender and the self-assessment skills of graduates after they get employed.
2. H0: There is no impact of college initiatives on graduates' employability skills.  
H1: There is an impact of college initiatives on graduates' employability skills.
3. H0: There is no significant relationship between educational qualifications and satisfaction with graduates' employability skills.  
H1: There is a significant relationship between educational qualifications and satisfaction with graduates' employability skills.
4. H0: There is no relationship between gender and the work experience of graduates.  
H1: There is a relationship between gender and the work experience of graduates.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### **1. Employability of graduates and post graduates in respect to retail industry: a study of selected states of North India- Neha Malhotra, Vidya M, Karthik Dave (2022)**

The study aims to identify and investigate the elements crucial to employability from a multidimensional approach. The study identifies and examines the antecedent elements that affect how college graduates and undergraduates develop their employability. With its conclusions, the study pinpoints the modifications or enhancements needed in instructional strategies, student grooming, societal norms, social and economic biases in facility accessibility that affect employment.

## 2. A Study on employability skill and competency of the graduates in the North-East India– Arun Kumar Banerjee (2020)

The current study emphasises the following key conclusions that came from a thorough examination of primary data gathered with the aid of a specially created questionnaire by the researcher. According to the study’s goal, the findings are based on Expectations of Students, Recruiters, and Employers.

## 3. Higher education and the labour market: an introduction – Hugh Lander & Ken Mayhew (2020)

Over the past ten years, tertiary education has grown at an unparalleled rate, but many graduates still struggle to find fulfilling employment, despite employers' claims to the contrary. To satisfy the demand for knowledge and skills tomorrow, the tertiary education sector needs to reinvent itself to give people more control over what they learn, how they learn, when they learn, and where they learn it.

### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

**Table 1: Tertiary Education (College) serves as a foundation for graduates to develop employability skills.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	.9	.9	.9
	Disagree	2	1.9	1.9	2.8
	Neutral	13	12.3	12.3	15.1
	Agree	47	44.3	44.3	59.4
	Strongly Agree	43	40.6	40.6	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

#### Inference

Table 1 portrays that around 44% of the respondents agree and 40% strongly agree with the fact that tertiary education serves as a base for graduates to develop employability skills, while 12% of the respondents neither agree nor disagree and 2% disagree with the same.

**Table 2: ANOVA Gender and Self-Assessment skills of graduates after getting employed**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Rate your Self -Assessment skills after getting employed. Mark only one per row. [Adaptability]	Between Groups	15.963	1	15.963	8.951	.003
	Within Groups	185.480	104	1.783		
	Total	201.443	105			
Rate your Self -Assessment skills after getting employed. Mark only one per row. [Problem Solving]	Between Groups	16.353	1	16.353	8.803	.004
	Within Groups	193.203	104	1.858		
	Total	209.557	105			
Rate your Self -Assessment skills after getting employed. Mark only one per row. [Self- Confidence]	Between Groups	16.353	1	16.353	10.550	.002
	Within Groups	161.203	104	1.550		
	Total	177.557	105			
Rate your Self -Assessment skills after getting employed. Mark only one per row. [Self- Discipline]	Between Groups	13.080	1	13.080	7.939	.006
	Within Groups	171.336	104	1.647		
	Total	184.415	105			
Rate your Self -Assessment skills after getting employed. Mark only one per row. [Teamwork]	Between Groups	10.135	1	10.135	5.656	.019
	Within Groups	186.355	104	1.792		
	Total	196.491	105			
Rate your Self -Assessment skills after getting employed. Mark only one per row. [Communication]	Between Groups	17.365	1	17.365	9.879	.002
	Within Groups	182.796	104	1.758		
	Total	200.160	105			

**Inference**

**1. ADAPTABILITY**

P VALUE = 0.003

The p-value is less than 0.05, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis. There is a significant difference between the gender and adaptability skills of graduates after employment.

**2. PROBLEM SOLVING**

P VALUE = 0.004

The p-value is less than 0.05, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis. There is a significant difference between gender and the problem-solving skills of graduates after employment.

### 3. SELF-ASSESSMENT

P VALUE= 0.002

The p-value is less than 0.05, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis. There is a significant difference between gender and the self-assessment skills of graduates after employment.

### 4. SELF-DISCIPLINE

P VALUE= 0.006

The p-value is less than 0.05, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis. There is a significant difference between gender and the self-discipline skills of graduates after employment.

### 5. TEAMWORK

P VALUE = 0.019

The p-value is less than 0.05, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis. There is a significant difference between gender and the Teamwork skills of graduates after employment.

### 6. COMMUNICATION

P VALUE = 0.002

The p-value is less than 0.05, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis. There is a significant difference between gender and the communication skills of graduates after employment.

**Table 3: ANOVA Educational qualification and Satisfaction of Graduates' employability skills**

How satisfied are you with the relevance of your skill set acquired during graduation to your present job?					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.971	4	.743	1.104	.359
Within Groups	67.944	101	.673		
Total	70.915	105			

### Inference

P Value = 0.359

The p value is greater than 0.05, thereby null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference in Educational Qualification and Satisfaction of Employability skills acquired.

## CORRELATION

**Initiatives taken by tertiary education to improve employability skills of graduates and how helpful was these workshops (initiatives) helpful for the graduates.**

**Table 4: Correlation coefficient**

		All Colleges take initiatives to improve the skills.	The Workshops conducted proves to be helpful.
All Colleges conduct workshops to initiate employability skills among graduates.	Pearson Correlation	1	.527**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	106	106
The Workshop Programs conducted by colleges prove to be helpful for graduates in attaining a job or employment status in companies.	Pearson Correlation	.527**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	106	106

### Inference

P VALUE = <0.01

The p value is less than 0.05, hence the null hypothesis is rejected. Correlation Coefficient value = 0.527 which states that there is a Moderate Positive Correlation between the variables.

**Table 5: CHI-SQUARE Gender and Work Experience of Graduate Employees**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.575 <sup>a</sup>	4	.813
Likelihood Ratio	1.559	4	.816
Linear-by-Linear Association	.289	1	.591
N of Valid Cases	106		

### Inference

P Value = 0.813

The p value is greater than 0.05, thereby accepting the null hypothesis. There is no relationship between gender and work experience among graduates employed in the labour market.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The study's sample size could be too small to be representative of the entire population.
- The study may have concentrated on a narrow range of employability skills that may not have adequately represented the whole spectrum of abilities required by graduates in the labour market.
- As the data came from Chennai locals, it's possible that the findings don't hold true for other areas or groups.
- The depth and scope of the analysis may have been compromised by the study's constrained time constraints.

### **FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

- There is significant difference between gender and Adaptability, Problem-solving, Team-work, Self-Discipline, Self-Assessment & communication skills of graduates in the labour market.
- There is No Relationship between Gender and Work Experience of graduates employed in the labour market.
- The initiatives taken by colleges proves to be helpful for graduates in attaining employment status in the job market.
- There is relationship between educational qualification attained and satisfaction of Employability skills of graduates.
- Study also shows that 75% of the respondents agrees that “All colleges conduct workshops to improve employability skills of graduates”.
- Data also reveals that 90% of the Graduate Employees concur that all the companies have started giving training upon joining them as a fresher.

### **SUGGESTIONS**

- According to the employers in the labour market, there is still a gap between the employability skills of graduates with labour market requirements. The tertiary education should see to that they identify and bridge this gap.
- Graduates should also improvise their skills or upskill themselves by doing any courses apart from their college degree.
- Employers should put forth their demands or their requirements such that graduates can train their skills accordingly.
- The colleges and institutions should make sure the workshops conducted by them are far more effective for graduates in upskilling their employability skills to match the labour market requirements.

### **CONCLUSION**

The employability abilities of graduates in the job market are significantly influenced by tertiary education. The study discovered that the employability abilities of graduates are significantly influenced by the quality of education provided by institutions. Higher success rates in producing employable graduates are seen at institutions that place a heavy emphasis on practical training and curriculum that is relevant to the industry. The study also reveals that graduates with work experience have a competitive edge over fresh job seekers. Colleges should focus on sending their students on internships, and industrial visits to gain the requisite work experience. The study also shows that graduates with higher educational qualifications possess more employability skills than those with lower educational qualifications.

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