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A Critical Evaluation of Employability Skills of Postgraduates and its Impact on their Job Prospects#

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Abstract

Employability skills have become the need of the hour. Many postgraduates are lacking the necessary skills to be employable. This paper explores different kinds of employability skills as perceived by employers. The objective of this study was to examine the extent to which the academic curriculum and extra-curricular activities of Higher Educational Institutions meet this urgent need to make the Postgraduates more employable and bridge the gap between industry requirements and college fresher's. The data was analysed using the Descriptive Analysis technique, Friedman's Test, Chi-Square analysis, and Correlation Analysis. The major findings of the study are that Campus recruitment features at the top mode of recruitment as the recruiter's preference for the right candidate to find the right job. Though the hardcore subjects in the curriculum are designed to make the Postgraduate student industry ready, many are not able to pass through the technical skills round, aptitude, general knowledge skills, communication skills test rounds conducted during Campus recruitment drives. There seems to be a disconnect in the minds of the students who are not able to apply theoretical concepts learnt in their curriculum to the practical challenges in business and industry. Postgraduates need to acquire soft skills along with their curriculum. This study has serious implications in that Universities and Colleges have to develop a curriculum framework that includes training the students in aptitude building and ensuring that skill development becomes the most vital part of higher education so as to make the student industry-ready.

Keywords: Acquisition, Employability, Generic Skills, Knowledge, Soft Skills

1. Introduction

The economy is facing an unprecedented challenge of a colossal type. Even before the pandemic started its destructive trial in India in the month of February 2020, unemployability and under employability was predominant in industry bastions. A perfect storm is brewing across India's industrial complex, one that will truly test the country's demographic dividend. Restructuring in many existing industries is leading to layoffs in thousands while a future in which new projects could be driven largely by automation and robots could put paid to the aspirations of millions of young men and women readying to join the workforce every year. The problem, of course, is that sectors that were traditionally large employers particularly at the blue-collar level, have also altered irrevocably. However, the education scenario shows that there are a lot more job aspirants who are qualified as far as acquisition of traditional degrees. The demand for

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graduate and post graduate courses in and outside the country has trebled in the past ten years. Young graduates passing out of various courses including technical courses like engineering, management, commerce and related areas are struggling to get placed in suitable jobs.

A part of the problem of employment has always been the result of a mismatch between qualitative aspects of the supply and demand of labour: demand has remained unfulfilled due to the non-availability of workers with requisite skills and workers have remained unemployed or underemployed as they have no skills or their skills have no demand. This mismatch seems to have grown in recent years due to fast changes in production technologies and structures to which the skill supply mechanisms and institutions have not been quick enough to respond. Thus, it was deemed necessary to analyse the extent to which young graduates and postgraduates acquire employability skills during their course of study so as to make them industry ready and be equipped with the necessary skills that are pertinent to get placement in the job suited to their area of study. It is the need of the hour to integrate into the education system, technical and soft skills so as to enable the fresher's to be competent and adept. This study is done to investigate the various technical and soft skills that are acquired by postgraduate students during their tenure of the study which contributes to their employability. It addressed the fundamental issue of how a Masters' degree in the Indian context could help a new entrant in the job market to land in a job of his or her course of study and area of interest.

2. Review of Literature

This study primarily involved an in-depth review of literature a few of which are presented below and the major factors affecting employability skills were Analytical skills, Self-understanding, General culture, General management, Work culture, Leadership and problem-solving ability, Communication, Listening, and Learning skills, Time management, Creativity, Computer skills, Teamwork skills, Work ethics, and Organisations thinking skills. Employer's expectations can be classified in the context of four varied fields as soft field-Development of oral and written communication; Hard field-Mathematical and Quantitative skills; Applied field-Team working skills; and Generic field-area of study are considered.

According to Griffin and Coelhoso (2019) the status of employability skills from the perspective of students within a United Arab Emirates (UAE) institution is based on their completion of a half-semester-long work placement experience. The findings of the study were students attributed a degree of importance to all skills addressed in the study with the greatest importance being attached to communication, teamwork, and time management. Students indicated that most skills were addressed in the classroom; however, there appears to be a lack of awareness in the areas of critical thinking, self-management, intercultural skills, and taking initiative.

Vandhana et al., (2019) found in the survey of employers assessing measurable qualities and skills that the employers think are mandatory for recruitment. Employers expect graduates to have technical and discipline competencies from their degrees, which will range from teamwork, communications, leadership, critical thinking, problem-solving, and managerial abilities. This also hints at the skill gap and points at the focus to be given for training for better employability.

Bano and Vasantha (2019) state that Employees have a responsibility to achieve the company's sustainable goals. The development of soft skills becomes as important as technical skills and knowledge acquired during a degree. The main objective of the study is to review the employability skill gaps. The paper also provides information about ways to bridge the employability gap.

Moazam, (2019) in his study stated education institutions must reform and realign instruction and assessment systems in a way that provides realistic information on the learning achievements of graduates. Lack of soft skills remains one of the major hurdles in the induction of graduates in the industry. Graduates must have sufficient industry exposure and commercial

awareness to acquire technical skills that will help them in becoming industry-relevant.

Jenifer (2018) explores the storied career-related perceptions of undergraduates in the College of Liberal Arts at a large, state-affiliated university. Thirty-two students participated in in-depth interviews to identify prevalent themes in employability narrative construction. Transcripts were coded and analyzed according to grounded theory methodology. Findings suggest that participants construct and manage employability narratives in an iterative process of exploring, packaging, and distinguishing themselves. Participants' semantic negotiation of "liberal arts" provides a sensitizing lens for consideration of contemporary student perspectives. By ascribing meaning and value to underlying influences on career progress, exploratory student thinking offers insights for practitioners and theorists concerned for the future of liberal arts graduates.

Huchet et al., (2018) states that the empirical literature acknowledges, however, that any transition dynamics triggered by economic opening can be complex and non-linear, making gains from trade for labour hard to identify. Finally, trade liberalization does not only affect job creation and growth, it has also an important impact on job quality.

The World Economic Forum (2018) stated that the top ten of skill demands by 2020 will be dominated by soft skills and technological skills. This shows, although technology is developing rapidly, soft skills and technical skills are still much needed in the industry revolution 4.0 and in the future.

Jibao Gu et al., (2018) examined the influencing mechanism of curriculum, including course workload and course challenge, on the PE of students. Results from a sample of 880 Chinese graduate students confirm that course workload and course challenge positively affect PE via motivational belief; high-level supervisor-student relationships increase the effect of course challenge, and high-level student-student relationships improve the effect of course workload. The results present valuable guidance to universities on how to improve the PE of students through the curriculum to help them succeed in their careers.

Subramanian and Kalpathy (2017) explored the areas which are critical for the employability of our students coming out of higher educational institutions. The paper considered what skill sets are lacking in our students and how this can be provided through soft skill training and Personality Development programs.

Sumanasiri et al., (2015) stated that the concept of employability has different interpretations and understanding among the stakeholders of employability. They have also expressed that employability not only depends on the graduates' attributes but also on the faculty, curriculum, university's system of teaching and learning, employers' expectations, and many more. The study has revealed the fact that many studies on employability were only concept-oriented. A few studies tried to operationalize employability through different factors. The factors proposed by different studies for operationalization of employability vary from one another leading to confusion. The paper concludes that only proper communication and consensus among the stakeholders of employability could successfully promote employability, which is the expected outcome of higher education.

2.1 Statement of the Problem

Education has to be skill-based and the prevailing education system has to churn out more graduates and postgraduates who are employable and increasingly qualified not just with a degree, but with more quality. Currently, the gross enrolment ratio is just a meagre 12.4 percent and though India produces high-quality Post Graduates from IITs and IIMs who earn very high salaries, they amount only to 0.0001 percent. The majority of the students completing their Master's Degree in Tier II and III institutions, the scene is very grim. Employability skills are imperative in India and there are about 2.9 crore Indian job seekers. The skills gap has to be bridged with appropriate training and this training should be ideally delivered over a period of time in schools and colleges. Education institutions need to emphasize and plan for this and develop training modules embedded in their curriculum.

Students need to be seriously concerned about this. This study attempts to analyse the skills gap and make recommendations to bridge the gap between what the graduate possesses and what is required of them.

3. Objectives of the Study

- To investigate the various technical and soft skills that are acquired by postgraduate students during their tenure of the study through the study of their curriculum which contributes to their employability.
- To evaluate the skill sets sought after by corporates and examine the clarity in their HR policies in hiring postgraduates.
- To compare the relative importance of technical skills Vs soft skills in the recruitment process in the background of employability theories.

3.1 Hypotheses

The course curriculum of postgraduate students does not have an inbuilt system to equip students with generic skills and promote self-efficacy in the Classroom, thus students do not possess the required skill sets.

3.2 Scope of the Study

This study is restricted to Post Graduate students from the Commerce and Management stream only. Data was collected from colleges of the states of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The researcher also managed to interview some Indian students pursuing their Masters Programmes abroad.

4. Research Methodology

The universe for this study comprised of Post Graduate students from the states of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala was selected from institutions offering Postgraduate courses in Commerce and Management. The researcher received responses through the administration of questionnaires from 643 respondents. Purposive sampling and stratified random sampling techniques were applied. The primary data was collected through a questionnaire and interview method. Secondary data was collected from various sources like government websites, journals, magazines, and e-journals. The data were analysed using Friedman's Test, Mann Whitney Test, and Chi-Square analysis.

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The following is the analysis of the data collected from 643 respondents with regard to the employability skills acquired by them during their Post Graduate courses. Out of the 643 respondents, the majority of the respondents were from Karnataka (338) followed by Tamil Nadu (235), Kerala (26) and foreign countries (44). There were 548 respondents from the Urban region and 95 respondents from rural region.

Table 1 depicts that the majority of the students prefer accounting and finance jobs followed by teaching jobs and bank jobs as these kinds of jobs give job security and a good pay package.

It is observed from the Table 2 that all the demographical profile variables of the respondents are not associated with the overall employability skills as the p values are is more than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected for all the variables.

As the study covered Post Graduate students across three States of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala and also among students pursuing their Master's degree abroad, the researchers sought to find out which of the demographical profile variables have a significant association in the attainment of employability skills by the respondents.

Hypothesis

H0: The attainment level on different Skills of the respondents is not associated with the demographical profile variables

It is observed from the Table 3 that all the demographical profile variables of the respondents except city are not associated with the attainment level on different skills as the p values are is more than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected for all the variables except the city.

Table 1. Nature of the Job preferred the most

Nature of Job	Frequency	Percentage
Accounting & Finance	248	38.6
Marketing & Sales	68	10.6
Call Centres & BPO	10	1.6
Teaching	157	24.4
Banking	127	19.8
Insurance	15	2.3
Travel & Tourism	16	2.5
Content Writing	9	1.4
General Administration	25	3.9
Human Resource	47	7.3
Advertising & Media	23	3.6
Logistics	14	2.2
Photography	11	1.7

N=643 MRR=1.197

Sources: Survey Data.

Note: Percentage is not equal to 100 because of multiple responses.

Table 2. Demographical profile and overall employability skills: Test statistics of Fisher's exact test or Chi-Square test

Demographical Profile	Overall employability skills		
	CSTV/FETV	Significant	Decision
City	FETV=26.420	P=0.757 > 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0
Area	FETV=6.745	P=0.672 > 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0
Age of the Respondent	FETV=35.243	P=0.654 > 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0
Gender	FETV=5.268	P=0.833 > 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0
Educational Qualification	FETV=78.625	P=0.212 > 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0
Occupation	FETV=80.907	P=0.987 > 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0

***Significant at 1% level of significant *Significant at 5% level of significant*

There is significant association between the attainment level on different skills and city wise distribution of the respondents. Hence, the attainment level on different skills is completely dependent on the where the respondents reside. It was found that some States emphasized more on including employability skills in the curriculum.

Hypothesis

H0: Behaviour in the learning of different subjects in case of job opportunity is not associated with the demographical profile

It is observed from the Table 4 that all the demographical profile variables of the respondents except the city are not associated with behaviour in learning of different subject in case of job opportunities as the p values are more than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected for all the variables except the city.

There is a significant association between behaviour in learning of different subjects in case of job opportunity and city wise distribution of the. Hence, behaviour in learning different subjects in case of job opportunity is completely dependent on where the respondents are residing.

Table 3. Demographical profile and the attainment level on different Skills: Test statistics of Fisher's exact test or Chi-Square test

Demographical Profile	The attainment level on different Skills		
	CSTV/FETV	Significant	Decision
City	FETV=91.48	P=0.019 <0.05 (Significant)	Reject H0
Area	FETV=18.03	P=0.798> 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0
Age of the Respondent	FETV=64.973	P=0.817> 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0
Gender	FETV=20.873	P=0.675> 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0
Educational Qualification	FETV=134.40	P=0.229> 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0
Occupation	FETV=124.99	P=0.114 > 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0

**Significant at 5% level of significant **Significant at 1% level of significant*

Source: Survey Data.

Table 4. Demographical profile and behaviour in learning of different subjects in case of job opportunity: Test statistics of Fisher's exact test or Chi Square test

Demographical Profile	Behaviour in learning of different subject in case of job opportunity:		
	CSTV/FETV	Significant	Decision
City	FETV=149.09	P=0.001<0.05 (Significant)	Reject H0
Area	FETV=32.49	P=0.290> 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0
Age of the Respondent	FETV=113.64	P=0.73> 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0
Gender	FETV=39.726	P=0.085> 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0
Educational Qualification	FETV=199.20	P=0.054> 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0
Occupation	FETV=187.33	P=0.135> 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0

***Significant at 1% level of significance *Significant at 5% level of significance*

Source: Survey Data.

Hypothesis

H0: The behaviours of the respondents on various factors which will help postgraduate to avail job is not associated with the demographical profile.

It is observed from the Table 5 that all the demographical profile variables of the respondents except area and educational qualification are not associated with the behaviours of the respondents on various factors which will help postgraduate to avail job as the p values are is more than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected for all the variables except the city.

There is a significant association between the behaviours of the respondents on various factors which will help postgraduate to avail job and area and educational qualification wise distribution of the. Hence, behaviour in learning of different subjects in case of job opportunity is completely dependent on the where the respondents belonging to rural or urban and based on his educational qualification.

6. Kruskal Wallis H Test

The Kruskal-Wallis test is a non-parametric test. The K.W test assesses for significant differences on

Table 5. Demographical profile and the behaviours of the respondents on various factors which will help postgraduates to avail job: Test statistics of Fisher's exact test or Chi-Square test

Demographical Profile	The behaviours of the respondents on various factors		
	CSTV/FETV	Significant	Decision
City	FETV=17.34	P=0.117> 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0
Area	FETV=11.713	P=0.010< 0.01 (Significant)	Reject H0
Age of the Respondent	FETV=22.83	P=0.060> 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0
Gender	FETV=4.186	P=0.323> 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0
Educational Qualification	FETV=40.23	P=0.046<0.05 (Not Significant)	Reject H0
Occupation	FETV=31.68	P=0.97> 0.05 (Not Significant)	Accept H0

**Significant at 5% level of significant **Significant at 1% level of significant*

Source: Survey Data.

Table 6. Kruskal-Wallis test for significant difference among the mean rank of the different city with respect to opinion on various skills that are important to get a good employment

Skills	City				Chi-Square Value	P Value and Inference
	KARNATAKA	TAMILNADU	KERALA	FOREIGN		
Psychological skills	303.22	351.79	319.35	308.72	10.703	0.013<0.05* H0: Rejected
Cognitive Skill	306.64	360.75	287.85	253.19	20.587	0.01<0.01** H0: Rejected
Team Work	315.53	321.81	309.81	379.93	4.999	.172 >0.01** H0: Accepted
Creativity and Innovation	335.47	290.02	445.87	316.17	21.065	.000<0.01** H0: Rejected
Logical and Reasoning	324.16	292.32	415.02	408.94	23.012	.000<0.01** H0: Rejected
Mathematical Ability	306.98	341.94	367.17	304.20	7.206	.066 >0.01** H0:Accepted
General knowledge	314.17	350.63	211.12	294.76	17.179	.001<0.01** H0: Rejected
Leadership	327.59	328.22	258.83	283.19	5.952	.114 >0.01** H0: Accepted
Verbal Communication	332.08	315.85	274.88	305.28	3.884	.274 >0.01** H0:Accepted
Technical	340.60	306.42	264.06	296.58	10.475	.015 >0.01** H0: Accepted

**Significant at 5% level of significant **Significant at 1% level of significant*

Source: Survey Data.

Table 7. Ranks for various skills

	CITY	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	P value
Psychological skills	KARNATAKA	338	303.22	10.703	P<0.05* Significant H0 is rejected
	TAMILNADU	235	351.79		
	KERALA	26	319.35		
	FOREIGN	44	308.72		
	Total	643			
Cognitive Skill	KARNATAKA	338	306.64	20.587	P<0.05* Significant H0 is rejected
	TAMILNADU	235	360.75		
	KERALA	26	287.85		
	FOREIGN	44	253.19		
	Total	643			
Team Work	KARNATAKA	338	315.53	4.999	P<0.05* Significant H0 is rejected
	TAMILNADU	235	321.81		
	KERALA	26	309.81		
	FOREIGN	44	379.93		
	Total	643			
Creativity and Innovation	KARNATAKA	338	335.47	21.065	P<0.05* Significant H0 is rejected
	TAMILNADU	235	290.02		
	KERALA	26	445.87		
	FOREIGN	44	316.17		
	Total	643			
Logical and Reasoning	KARNATAKA	338	324.16	23.01	P<0.05* Significant H0 is rejected
	TAMILNADU	235	292.32		
	KERALA	26	415.02		
	FOREIGN	44	408.94		
	Total	643			
Mathematical Ability	KARNATAKA	338	306.98	7.206	P<0.05* Significant H0 is rejected
	TAMILNADU	235	341.94		
	KERALA	26	367.17		
	FOREIGN	44	304.20		
	Total	643			
General Knowledge	KARNATAKA	338	314.17	17.179	P<0.05* Significant H0 is rejected
	TAMILNADU	235	350.63		
	KERALA	26	211.12		
	FOREIGN	44	294.76		
	Total	643			
Leadership	KARNATAKA	338	327.59	5.952	P<0.05* Significant H0 is rejected
	TAMILNADU	235	328.22		
	KERALA	26	258.83		
	FOREIGN	44	283.19		
	Total	643			
Verbal Communication	KARNATAKA	338	332.08	3.884	P<0.05* Significant H0 is rejected
	TAMILNADU	235	315.85		
	KERALA	26	274.88		
	FOREIGN	44	305.28		
	Total	643			
Technical	KARNATAKA	338	340.60	10.475	P<0.05* Significant H0 is rejected
	TAMILNADU	235	306.42		
	KERALA	26	264.06		
	FOREIGN	44	296.58		
	Total	643			

Source: Survey Data.

the continuous dependent variable by a categorical independent variable (with two or more groups). It also helps to determine which samples are significantly different and shows the number of subset groups.

The Kruskal Wallis H test shows that there is a significant difference in the opinion on the importance of psychological skills in good employment among different cities in the study at 5% level, so the null hypothesis is rejected in the case of psychological skills. The implications of this is that Post graduates possessing good psychological skills in terms of having high emotional quotient are better team players, have the ability to handle stress, take up initiative and leadership roles and thus are more employable as they possess the qualities that employers are looking for.

There is a significant difference in the opinion on the importance of Cognitive skills in good employment among different cities in the study at 1% level, so the null hypothesis is rejected in the case of cognitive skills. This infers that Cognitive skills are perceived by some students to be important in getting them a good job.

There is no significant difference in the opinion on importance of Team work skills in good employment among different cities in the study at 1% level, so the null hypothesis is accepted in case of team work skills. All students across the various cities agree that ability to work in a team is imperative and employers expect this as a mandatory soft skillfor recruitment.

There is a significant difference in the opinion on importance of Creativity and Innovation skills in good employment among different cities in the study at 1% level, so the null hypothesis is rejected in case of creativity and innovation skills. This implied that respondents from different cities have varied opinion on whether there was need for creativity and innovation skills. However past literature too emphasizes the fact that creativity and innovation skills are much sought after by employers.

There is a significant difference in the opinion on importance of Logical and reasoning skills in good employment among different cities in the study at 1% level, so the null hypothesis is rejected in case of logical and reasoning skills. The implication of this is obvious, as students who do not possess these skills do not get through the aptitude round and thus are eliminated from the interview process at the initial stage itself.

There is a significant difference in the opinion on importance of Mathematical Ability, leadership, verbal communication and technical skills, general knowledge skills, in good employment among different cities in the study at 1% level, so the null hypothesis is rejected in case of all these skills.

7. Mann Whitney U Test

The Mann-Whitney U test is non-parametric and used to compare differences between two independent groups when the dependent variable is metric data, but not normally distributed. The Independent variable should consist of two categorical.

Hypothesis

H0: There is no significant difference between the mean rank of Rural area and Urban area with respect to opinion on various skills is important to get good employment.

The Table 8 reveals the Mann Whitney U test values and their significance between rural and urban in respect of opinion on various skills is important to get a good employment.

The Mann Whitney U test showed that there was significant difference in opinion on Psychological skills.

In respect of good employment between respondents from rural and urban area as the p value is less than 0.01, H0 is rejected in case psychological skills. There is no significant difference in opinion on cognitive skill, team work, creativity and innovation, logical and reasoning, Mathematical Ability, General knowledge, leadership, verbal communication skills in respect of good employment for respondents from rural and urban areas.

Table 8. Mann Whitney U test for significant difference between mean rank of rural and urban with respect to opinion on various skills being important to get a good employment

Skills	Mean Rank of Region/area		Z value	P value and inference
	Rural	Urban		
Psychological skills	330.72	271.67	-3.001	0.003<0.01** H0:Rejected
Cognitive Skill	181237.00	25809.00	-.159	.874 >0.01** H0: Accepted
Team Work	176714.50	30331.50	-.473	.636 >0.01** H0:Accepted
Creativity and Innovation	177230.50	29815.50	-1.534	.125 >0.01** H0: Accepted
Logical and Reasoning	178193.00	28853.00	-1.058	.290 >0.01** H0:Accepted
Mathematical Ability	175333.50	31712.50	-.688	.491 >0.01** H0:Accepted
General knowledge	177983.00	29063.00	-.935	.350 >0.01** H0:Accepted
Leadership	176684.00	30362.00	-.142	.887 >0.01** H0:Accepted
Verbal Communication	174961.50	32084.50	-.973	.331 >0.01** H0:Accepted
Technical	172943.50	34102.50	-2.347	.019 >0.01** H0:Accepted

**Significant at 5% level of significance **Significant at 1% level of significance*

Source: Survey Data.

Table 9. Test Statistics

	Psychological skills	Cognitive Skill	Team Work	Creativity an Innovation	Logical and Reasoning	Mathematical Ability	General Knowledge	Leadership	Verbal Communication	Technical
Mann-Whitney U	39029.000	36429.500	36647.000	39015.000	36582.000	38617.000	35533.500	39120.500	36961.500	38775.000
Wilcoxon W	52559.000	151389.500	151607.000	153975.000	50112.000	153577.000	49063.500	154080.500	151921.500	153735.000
Z	-.127	-1.427	-1.307	-.130	-1.337	-.330	-1.867	-.080	-1.228	-.274
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.899	.153	.191	.896	.181	.741	.062	.936	.220	.784
a. Grouping Variable: GENDER										

Source: Survey Data.

It is found that there is no significant difference in Gender and skills acquired.

It is found from Table 10 that there is a significant difference in General Knowledge, Logical and Reasoning Creativity, and Innovation skills at the different levels of educational qualification of the respondents. However, no significant difference was found in cognitive skills, psychological skills, teamwork, mathematical ability, leadership, verbal communication and technical skills.

8. Findings of the Study

As shown in Table 1, it was found that most Commerce and Management students preferred to work in the field of accounting and Finance, the second preference was for teaching jobs and in the third position were jobs

Table 10. Ranks of qualification and skills

	EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	N	Mean Rank	Chi square value	P value and inference
Psychological skills	P.G I year (previous)	217	340.72	5.752	0.218 >0.01** H0: Accepted
	PG II Year (Final)	399	311.26		
	Just Completed Post Graduation	16	355.38		
	Post Graduate with M.Phil./ Ph.D.	10	310.70		
	Post Graduate with pass in competitive exam	1	124.00		
	Total	643			
Cognitive Skill	P.G 1 year (previous)	217	336.00	8.476	0.076 >0.01** H0: Accepted
	PG II Year (Final)	399	315.90		
	Just Completed Post Graduation	16	231.50		
	Post Graduate with M.Phil./ Ph.D.	10	413.25		
	Post Graduate with pass in competitive exam	1	254.00		
	Total	643			
Team Work	P.G 1 year (previous)	217	313.47	4.901	0.298 >0.01** H0: Accepted
	PG II Year (Final)	399	330.83		
	Just Completed Post Graduation	16	247.63		
	Post Graduate with M.Phil./ Ph.D.	10	285.35		
	Post Graduate with pass in competitive exam	1	205.50		
	Total	643			
Creativity and Innovation	P.G 1 year (previous)	217	275.91	22.644	0<0.01** H0: Rejected
	PG II Year (Final)	399	348.07		
	Just Completed Post Graduation	16	327.63		
	Post Graduate with M.Phil./ Ph.D.	10	275.90		
	Post Graduate with pass in competitive exam	1	293.00		
	Total	643			
Logical and Reasoning	P.G 1 year (previous)	217	280.22	21.165	0<0.01** H0: Rejected
	PG II Year (Final)	399	344.86		
	Just Completed Post Graduation	16	337.31		
	Post Graduate with M.Phil./ Ph.D.	10	263.85		
	Post Graduate with pass in competitive exam	1	604.50		
	Total	643			
Mathematical Ability	P.G 1 year (previous)	217	343.71	11.616	0.02 >0.01** H0: Accepted
	PG II Year (Final)	399	307.74		
	Just Completed Post Graduation	16	420.25		
	Post Graduate with M.Phil./ Ph.D.	10	278.20		
	Post Graduate with pass in competitive exam	1	165.50		
	Total	643			
General Knowledge	P.G 1 year (previous)	217	352.95	16.91	0.002<0.01** H0: Rejected
	PG II Year (Final)	399	300.18		
	Just Completed Post Graduation	16	407.44		
	Post Graduate with M.Phil./ Ph.D.	10	386.55		
	Post Graduate with pass in competitive exam	1	300.50		
	Total	643			

Leadership	P.G 1 year (previous)	217	329.41	3.139	0.535 >0.01** H0: Accepted
	PG II Year (Final)	399	320.96		
	Just Completed Post Graduation	16	249.66		
	Post Graduate with M.Phil./ Ph.D.	10	324.80		
	Post Graduate with pass in competitive exam	1	260.00		
	Total	643			
Verbal Communication	P.G 1 year (previous)	217	324.27	3.714	0.446 >0.01** H0: Accepted
	PG II Year (Final)	399	321.25		
	Just Completed Post Graduation	16	365.94		
	Post Graduate with M.Phil./ Ph.D.	10	245.35		
	Post Graduate with pass in competitive exam	1	190.50		
	Total	643			
Technical	P.G 1 year (previous)	217	327.86	3.121	0.538 >0.01** H0: Accepted
	PG II Year (Final)	399	316.06		
	Just Completed Post Graduation	16	375.75		
	Post Graduate with M.Phil./ Ph.D.	10	354.75		
	Post Graduate with pass in competitive exam	1	233.50		
	Total	643			

Source: Survey Data.

in Banking industry. The implication of this is that Accounting and Finance jobs are most sought after but students require a certain set of skills in order to qualify for the job and just holding a Post Graduate Degree is not enough. This supports the view of Vandhana et al., who found in the survey of employers assessing measurable qualities and skills that the employers think are mandatory for recruitment. Post Graduates in Commerce and Management definitely want jobs in their area but employers expect graduates to have technical and discipline competencies from their degrees, which include problem-solving and critical thinking which most of the students do not possess. It was also found that Commerce and Management students are not particularly interested in creative jobs like content writing and photography which they might just prefer to have as a hobby. The study also found that (Table 2, 3, and 4) employability skills did not depend on the demographical variables like rural or urban areas and their gender. Thus it is inferred that the employability skills of a person in a rural area is the same as that of a person in a in the urban areas. However, city of residence did show significant difference as students living in metropolitan city had an advantage of acquiring more skills over those in a two tiered city where the researchers conducted the survey.

The study shows that a fresher should possess technical skills or hard skills followed by verbal communication to get a job employment. Post graduates possessing good psychological skills in terms of having high emotional quotient are better team players, have the ability to handle stress, take up initiative and leadership roles and thus are more employable as they possess the qualities that employers are looking for (Table 6).

Cognitive skills are perceived by some students to be important in getting them a good job.

All students across the various cities agree that ability to work in a team is imperative and employers expect this as a mandatory soft skill for recruitment (Table 7).

Respondents from different cities have varied opinion on whether there was need for creativity and innovation skills. However past literature too emphasizes the fact that creativity and innovation skills are much sought after by employers.

There is a significant difference in the opinion on importance of Logical and reasoning skills in good employment among different cities in the study at

1% level, so the null hypothesis is rejected in case of logical and reasoning skills. The implication of this is obvious, as students who do not possess these skills do not get through the aptitude round and thus are eliminated from the interview process at the initial stage itself (Table 8).

According to the respondents, 61% opine that general knowledge skill test is most often conducted in a job recruitment drive, 65% of the respondents said that performing well in the spoken English test round is needed to be employed; majority of the respondents (45%) state that they have to perform well in the technical round to qualify for a job; Majority of the respondents (45%) said that getting through the Creative thinking round successfully is sometimes needed to get a job. Majority of the respondents (55%) said that Reasoning ability is always required to get a job. 40% of the respondents opine that mathematical ability sometimes helps in getting placed. Majority of the respondents (40.4%) are of the opinion that having a high Emotional Quotient sometimes helps in getting a job. 73% state that writing skill is always an essential skill to get a job according to this study. The respondents do not specifically state that the study of physical strength sometimes helps in getting a job; majority (40% respondents feels that Psychological Skills sometimes helps in getting a job. 57.4; majority of the respondents (57.4%) feel that test of Computer Skills is always conducted during a job placement drive and possessing them is helpful in getting a job. Majority of respondents (45.7) acknowledge that ability to crack the Psychometric Test sometimes helps in getting a job. However, more than 69% of the respondents opine that Skills taught in the Subjects only sometimes or rarely in the courses of study helps in getting a job.

9. Conclusion and Suggestions

The major findings of the study are that Campus recruitment features at the top as the recruiters and students preference for the right candidate to find the right job. Though the hard core subjects in the curriculum are designed to make the Post Graduate student industry ready, many are not able to pass through the technical skills, general knowledge skills, communication skills test rounds conducted during Campus recruitment drives. There seems to be a disconnect in the minds of the students who are not able to apply theoretical concepts learnt in their curriculum to the practical challenges in business and industry. Only a few higher education institutions make it mandatory for practical training and internships in the industry as part of the programme requirements. This is the only way forward to ensure that the students get adequate exposure to the tenets of the business world so that they are industry-ready when they complete their tenure of study. What matters is to promote higher education as a tool to build analytical skills, perfect understanding of self, principles of general management, ethical work culture, leadership skills including crisis management and problem-solving ability, ability to communicate with peers and colleagues, listening skills and a constant desire to learn, time management, creativity, computer skills, teamwork skills, work ethics and organisation level thinking skills. All hard skills and generic skills acquired must be applied in the workplace through team-building skills with a constant desire to pursue knowledge in its whole sense so as to be empowered and add value and worth to the organisation and at the same time contribute to having true meaning to one's life and fulfil one's role in society and be a worthy citizen of the country.

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