

Impact of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on Employability



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Abstract: Technical education becomes the need of the hour as organizations are looking for employees who are technically sound and has the capacity to accommodate themselves in any kind of changing business environment. Flexibility comes first followed by the knowledge and expertise. There is need for educational sector reform to address the gap between existing employability skills and skill levels at entry level job. Most of the literatures observed the gap that exists in the present scenario. There is a specific need from the employer that they are looking for people who do not have basic skills but a diversity of knowledge that helps them to achieve business optimization. The present paper is an effort to understand the importance of ICT and employability. This paper is a kind of review and the objective of the paper is to understand the role of ICT in employability and to undertake an intensive empirical study based on the various research gaps identified from such reviews. Only secondary data included, for which the information collected by visiting various libraries and with the help of online journals for this paper. The present study will definitely give new dimension to all existing literatures.

Key words: ICT, Employability, skill and employees.

I. INTRODUCTION

a. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Employability skills are the skills that can be applied diagonally the variety of jobs and life contexts. In a country like India management study is used as passport to get a good job. Management programmes in different business schools in India is now seen as a workable choice and considered as comprehensive chronological process of the study. This thing raises the criticality of employability skill development among management students in India. Enhancing employability skills of management students is a challenge of the management institutions. Management education has to address a wide variety of critical issues of the industries. Due to a skill gap occurring in the nation now days employers find it difficult to include management graduates into the workforce. The employability of management students have fallen in India in last few years. Information Technology skill is one of the most important skills by which a student can get ready to face or solve the critical issues in the industries.

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Information and communication technology is very important in modern world. ICT skills are essential and should form a major part of organization strategy in providing better quality of the students. IT skill is a vital factor in today's world for the students in inhibiting the learning of the students. Literacy of ICT should be included in the regular curricula. The lack of ICT skills may deprive the efforts to use e-learning in bridging the digital divide.

II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To understand the importance of ICT on employability
- To undertake the empirical analysis based on the findings of the study

III. METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on the secondary data. For this purpose, various libraries were visited and websites were browsed for data collection.

IV. REVIEW OF PAST STUDIES

Cotton (1993) highlighted the need for educational sector reform to address the gap between accessible employability skills and entry level job skills. There is a specific need from the employer as they are looking for those people who have diversity of knowledge which help them to achieve business optimization. This study observed that employers give value towards generic employability skills rather than specific occupational skills. It is to be noted that diversified workforce has more ability to absorb any kind of competitive market conditions in better way.

Phillip Brown (2003) tried to discuss the concept of opportunity trap between education and employment. It is a known fact that education is a pillar for success. No country can grow without achieving significant growth in education. However, if we look at the present scenario of employment then there may be some gap exists. The existing system is not sufficient to deal with present requirement. The main thing is that the division of labour can no longer bear the aspirations of individuals, families and social classes. It is acceptable that there are important differences remain in the organization of education, employment and the labour market. The author mentioned that further there is a need of realistic re-evaluation of the role of education to get a better job in the industry after completing the education.

Mel Fugate, Angelo J. Kinicki, and Blake E. Ashforth (2004) described employability as a psycho-social construct. They tried to ascertain its dimension and applications. A theoretical research approach was developed based on the review of literature.



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According to the authors Employability consists of three dimensions, i.e. career identity, personal adaptability and social and human capital but there is a reciprocal relationship among the three dimensions. The study also discussed that these factors contributing positively towards better organizational growth. Further the authors also mentioned that the construct of employability should be judged to test the theoretical model of the article. There is a need to find the factors that may determine low or high employability. Since, social capital is an established phenomenon there is a need to address the issue whether employability incorporates the human capital dimension.

McQuaid et al. (2005) conducted an exploratory study with the help of existing literatures to describe the term employability. The authors suggested that most of the existing literatures had identified a very narrow definition of employability thus making it difficult to interpret. The research conducted by them tried to describe the employability term with the help of personal factors, personal circumstances and external factors.

Bennett (2006) focused on developing the factors affecting employability skills and its role in impacting the class room environment. The author has identified six factors that may change the environment of the classroom such as elasticity of course delivery method, accessibility of community resources, availability of the proper department which can make proper lesson plan, difficulty of incorporating project based education, inability of interacting with the managers to identify the actual skills what they are looking for and lack of availability of professional development. The paper has shown most of the perceived services are important to design the proper employability skills. The experience and knowledge of the teaching professionals and their methods of teaching can be a important parameter which need to addressed at the very beginning.

Wendy Ann Mihm-herold (2010) wanted to develop a model based on the current theory of human capital. There is a need to create a mapping to identify the gaps between current skills and the needs of a knowledge-based economy in northeast Iowa. An extensive survey was conducted and approximately 3794 respondents were surveyed. At the end the authors mentioned that there is a need to develop and implement career paths to find out further the skills and cognition of young adults who are not interested in two- or four-year degree programs.

Merwe et al. (2010) primarily focused on two theories best portrayed by employability concept such as human capital theory and screening theory. Human capital theory highlighted on the fact that higher education generally helps to develop the intangible background of the high school passed out students and makes them more employment-commendable. It also helps to improve the productive capacities of the individuals. Screening theory mainly focuses on the ability of the individual after completion of formal training. There can be a dilemma about the prospective and the benefits of formal training. As a result the second theory may not work.

Mohd Yusof Husain, Seri Bunian Mokhtar, Abdul Aziz Ahmad, Ramlee Mustapha (2010) have described the value of employability skills from perspective of the employers. The study was conducted among 180 employers of various fields of engineering in Malaysia. A structured questionnaire method was adopted to collect the information from the target

respondents. The study reveals that employers rated the importance of employability skills at a high level. This is the reason why there is a need to focus on this aspect. Lastly, all the stakeholders of different educational institution should improve the employability skills of the students through professional development of lecturers, curriculum and co curriculum. The author suggested that more research could be done to find out fundamental differences between employability skills and technology skills acquired by graduates.

Stoten (2010) focused on the changing environment in higher education sector. The study highlighted that value of higher education has seen lots of changes and employment orientation becomes more obvious. The existing system of providing value based education will not solve the purpose. The nature of work has changed with a range of technological and employment practices in the global market. Employability can be considered as a gimmick to create meaning and encourage desirable behaviors in the population should be addressed so that the policy makers better understand the new concepts.

DEHEMS Report (2012) prepared by a group of scholars to answer specific questions related to labour market employability problems. The specific objective of the report is to identify the impact of teaching mode on training, content of the education, employment related guidance services, practical orientation in education system. The study followed both quantitative approach as well as qualitative approach to analyse the data obtained during the survey. The qualitative analysis mainly focused on different stakeholders like Higher Education policy makers, employers, trade unions and student organizations to understand their perception regarding employability and labour market inclusion. Both the dependent as well as extraneous variables are identified and analysis has been made. Based on the analysis it was observed that higher education system need reforms and it should be move towards employability options. The existing system are not interlinked with the labour market operation and this should be re – modified in a way to get better-trained work force.

Ingrid Potgieter et al. (2013) tried to find the link between employability attributes and personality preferences of the post graduate students. The authors developed attitude measurement scale and a quantitative research method applied with the help of 304 sample respondents. The outcome of the research suggests that the employee's personality has a significant role to play to determine the employability. The career counsellors should understand this specific requirement and accordingly incorporate necessary changes in the employability training. Only making necessary changes in the course will not solve the entire purpose.

Stella Williams, Lorna Dodd, Catherine Steele, Raymond Randall (2015) conducted a systematic review of current employability scenario. Related research in this area has identified different dimensions of employability. All of them are not equally employable in every situation. Sometimes, they are not relevant at all. This leads to create a systematic approach towards employability.

The aim is to identify the factors associated with the term employability and to develop an uniform definition and for this reason there is a need to combine conceiving around capital, signaling, identity, career management and labour market demand so as to better understand the concept of employability. The researcher tried to map the existing literature to identify the gaps that may exist.

Oliveira (2015) discusses the concept of transfer theory applicable to the graduate students who face this situation during a transformation phase from full time education to full time employment scenario. The paper identified the drawbacks of human capital theory and mentioned that the learning transfer theory is a better model than others are as it has the narrow view of student's first work life experience. The study mainly conducted with the help of a qualitative research method and it helps to address the issues that the workplace employment is facing over a period.

Thi Tuyet Tran (2016) discussed the importance of increased efficiency of university graduates with the help of industry participation. Employment opportunities are generated by the industry, so it is quite obvious that they will look for the manpower as per their requirement. Over the years, most of the educational institutes were focused on their own system. This does not remain valid in today's environment. It is understandable that without collaboration with the industry, educational organizations are not able to improve the employability among the graduates. It can be concluded that the author only focuses on the institute industry partnership. The quality of graduate students and their socio economic background is also equally important in this regard. There is a need to see that angle as well.

Metilda et al. (2017) has discussed about the consequences of learning of digital technology to enhance the skills of employability. It has been stated that the introduction of online technology has witnessed a extremist effect on the knowledge of an individual and help him to sustain in competitive scenario. Every colleges and students should acquire the skills of information and communication technology to survive in the workforce and to be successful in their career. ICT has set up an electronic platform for a graduate to improve their skills from professional point of views. It can increase the self confidence and helps to achieve success in the job market. The study has analyzed the fluctuation of the procedure of skills of graduates with the impact of the facilities of digital technology which should be implemented in each and every institutions of the country.

Buarki (2010) in his doctoral thesis has discussed about the ICT skills of the students and have discovered that they are potentially defined by the job market. ICT skills are essential for the employment of the graduate students in different job market. It has been seen in the research that most of the students are lacking behind in the job market due to less knowledge in advanced searching and navigation skills. Most of the students have knowledge about beginner's level. Institutes should have knowledge about whether employees have met their job requirements or not. They need to find out the gaps in their knowledge, skills and attitudes which could be improved by proper training. Employer's perception about the students can help to develop curricula in response to market needs. In this paper it can be seen that to improve the skills of ICT some attempts have been made by improving the equipment facilities in laboratories, training facilities to the teachers and introducing electronic content in the curriculum.

Bassols (2002) in his paper on "ICT skills and Employment" had shown the impactful relationship between the two. The study has addressed the growth and changed number of workers in the workforce due to skill mismatches in ICT related jobs. As globalization and economic transformation has brought structural changes in every sphere of job markets, the workforce should also expand themselves towards services. The rapid growth of new segments of the ICT sector has created new types of jobs which require new skills. According to the author the main issue of concerns lies with the policy makers and firms. They should identify the gap between the skills of the IT workers based on current transformation of advanced economies and employment opportunities. It has been identified that to remove the gap three skills are mainly needed for an IT worker such as technical skills, management skills and personal skills. Educational institution should recognize the growing role of ICT sectors and should train the students as per the requirements of the industries.

UKCES Report (2010) has discussed about how to build employability skill with the help of information and communication technology. It has been stated in the report that both the economy and the society of UK have got benefited by having more productive people in workforce. The industries need people who have the skills for today's jobs and having the capacity to adapt the new challenges and changes. Every economy can grow if they have people with right and proper skill set. Proper skill set actually consist of technical and transferable skills, fundamental skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT skill. It has been noted in the report that the skills required to teach the personal employability skills are not in focus in the majority of the institutions. It should be included in the teacher training programmes. Involvement of employers in such training programmes is also necessary. Work placements are most effective in such cases as employers find engaging with the education system more suitable and they can suggest their requirements for the job market.

Bello et al. (2013) have shown how ICT training helps the graduates in technical and vocational study and to get employed after completing the course. It has been stated that in present technological era the vocational and technical courses is more important and suitable for the graduates and it helps to compete them with others. It is totally favorable for the dynamic labour market as they have flexible employability skills.

This paper has highlighted the challenges of the graduates regarding acquisition of ICT based employability skills and depicted the procedures in strengthening the curriculum of technical and vocational courses to assemble up with the global ICT skill challenges.

The graduate students generally face different challenges in the job market. They need to gain adequate ICT skills for employment and they should have the ability to fir into knowledge based society. They must have the ability to cope up with new skills which are demanded by the labour market. The institutions should make the curriculum in such a way that covers all skill related training to cope up with the present job market scenario.

V. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

It was found that there is need for educational sector reform to address the gap between accessible employability skills and entry level job skills. There is also need for focus on specific occupational skills rather in generic skills. It was also observed that there is a need of realistic re-evaluation of the role of education to get a better job in the industry after completing the education. Also found that there is a need to find the factors that may determine low or high employability. One more observation is that there is need for greater emphasis for personal factors, personal circumstances and external factors in the context of employability. Employability as a device to create meaning and encourage desirable behaviors in the population should be addressed so that the policy makers better understand the new concepts.

VI. CONCLUSION

The concluding observations are that the higher education system need reforms and it should be move towards employability options. The existing system are not interlinked with the labour market operation and this should be re – modified in a way to get better-trained manpower. The quality of graduate students and their socio economic background is also equally important in this regard. There is a need to see that angle as well. ICT skills are essential for the employment of the graduate students in different job market. It has been identified that to remove the gap three skills are mainly needed for an IT worker such as technical skills, management skills and personal skills. Educational institution should recognize the growing role of ICT sectors and should train the students as per the requirements of the industries. Every economy can grow if they have people with right and proper skill set. Proper skill set actually consist of technical and transferable skills, fundamental skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT skill. They need to gain adequate ICT skills for employment and they should have the ability to fir into knowledge based society

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