

UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS: A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS FOR IMPROVING CAREER OUTCOMES

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Abstract

In today's dynamic job market, employability skills such as communication, adaptability, teamwork, and problem-solving are increasingly critical for career success. This study examines how students see employability skills, emphasising the discrepancies between their self-reported aptitudes and the capabilities that companies require. The research assesses how well academic curricula, industry exposure, and extracurricular activities nurture these competencies using primary data from 100 final-year undergraduate and graduate students. The results underscore the necessity of curriculum revisions, improved industry-academia cooperation, and focused interventions such as mentorship programs, internships, and seminars. Institutions may improve students' readiness for the workforce and guarantee that their career goals are successfully achieved by coordinating their educational approaches with market demands.

Keywords: Employability, Graduates, Industry-Academia Collaboration.

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1. Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving job market, the demand for employability skills—often referred to as "soft skills"—has become increasingly significant. While technical skills remain vital, employers across industries emphasize the importance of qualities such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability. These skills not only enhance an individual's ability to secure employment but also contribute to long-term career success and progression.

Higher education institutions play a crucial role in equipping students with these essential skills. However, a notable challenge lies in aligning the skills taught in educational settings with the expectations and demands of the job market. As such, understanding students' perceptions of employability skills and their importance is essential for educators and policymakers aiming to enhance career readiness.

This research aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of students' perceptions of employability skills, exploring their awareness, attitudes, and perceived importance. By examining these factors, the study seeks to identify gaps between students' self-assessment of their skills and the competencies required by employers. Additionally, it explores the role of educational institutions in fostering these skills and the impact of various learning experiences on students' skill development.

The findings from this research will offer valuable insights into how educational programs can be better tailored to meet the evolving demands of the job market. Ultimately, this study aims to

contribute to improving career outcomes for students by informing curriculum development, career services, and policy initiatives focused on enhancing employability skills.

2. Literature Review

Abelha, M. et al. (2020)¹, Graduate Employability and Competence Development in Higher Education, concludes that research in Europe highlighted a disparity between the skills of graduates and employer's expectations. To bridge this gap, educational institutions should prioritize the development of essential competencies and improve collaborative practices.

Khan, U. (2019)², A study of select employability skills desirable across various job types: bridging the skill gap among job aspirants through industry academia interface concludes that industry academia interface plays a significant role in developing employability skills in students as students learn many updated things during the industry visit and get practical knowledge, which provides advantages to students during their career life.

Gill, R. (2018)³, Building Employability Skills for Higher Education Students: An Australian Example. Journal of Teaching and Learning for Graduate Employability, concludes that many students enrol in skill development courses, but these programs often fail to meet expectations. As a result, students frequently encounter a significant skills gap during recruitment, where their abilities do not align with employer demands. This central gap arises from insufficient interaction between educational institutions and employers. To remove such issues, there should be proper communication between academic institutions and organizations.

3. Objectives of the Study

1. To evaluate the awareness of employability skills amongst students.
2. To analyse the perception of students towards their career aspirations and future employment opportunities.
3. To identify gaps between students' skills and employer expectations, highlighting areas for improvement.
4. To assess the effectiveness of the current academic curriculum in preparing students for the job market.
5. To examine how higher education institutions contribute to developing employability skills.
6. To explore additional resources and opportunities that can enhance the development of employability skills among students.

4. Hypothesis of the Study

H₀₁: Students do not significantly recognize the importance of employability skills, nor do they have a substantial understanding of what these skills entail.

H₁₁: Students significantly recognize the importance of employability skills and have a substantial understanding of what these skills entail.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in how students perceive the importance of various employability skills in relation to their career aspirations and future employment opportunities.

H₁₂: There is a significant difference in how students perceive the importance of various employability skills in relation to their career aspirations and future employment opportunities.

H₀₃: There is no significant gap between the skills students believe they possess and the competencies expected by employers, and students do not have specific areas where they feel they need further development.

H₁₃: There is a significant gap between the skills students believe they possess and the competencies expected by employers, and students have specific areas where they feel they need further development.

H₀₄: Higher education institutions do not significantly impact the development of employability skills through their curricular, teaching methods, or extracurricular activities. The effectiveness of these components in imparting employability skills is not significantly different from what students might achieve independently.

H₁₄: Higher education institutions significantly impact the development of employability skills through their curricular, teaching methods, and extracurricular activities. These components are more effective in imparting employability skills than what students might achieve independently.

H₀₅: Academic background, field of study, work experience, and involvement in extracurricular activities do not significantly influence students' perceptions and development of employability skills.

H₁₅: Academic background, field of study, work experience, and involvement in extracurricular activities significantly influence students' perceptions and development of employability skills.

5. Methodology of the Study

This study is based on primary data collected through a questionnaire from final year students of degree and postgraduate students. The sample size is 100 students, and the data is analyzed using the descriptive analysis and Chi-square Test.

6. Limitations of the Study

- The study's findings may not be as broadly applicable as they may be because it is based on a sample of 100 final-year undergraduate and post-graduate students.
- The information is based on students' evaluations of their own employability skills, which may contain biases like exaggerated or underestimated talents.
- The study ignores other potential factors that can affect career success in favour of concentrating on particular employability abilities.
- The study was carried out in a particular geographic and educational setting, it may not accurately represent the employability skill requirements in other nations or locations.

7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

- How important do you think the following employability skills are for your career? (Rate on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is 'Not Important' and 5 is 'Very Important')

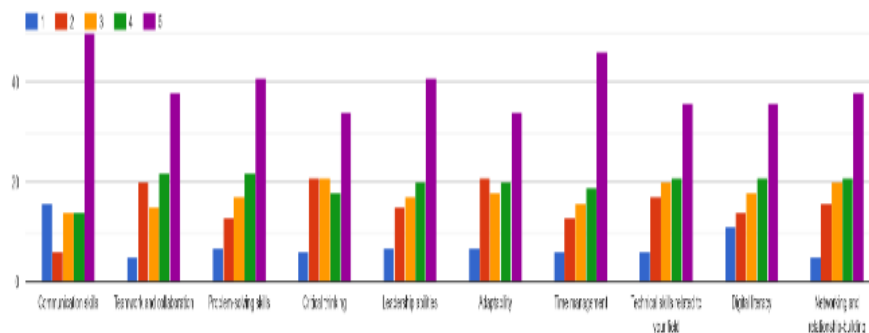


Figure 1. Students feedback: important employability skills

	Communication Skill	Teamwork and Collaboration	Problem Solving Skill	Critical Thinking	Leadership Skills	Adaptability	Time Management	Technical Skills	Digital Literacy	Networking and Relationship Building
Mean	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.9	3.6	3.6	3.7
Standard Error	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Median	4.5	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Mode	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Standard Deviation	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3
Sample Variance	2.3	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.6
Kurtosis	-0.8	-1.1	-0.7	-1.2	-0.9	-1.2	-0.6	-1.0	-1.0	-0.9
Skewness	-0.8	-0.5	-0.7	-0.3	-0.6	-0.4	-0.8	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5
Range	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Minimum	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Maximum	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Sum	376.0	368.0	377.0	353.0	373.0	353.0	386.0	364.0	357.0	371.0
Count	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Largest(1)	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Smallest(1)	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Confidence Level(95.0%)	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3

Table 1. The analysis of competency ratings reveals:

- High Perception: There is broad consensus regarding the significance of these abilities, as seen by mean scores of 3.5–3.9 and median/mode around 4.0–5.0.
- Consistency: Moderate response variability is indicated by a standard deviation of ~1.3.
- Distribution Insights: A propensity towards higher ratings is shown by a slight left skew and negative kurtosis.
- Reliability: These ratings' reliability is supported by 95% confidence intervals (CI) of about 0.3.

Interpretation: The data suggests these competencies are valued, reinforcing the need for continued focus on developing these skills in educational and professional settings

- Which of the following skills do you believe you possess at a competent level? (Rate on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is 'Not Important' and 5 is 'Very Important')

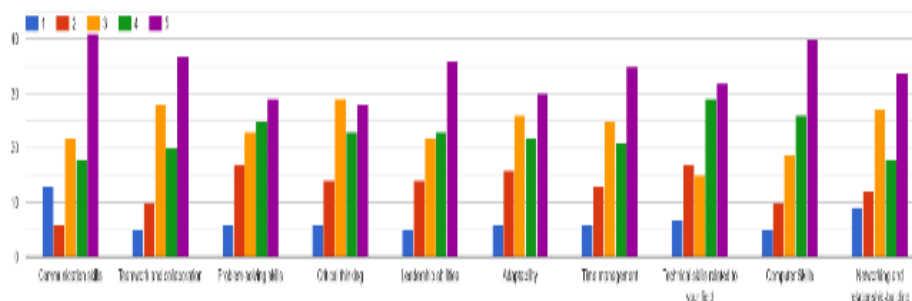


Figure2. Students feedback: skills to possess at a competent level

	Communication Skill	Teamwork and Collaboration	Problem Solving Skill	Critical Thinking	Leadership Skills	Adaptability	Time Management	Technical Skills	Digital Literacy	Networking and Relationship Building
Mean	3.76	3.68	3.77	3.53	3.73	3.53	3.86	3.64	3.57	3.71
Standard Error	0.15	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.14	0.13
Median	4.5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Mode	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Standard Deviation	1.51	1.3	1.3	1.31	1.32	1.34	1.3	1.29	1.39	1.27
Sample Variance	2.29	1.69	1.69	1.73	1.75	1.79	1.68	1.67	1.92	1.6
Kurtosis	0.81	1.09	0.7	1.21	0.88	1.2	0.64	1	1.01	0.93
Skewness	0.83	0.5	0.71	0.3	0.63	0.35	0.79	0.47	0.53	0.53
Range	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Minimum	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Sum	376	368	377	353	373	353	386	364	357	371
Count	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Largest(1)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Smallest(1)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Confidence Level(95.0%)	0.3	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.26	0.28	0.25

Table2. The analysis of competency ratings reveals: -

- High Perception: Mean values range from 3.53 to 3.86, indicating positive perceptions. Computer Skills (3.86) and Networking and Relationship-building (3.74) are highest, while Critical Thinking (3.53) is lowest.
- Consistency: Standard deviation ranges from 1.19 to 1.40, showing moderate variability. Communication Skills is least consistent (1.40), while Networking is most consistent (1.20).
- Distribution Insights: Negative skewness indicates a tendency for higher ratings. Low kurtosis reflects dispersed responses, with a mode of 5 for most skills highlighting frequent high ratings.
- Reliability: Small confidence intervals (0.23–0.27) confirm reliable estimates.

Interpretation: The findings highlight the importance of all skills, with a focus on strengthening adaptability and critical thinking through targeted initiatives.

- Where have you primarily developed your employability skills? (Rate on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is 'Not Important' and 5 is 'Very Important')

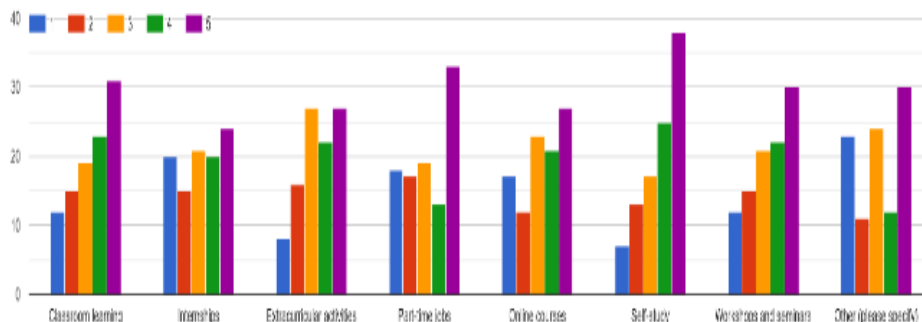


Figure3. Students feedback: where have you developed employability skills

	Classroom learning	Internships	Extracurricular activities	Part-time jobs	Online courses	Self-study	Workshops and seminars	Other (please specify)
Mean	3.46	3.13	3.44	3.26	3.29	3.74	3.43	3.15
Standard Error	0.14	0.15	0.13	0.15	0.14	0.13	0.14	0.15
Median	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	3.00
Mode	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Standard Deviation	1.38	1.45	1.27	1.52	1.42	1.28	1.37	1.53
Sample Variance	1.91	2.11	1.60	2.30	2.03	1.65	1.88	2.35
Kurtosis	-1.07	-1.31	-0.94	-1.43	-1.17	-0.67	-1.08	-1.41
Skewness	-0.43	-0.15	-0.30	-0.19	-0.31	-0.70	-0.39	-0.14
Range	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Sum	346.00	313.00	344.00	326.00	329.00	374.00	343.00	315.00
Count	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Confidence Level(95.0%)	0.27	0.29	0.25	0.30	0.28	0.25	0.27	0.30

Table3. The analysis of competency ratings reveals:

- High Perception: Classroom learning (3.46), workshops (3.43), extracurricular activities (3.44), and self-study (3.74) are the most valued activities.
- Consistency: While part-time employment (1.52) and other (1.53) have the most variability, self-study (1.28) and extracurricular activities (1.27) exhibit the lowest.
- Distribution Insights: The majority of replies lean upward, and all categories exhibit flat distributions (negative kurtosis) and slight negative skewness. Consistently, the mode is 5.
- Reliability is guaranteed by consistent sample size (n=100) and narrow confidence intervals (<0.30).

Interpretation: The best mode of developing employability skills is self-study. Classroom learning, internships, extracurricular activities, part-time jobs, online courses, workshops & classroom instruction and others are examples of developing employability skills.

- How effective do you find your current academic curriculum in preparing you for the job market?

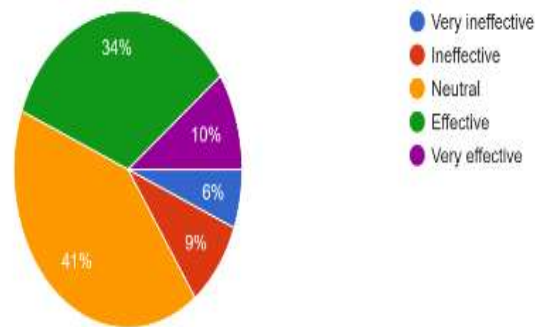


Figure4. Students feedback: effective current academic curriculum

	effectiveness of curriculum
Mean	3.33
Standard Error	0.098529594
Median	3
Mode	3
Standard Deviation	0.985295936
Sample Variance	0.970808081
Kurtosis	0.210545655
Skewness	-0.449798655
Range	4
Minimum	1
Maximum	5
Sum	333
Count	100
Largest(1)	5
Smallest(1)	1
Confidence Level(95.0%)	0.19550409

Table4. The analysis of competency ratings reveals:

- Moderate effectiveness is indicated by the average rating of 3.33/5.
- Consistency: The responses are constant around the average, with a median and mode of 3.
- Variability: A standard deviation of 0.99 indicates that opinions vary somewhat.
- A slight positive tilt is indicated by a skewness of -0.45, which points to a slight tendency towards higher evaluations.
- Dependability: The mean's dependability is supported by its narrow confidence interval (± 0.20).

Interpretation: General satisfaction with the curriculum, but there is a need for improvements.

- What are the main gaps in employability skills that you feel you need to improve? (Rate on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is 'Not Important' and 5 is 'Very Important')

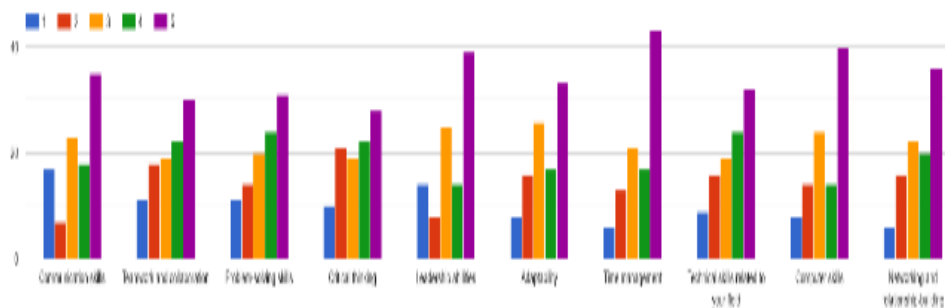


Figure5. Students feedback: main gap in employability skills

	Communication skill	Teamwork and collaboration	Problem-solving skills	Critical thinking	Leadership abilities	Adaptability	Time management	Technical skills	Computer skills	Networking and relationship-building
Mean	3.47	3.42	3.5	3.37	3.56	3.51	3.78	3.54	3.64	3.64
Standard Error	0.145959	0.137201	0.135214	0.13533	0.143069	0.131422	0.129162	0.132893	0.13448	0.12833
Median	4	4	4	3.5	4	3.5	4	4	4	4
Mode	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Standard Deviation	1.45959	1.372015	1.35214	1.353298	1.430688	1.314219	1.29162	1.328932	1.344799	1.283304
Sample Variance	2.130404	1.882424	1.828283	1.831414	2.046869	1.727172	1.668283	1.766061	1.808485	1.646869
Kurtosis	-1.06003	-1.15323	-0.97323	-1.20221	-0.99426	-1.05647	-0.8105	-0.98487	-1.0226	-0.97854
Skewness	-0.50637	-0.3441	-0.47531	-0.25501	-0.53498	-0.33548	-0.64064	-0.46985	-0.48302	-0.46454
Range	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Minimum	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Sum	347	342	350	337	356	351	378	354	364	364
Count	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Largest(1)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Smallest(1)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Confidence Level(95)	0.289614	0.272237	0.268294	0.268524	0.28388	0.26077	0.256285	0.263689	0.266837	0.254635

Table5. The analysis of competency ratings reveals:

- Mean Ratings: The mean ratings range from 3.37 (Critical thinking) to 3.78 (Technical skills). Technical skills, Networking and relationship-building, and Computer skills are the highest-rated gaps, while Critical thinking is the lowest.
 - Consistency: Standard deviations (1.29–1.46) show moderate consistency. Time management is most consistent, while Leadership abilities show the most varied perceptions.
 - Variability: A range of 4 (1 to 5) indicates diverse responses. Negative kurtosis and skewness suggest flatter distributions, with a slight lean toward higher ratings.
 - Distribution: Mode (5) and median (4) indicate most respondents perceive significant gaps.
- Interpretation: Technical and interpersonal skills are top improvement priorities, with generally consistent responses leaning toward higher ratings.

- What additional resources or opportunities would help you develop employability skills? (Rate on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is 'Not Important' and 5 is 'Very Important')

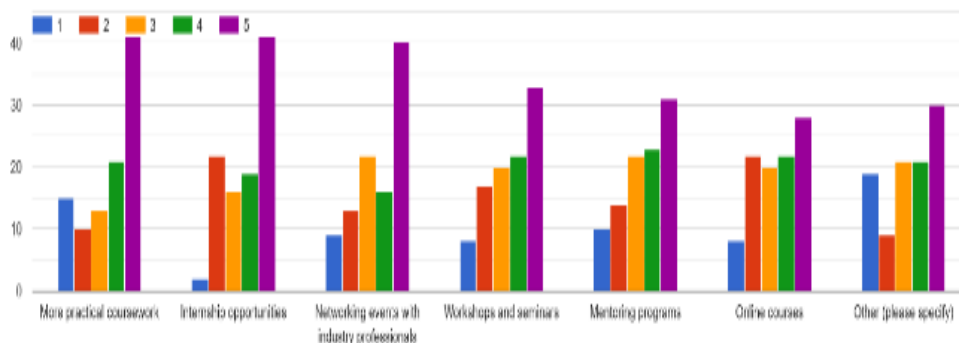


Figure6. Students feedback: additional resources help you to develop employability skills

Additional resources help you develop employability skills	[More practical coursework]	[Internship opportunities]	[Networking events with industry professionals]	[Workshops and seminars]	[Mentoring programs]	[Online courses]	[Other (please specify)]
Mean	3.63	3.75	3.65	3.55	3.51	3.4	3.34
Standard Error	0.147473675	0.125830574	0.135866096	0.1320965	0.132950207	0.131809	0.147175
Median	4	4	4	4	4	3.5	4
Mode	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Standard Deviation	1.474736751	1.258305739	1.358660957	1.3209654	1.329502071	1.318095	1.471754
Sample Variance	2.174848485	1.583333333	1.845959596	1.7449495	1.767575758	1.737374	2.166061
Kurtosis	-0.971336311	-1.269600353	-0.960173202	-1.031172	-0.945148958	-1.1845	-1.19283
Skewness	-0.664311272	-0.444269959	-0.545865024	-0.432293	-0.456146324	-0.23765	-0.39658
Range	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Minimum	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Sum	363	375	365	355	351	340	334
Count	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Largest(1)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Smallest(1)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Confidence Level(95.0%)	0.292619766	0.249675158	0.26958781	0.2621082	0.263802055	0.261539	0.292028

Table6. The analysis of competency ratings reveals:

- Mean Ratings: Internship opportunities (3.75) received the highest mean rating, followed by Networking events (3.65) and Practical coursework (3.63).
- Other resources (3.34) and Online courses (3.4) were rated lowest, indicating lesser perceived impact.
- Consistency: Standard deviations (1.26–1.47) suggest moderate consistency. Internship opportunities (1.26) responses are most consistent, while other resources (1.47) show more variability.
- Variability: The range is consistent at 4 across all categories, from 1 (minimum) to 5 (maximum). Negative kurtosis across categories indicates flatter distributions.

○ Distribution: The mode (5) and median (4) for most categories show a trend toward high ratings, with slight negative skewness reflecting more frequent high scores.

Interpretation: Internship opportunities, Networking events, and Practical coursework are the most valued resources, with consistent recognition of their importance.

- What type of job sector are you most interested in?

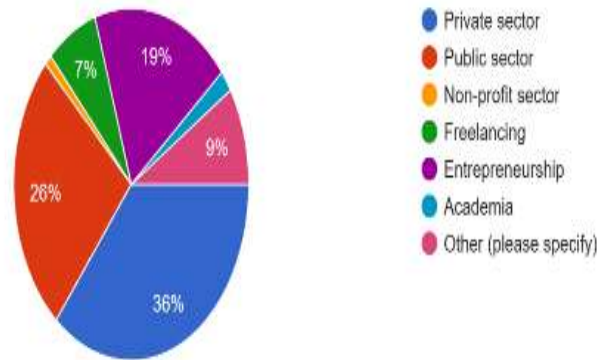


Figure7. Students feedback: most interested job sectors

○ Out of 100 responses, the chart displays the respondents' preferred job sector with entrepreneurship coming in at 19%, the public sector at 26%, and the private sector at 36%.

○ Interest is lower in academia (9%), non-profits (7%), and freelance work.

○ The findings point to a desire for innovation and stability, directing career assistance towards well-liked industries while removing hurdles for specialised fields.

Interpretation: The private and public sectors dominate preferences, while freelancing and academia are less favoured, highlighting interest in stability and innovation.

- What factors are most important to you in a future job? (Rate on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is 'Not Important' and 5 is 'Very Important')

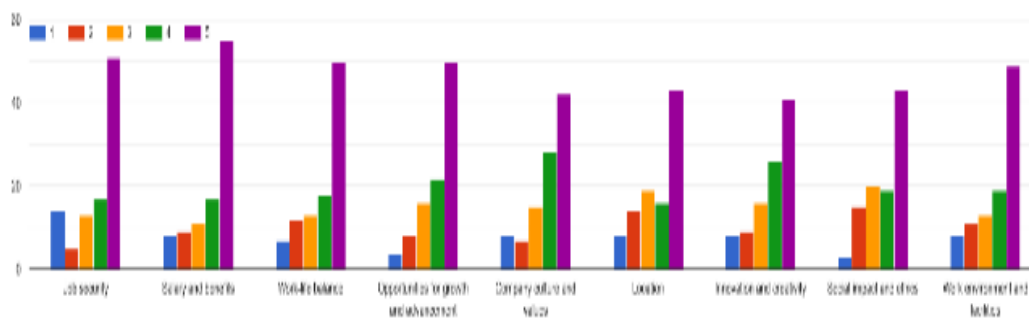


Figure8. Students feedback: factors important in future job

factors are most important to you in a future job	[Job security]	[Salary and benefits]	[Work-life balance]	[Opportunities for growth and advancement]	[Company culture and values]	[Location]	[Innovation and creativity]	[Social impact and ethics]	[Work environment and facilities]
Mean	3.86	4.02	3.92	4.06	3.89	3.72	3.83	3.84	3.9
Standard Error	0.144962552	0.132558354	0.132329555	0.116185154	0.125444664	0.1356466	0.127963852	0.12203659	0.133711585
Median	5	5	4.5	4.5	4	4	4	4	4
Mode	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Standard Deviation	1.449625518	1.325583538	1.323295549	1.161851535	1.254446636	1.356465997	1.279638522	1.2203659	1.337115847
Sample Variance	2.101414141	1.757171717	1.751111111	1.349898999	1.573636364	1.84	1.637474747	1.489292929	1.787878788
Kurtosis	-0.444573336	-0.041527344	-0.470559273	0.169801399	0.029716245	-0.93419666	-0.297220792	-0.891864232	-0.442543886
Skewness	-0.98917372	-1.125900674	-0.917818171	-1.065142404	-1.010101017	-0.614450506	-0.88459654	-0.605784085	-0.926117091
Range	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Minimum	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Sum	386	402	392	406	389	372	383	384	390
Count	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Largest(1)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Smallest(1)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Confidence Level(95.0%)	0.287637153	0.263024533	0.262570546	0.230536551	0.248909428	0.269152282	0.253908045	0.242147071	0.265312793

Table8. The analysis of competency ratings reveals:

- Mean Ratings: The highest-rated factor is Opportunities for growth and advancement (mean: 4.06), while the lowest is Location (mean: 3.72). Other factors range between 3.8–4.0, showing general importance.
 - Consistency: Opportunities for growth and advancement shows the highest consistency (lowest standard deviation: 1.16), while Location has the least (1.36), indicating diverse opinions.
 - Variability: All factors have a range of 4, but Work environment and facilities shows the highest variability (variance: 1.79). Opportunities for growth and advancement has the least (1.35).
 - Distribution: Ratings skew towards higher scores. Salary and benefits and Opportunities for growth and advancement are most skewed (-1.13, -1.07). Company culture has a flat distribution.
- Interpretation: Opportunities for growth and advancement is most critical; Location shows varied importance.

- What are your biggest concerns about entering the workforce? (Rate on a scale of 1 to 5)

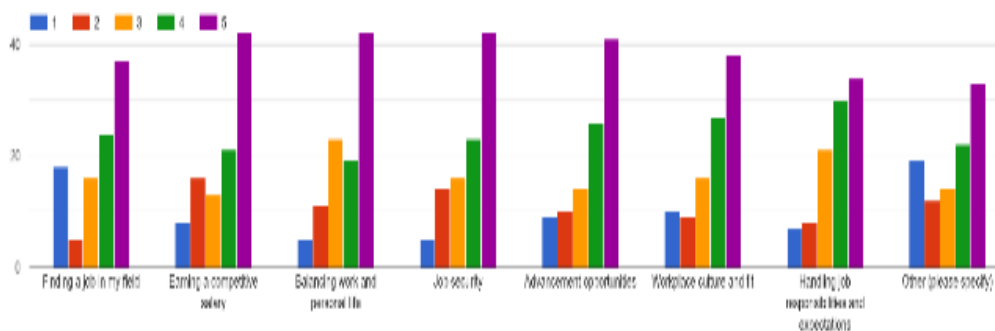


Figure9. Students feedback: biggest concern about entering the workforce

biggest concerns about entering the workforce	[Finding a job in my field]	[Earning a competitive salary]	[Balancing work and personal life]	[Job security]	[Advancement opportunities]	[Workplace culture and fit]	[Handling job responsibilities and expectations]	[Other (please specify)]
Mean	3.57	3.73	3.82	3.83	3.8	3.74	3.76	3.38
Standard Error	0.147884066	0.136222486	0.123402929	0.125573432	0.131809474	0.132283748	0.120705	0.151610879
Median	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Mode	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Standard Deviation	1.47884066	1.36222486	1.234029288	1.255734322	1.318094738	1.322837477	1.207049998	1.516108789
Sample Variance	2.186969697	1.856656566	1.522828283	1.576868687	1.737373737	1.74989899	1.456969697	2.296585859
Kurtosis	-0.910118471	-0.909083685	-0.646116602	-0.658613308	-0.43016457	-0.475589539	-0.209061887	-1.297513549
Skewness	-0.693961756	-0.669631427	-0.669183064	-0.733387696	-0.86417178	-0.81534921	-0.789840542	-0.422665579
Range	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Minimum	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Sum	357	373	382	383	380	374	376	338
Count	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Largest(1)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Smallest(1)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Confidence Level(95.0%)	0.293434071	0.270294966	0.244858183	0.249164933	0.261538592	0.262479655	0.239504907	0.300828876

Table9. The analysis of competency ratings reveals:

- Mean Ratings: The highest-rated concern is Job security (mean: 3.83), followed by Balancing work and personal life (mean: 3.82) and Advancement opportunities (mean: 3.8). The lowest-rated concern is Other (please specify) (mean: 3.38).
 - Consistency: Most consistent: Handling job responsibilities and expectations (lowest standard deviation: 1.21) indicates stronger agreement. Least consistent: Other (please specify) (highest standard deviation: 1.52) reflects diverse views.
 - Variability: All factors show a range of 4, with minimum and maximum values at 1 and 5. Advancement opportunities (variance: 1.74) and Other (please specify) (variance: 2.30) display higher variability.
 - Distribution: Ratings skew towards higher values, with moderate negative skewness (e.g., Job security: -0.73). Other (please specify) has the most flattened distribution (kurtosis: -1.30)
- Interpretation: Job security, Balancing work and personal life, and Advancement opportunities are key concerns. Other responses show significant variation, suggesting a range of individual-specific concerns. Most ratings cluster around higher scores, reflecting shared priorities among respondents.

- To what extent do you feel prepared for the following aspects of professional life? (1 - Not Prepared, 5 - Very Prepared)

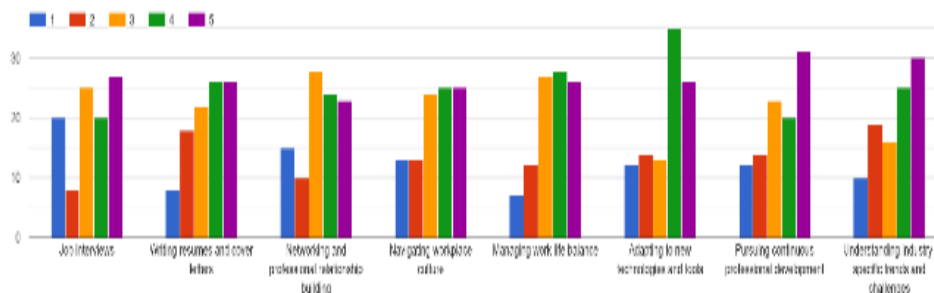


Figure10. Students feedback: aspects of professional life

following aspects of professional life	[Job interviews]	[Writing resumes and cover letters]	[Networking and professional relationship building]	[Navigating workplace culture]	[Managing work-life balance]	[Adapting to new technologies and tools]	[Pursuing continuous professional development]	[Understanding industry-specific trends and challenges]
Mean	3.26	3.44	3.3	3.36	3.54	3.49	3.44	3.46
Standard Error	0.145380031	0.127382348	0.133711585	0.133726692	0.120117787	0.133707807	0.137304498	0.135899547
Median	3	4	3	3.5	4	4	4	4
Mode	5	4	3	4	4	4	5	5
Standard Deviation	1.453800314	1.273823482	1.337115847	1.337266925	1.201177873	1.337078075	1.373044983	1.35899547
Sample Variance	2.113535354	1.622626263	1.787878788	1.788282828	1.442828283	1.787777778	1.885252525	1.846868687
Kurtosis	-1.181839348	-0.98032801	-0.922796488	-0.968159061	-0.615731481	-0.848086891	-1.064033152	-1.129338097
Skewness	-0.325265919	-0.341902328	-0.362168695	-0.378720763	-0.470708797	-0.5990959	-0.385773959	-0.394452517
Range	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Minimum	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Sum	326	344	330	336	354	349	344	346
Count	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Largest(1)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Smallest(1)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Confidence Level(95.0%)	0.288465523	0.252754215	0.265312793	0.26534277	0.23833975	0.265305298	0.272441913	0.269654185

Table10. The analysis of competency ratings reveals:

- Mean Ratings: Managing work-life balance (3.54) and adapting to new technologies and tools (3.49) are rated highest. Job interviews (3.26) and Networking and professional relationship building (3.3) are rated lowest.
- Consistency: Managing work-life balance is most consistent (lowest standard deviation: 1.20). Pursuing continuous professional development is least consistent (highest standard deviation: 1.37).
- Variability: All factors have a range of 4 with minimum and maximum values of 1 and 5. Variances are highest for Pursuing continuous professional development (1.89) and Understanding industry-specific trends and challenges (1.85).
- Distribution: All distributions are negatively skewed, with mild clustering towards higher values. Adapting to new technologies and tools shows stronger skewness (-0.60), reflecting a tilt towards agreement.

Interpretation: Skills like Managing work-life balance and adapting to new technologies are top priorities. Networking and Job interviews show lesser importance, indicating potential areas for improvement or less concern overall.

- How confident are you in achieving your career goals?

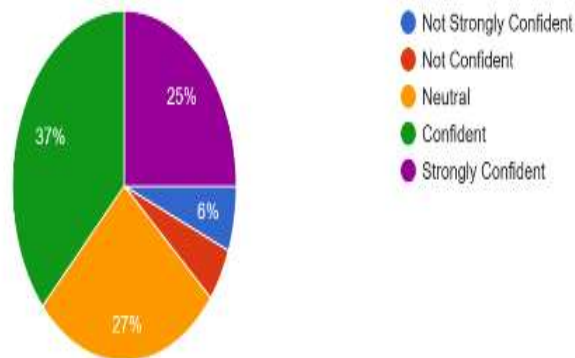


Figure 11. Students feedback: confidence in achieving career goals

	Confident in achieving your career goals
Mean	3.33
Standard Error	0.098529594
Median	3
Mode	3
Standard Deviation	0.985295936
Sample Variance	0.970808081
Kurtosis	0.210545655
Skewness	-0.449798655
Range	4
Minimum	1
Maximum	5
Sum	333
Count	100
Confidence Level(95.0%)	0.19550409

Table 11. The analysis of competency ratings reveals:

- With a mean score of 3.33 and a neutral median and mode of 3, the data indicates a modest level of confidence in reaching career goals.
- Responses vary from 1 to 5, indicating a diversity of viewpoints.
- Moderate variability is indicated by a standard deviation of 0.99, although a tiny negative skew (-0.45) points to a slight tendency towards greater confidence levels.
- This trend is supported by the 95% confidence interval (3.14–3.52). In general, people have neutral to somewhat positive confidence, and there are chances to increase it with focused interventions like skill-building courses or career advice.

○ The sample mean is a trustworthy approximation of the population mean, as indicated by the low standard error (0.10).

Interpretation: Individuals exhibit moderate confidence in achieving career goals, with diverse opinions and opportunities for improvement through targeted interventions.

8. Testing of Hypothesis

1. "Exploring Students' Recognition and Understanding of Employability Skills"

- p-value is 0.8295313.
- p-value > 0.05, There we fail to reject H_{01} , H_{01} is accepted.

H_{01} : Students do not significantly recognize the importance of employability skills, nor do they have a substantial understanding of what these skills entail.

2. "Assessing Students' Perceptions of Employability Skills in Relation to Career Aspirations"

- p-value is 0.418424876.
- p-value > 0.05, There we fail to reject H_{02} , H_{02} is accepted.

H_{02} : There is no significant difference in how students perceive the importance of various employability skills in relation to their career aspirations and future employment opportunities.

3. "Examining the Gap Between Students' Self-Perceived Skills and Employer Expectations"

- p-value is 0.97151022.
- p-value > 0.05, There we fail to reject H_{03} , H_{03} is accepted.

H_{03} : There is no significant gap between the skills students believe they possess and the competencies expected by employers, and students do not have specific areas where they feel they need further development.

4. "Evaluating the Impact of Higher Education on the Development of Employability Skills"

- p-value is 0.0291175.
- p-value < 0.05, There we reject H_{14} , H_{14} is accepted.

H_{14} : Higher education institutions significantly impact the development of employability skills through their curricular, teaching methods, and extracurricular activities. These components are more effective in imparting employability skills than what students might achieve independently.

5. "Exploring the Influence of Academic and Extracurricular Factors on Employability Skills Development"

- p-value is 0.72366996.
- p-value > 0.05, There we fail to reject H_{05} , H_{05} is accepted.

H_{05} : Academic background, field of study, work experience, and involvement in extracurricular activities do not significantly influence students' perceptions and development of employability skills.

9. Suggestions

- **Enhance Critical Thinking and Technical Skills:** These were identified as areas with significant perceived gaps. Institutions can design targeted workshops, real-world case studies, and project-based learning to address these.
- **Promote Self-Directed Learning:** Since self-study was rated as the most effective method of skill development, students should be encouraged and supported with curated online resources, self-paced modules, and digital learning tools.
- **Strengthen Career Services:** Moderate confidence in career preparedness and job interviews suggests a need for enhanced support in resume writing, interview training, and career counselling.

- Integrate Practical Exposure: Internship opportunities, networking events, and hands-on coursework received the highest appreciation. Colleges should collaborate more actively with industries to provide these experiences.
- Revise Academic Curriculum: While the current curriculum is seen as moderately effective, there is scope for updating content to reflect current industry demands, especially in emerging technologies and market trends.
- Encourage Work-Life Balance Awareness: As managing work-life balance and job security are top concerns, soft-skills training should include stress management, time management, and personal development.
- Focus on Consistency in Skill Development: Skills such as leadership and communication showed high variability in perception, indicating the need for more uniform and structured training in these areas.

10. Conclusion

- Employability skills are highly valued by students, especially technical, communication, and computer skills.
- Self-study emerged as the most effective mode of skill development, followed by extracurricular activities and workshops.
- Students showed moderate confidence in achieving their career goals, suggesting a need for enhanced guidance and support.
- Internship opportunities, networking events, and practical coursework are considered the most helpful additional resources.
- The current academic curriculum is rated moderately effective, indicating a need for curriculum updates aligned with industry needs.
- Critical thinking and leadership abilities were identified as the biggest skill gaps, requiring focused development.
- Job security and work-life balance are top concerns for students entering the workforce.
- There is a strong preference for private and public sector jobs, while interest in freelancing and academia is relatively low.
- Students place the highest importance on growth opportunities in their future jobs, with location being the least critical factor.
- Targeted interventions such as skill-building programs, career counselling, and industry exposure can significantly improve student preparedness and confidence.

11. References

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