



Employability in India – Challenges and Solutions

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Abstract- Over 100 years. Employability is an emerged concept in unemployment and labour markets. Part of the problem of youth employability is the relevance of acquired knowledge, skills and educational and training qualifications to current labour market opportunities. This paper focuses the concept of employability and skills needed to become a globally recognised employee. The perception of Employers and employees towards employability skills required for Entry level engineering graduates in multinational software companies is examined. An approach of accreditation towards higher education is explained and highlighted the importance of accreditation in Indian Institutions. The development skills available in India which are needed to enhance the employability in global market are projected.

Keywords: Employability, engineering graduates, employers, perception, accreditation and global market.

I. INTRODUCTION

Globalisation places a high premium on education and skills. Globalisation has intensified international competition between companies and countries in products and services, their design, distribution and cost. As a consequence, it has placed a premium on developing a high- quality labour force.

Employability can be defined as –doing value creating work, getting paid for it – and learning at the same time, enhancing the ability to get work in the future. Employability is a management philosophy, developed by late Professor Sumantra Ghoshal and others, which recognises that employment and market performance stem from the initiative, creativity and competencies of all employees, and not just from the wisdom of senior management. For employers, it involves creating a working environment that can provide opportunities for personal and professional growth, within a management environment where it is understood that talented, growing people mean talented, growing organisations. For many employees, the new contract would involve movement towards a greater commitment to continuous learning and development, and towards an acceptance that, in a climate of constant change and uncertainty, the will to develop is the only hedge against a changing job market.

Employability skills

Employability skills have been defined as "A set of achievements, understandings and personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and to be successful in their chosen occupations". You may also see these skills referred to as transferable skills or personalities. In the context of your career planning and development, they are called career management skills.

Factors that help to make people employable include

- Knowledge and abilities relating to a particular job.
- The ability to identify suitable job opportunities.
- Self-presentation (on applications and at interviews)
- External factors such as the job market and personal circumstances.

Expectation of Skills from Graduates

Employers look for a range of skills in graduate applicants, many of which are common to a number of different career areas. Those most frequently mentioned are communication, team working, leadership, initiative, problem-solving, flexibility and enthusiasm.

Many skills overlap with one another. Leadership, for example, encompasses a number of other skills including cooperating with other planning and organising, making decisions and verbal communication. Verbal communication itself involves various means of communication, some of which you may find easier than others - talking over the phone, making a presentation to a group or explaining something to a person with a more limited understanding of the topic. By improving one skill, you may also improve in a number of others.

Among the most important generic skills identified by various researchers exploring the employers and graduates views are: analytical/research skills computer/ technology / skills interpersonal/ teamwork skills, communication skills both verbal and written leadership/problem-solving skills creative/innovative skills self-management lifelong learning emotional intelligence.

II. GLOBALISATION EFFECTS ON INDIA

India has also promoted higher education through the propagation of universities; however, funding to elementary education has declined. Sixty-three million children age 6 to 14 are out of school due the reduced education budget. The Indian government has invested a lot in promoting higher education in the country, but more progress could be made with the help of private interests. The private sector has more than enough financial power to increase the literacy rate and access to higher education. It can be done through private universities and learning centres. In addition, global universities might be established in India so the global perspective can be fixed into the curriculum. Four aspects of global education that universities in India might focus on are a global curriculum, global faculty, global degrees, and global interaction. These aspects would not only help promote higher education, but would help prepare India for the growing global competition that globalisation is creating.

NASSCOM report on employability in India

The AICTE, Chairman SS Mantha came down on the surveys done by the NASSCOM and other firms. Recently National Association of software & service Companies and other private firms surveyed that only 25% graduates in India are employable SS Mantha questioned the vary basis of these surveys, stating those were limited to very few people. SS Mantha said, "Around 1.5 million engineering degree and 1 million diploma seats are present in India. In which, every year 1 million graduates come out for jobs and higher studies. If we considered survey figures, then about 7.5 lakh engineers should be rendered unemployed. If cumulative average of five years is taken into account then it will have 35 lakh unemployed engineers.

He said that, this situation would have led to civil war but the reality was in complete contrast. This is certainly not the case and maximum of them are getting jobs. The only reason is they are underemployed and not getting the deserving salary. These surveys were conducted without any logical background and thus create confusion. The AICTE chief states that NASSCOM had taken database of candidates coming for the interviews in 500 IT companies and arrived at these conclusions. "But India is vast country and these findings are far from reality," he said, this is for the first time that any apex body had come out openly against NASSCOM survey.

Mantha rechecked AICTE's stand of improving quality education, stating that it had started an e- governance project under by collecting data from all the states. He admitted that no survey was conducted on the actual number of jobs in engineering and other professional sectors in India and their demand-supply gap. "For an important branch like mining, having tremendous demand in the market, there are only 654 seats in the entire country.

The former pro-Vice Chancellor of SNDT University admitted that there were concerns on the quality of engineering entrance examinations conducted by the states. MHT-CET entrance conducted by the Maharashtra government for admission to engineering, medical, pharmacy and veterinary courses has qualifying marks of just 1/200. He ridiculed the present school system, terming it as "redundant" as marks of Class 10 and 12 were not considered from the admission to professional courses. "The students have completely lost the focus on the board examination and started ignoring it.

We therefore have decided to give 40% weight age to the class 12 board examination and 60% to JEE exam

so that students should focus equally on both."

Employability Skills of Graduates in India

India is one of the emerging markets in the world. India's change from an agrarian economy to an industrialised economy is lagging due to the shortage of skilled labour. Although the country has enough potential to deliver to the needs of the global talent market, the strong employability challenge of the graduates; especially engineering graduates became the bottleneck for India's growth perceptively.

Even in India, which produces 400,000 engineers annually, corporations are finding it increasingly difficult to find the qualified workers they require. India's National Association of Software Services Companies estimates a potential shortfall of 500,000 technology professionals by 2010. There were several studies conducted in India to know the employability skills.. It is found that 75% of the Indian graduates are unemployable. There was an argument that this study doesn't give a clear picture of Indian graduates and it is outdated. But the recent study conducted by World Bank (2011) points out that 64% of the employers say they are only somewhat satisfied with the performance of the engineering graduates in India. Globally about 34% of the employers find it difficult to fill the talent gap and in India 67% of the employers find it difficult to find right talent in India. These results point out the need for proper awareness and training among the graduates to enhance their skills.

International development

International development or global is a wide concept concerning level of development on an international scale. It is the basis for international classifications such as developed country, developing country and least developed country. There are however many schools of thought and conventions regarding, which are the exact features constituting development of a country. Historically it has been largely synonymous with economic development. Recently it is also often used in a holistic and multi-disciplinary context of human development as well as other concepts like competitiveness, quality of life or subjective well-being. International development is different from simple development in that it is specifically composed of institutions and policies that arose after the Second World War. These institutions focus on alleviating poverty and improving living conditions in previously colonised countries.

Accreditation context

Accreditation is another widely used method in European quality assurance. It is especially common in the associated countries, where this method has been a traditional way of assuring the quality of higher education. Moreover, countries such as Germany, Norway, and the Netherlands have since the completion of the survey decided that this should be the main type of quality assurance of higher education.

Accreditation is defined in many ways. Three examples are:

- Accreditation is a formal, published statement regarding the quality of an institution or a programme, following a cyclical evaluation based on agreed standards.
- Accreditation is a process of external quality review used by higher education to scrutinise colleges, universities, and higher education programmes for quality assurance and quality improvement.
- Accreditation is the award of a status. Accreditation as a process is generally based on the application of predefined standards. It is primarily an outcome of evaluation.

Considering the individual responsibility of the institutions of higher education on the one hand, and the responsibility of the overall national quality assurance systems on the other hand, the Berlin Declaration of 19 September, 2003 lists both evaluation and accreditation as important tools for quality assurance. It has been agreed –that by 2005, national quality assurance systems should include the following:

- Evaluation of programmes or institutions, including internal assessment, external review,
- Participation of students and the publication of results,
- A system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures.

III. ACCREDITATION-INDIAN CONTEXT

Accreditation is an integral part of the higher education institutions. The two accreditations that higher education institutes in India are required to have are accreditation to regulatory bodies, and accreditation to professional associations. Accreditation to regulatory bodies ensures that academic institutes are developing and maintaining certain level of standards in terms of infrastructure, faculty, pedagogy, etc. Without accreditation, institutes may go for sub-standard measures at students' cost. Accreditation to professional associations such as the Bar Council of India, Energy Institute UK, Council of Architects, Indian Institute of Town Planners, etc. validates academic rigour required for the profession, industry acceptability of qualification, and reinforces employability of graduates.

Developing Employability Skills in India

Skill development can be viewed as an instrument to improve the effectiveness and contribution of labour to the overall production. Skill development can also be seen as a means to empower the individual and improve his/her employability. Skill development in India draws its attention from the changing demographic profile. India has a unique 20-25 years window of opportunity known as demographic dividend. Global economy is expected to face a skilled manpower shortage to the extent of around 56 million by 2020. Hence, skill development in India is a big challenge although, skill development has several challenges before it.

Need for Skill Development

Employability skills are those skills necessary for getting, keeping and being successful in a job. They are the skills and attitudes that enable employees to get along with their colleagues, to make critical decisions, solve problems, develop respect and ultimately become strong ambassadors for the organization. Employability or soft skills are the foundation of your career building blocks and they are frequently referenced in the media as lacking in school-leavers, graduates and those already in employment.

Organisations spend a lot of time and money training staff, not in job specific areas but in general and basic skills. In the backdrop of India's employment scenario it becomes imperative to formulate a National Policy on Skill Development and initiate a Program of Action.

National Skill Development Policy and Government's Coordinated Action on Skill Development

As India is a growing knowledge society which also has maximum population in the age group of 20-25 years, it has created a Coordinated Action on Skill Development. National Council on Skill Development has formed a policy in the form of core principles and has given a vision to create 500 million skilled people by 2022.

Objectives of National Skill Development Policy

There is an urgent need of Partnership between the Government and Universities' departments of Life Long Learning and Extension to achieve the goal of National Policy of Skill Development and some objectives of National Skill Development Policy includes:

- Create opportunities for all to acquire skill throughout life, especially for youth, women, and disadvantaged groups.
- Promote commitment by all stakeholders to own skill development initiatives.
- Develop a high quality skilled workforce/entrepreneur relevant to current and emerging market needs.
- Enable the establishment of flexible delivery mechanisms that respond to the characteristics of a wide range of needs of stake holder.
- Enable effective coordination between different ministries, the Centre, and the State and public and private providers.

Scope of the National Skill Development Policy

India has a Demographic Dividend which can serve not only our nation but the need of the global economy provided the youth is equipped with modern skills. National Policy on Skill Development is designed to

serve the need. There are certain challenges before the Government in the implementation of the Policy, such as in disseminating information about the availability of programs, inadequate vocational training system, need of institution to carry out impact evaluation studies etc. Universities' departments of Life Long Learning and Extension like their any other departments are rich source of human resource.

The departments can work for disseminating information about the Program, can run vocational courses, can carry out impact assessment research, and can suggest measures to make the plan of action more viable. Scope of the policy includes,

- Institution based Skill development including ITIs/ITCs/Vocational /Technical Colleges/ Poly techniques/ Professional Colleges etc.
- Learning initiative of Sectoral Skill development organised by different ministries/ departments.
- Formal & Informal apprenticeships and other types of training by enterprises.
- Training for self employment/entrepreneurial development

The concept of employability provides a better scope for skilled professionals and graduates in global market. The paper implies an immediate need for gaining the employability skills among the Indian graduates to shine in the global market. It is essential to provide well qualified and assured higher education system to raise their bar to attain jobs in the global talent market. It is very clearly shown the importance of accreditation and its procedures that are followed in higher education in India. Enhancing the employability skills through accreditation and some development skills will motivate the Indian graduates to produce their best and to achieve their goals in global labour market.

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