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“The Employability Skills According To Nace And Nep 2020 : The Response Of The Post Graduate Students”

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ABSTRACT: The world of education is with the focus of skills for employability. NEP 2020 with its emphasis on outcome-based education keeps skills as priority at all levels of education. National association of colleges and employers proposed eight employability skills that are internationally relevant. This study is with the objective to analyse the skills of the PG students in response to the intercultural fluency in education in the context of Internationalisation of education. The descriptive research uses both the primary and secondary sources. The expected outcome of the research is to assess as well as to guide the students with strategies for developing relevant skills.

Keywords: Employability, intercultural, internationalization, NEP 2020.

INTRODUCTION

Employability is the immediate aim of higher education. In order to identify the areas of employability there is a need to develop the required skills for the same in relation to the job market. Economics of education calls for the identification of the methods to develop the demands of the future employers in order to meet the requirements. Therefore this study is undertaken with the purpose of making an articulation of the skills required of a college graduate as per the prescription of NACE and to frame the means to fulfill them in line with the NEP 2020.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGE EMPLOYERS

NACE has prescribed the following skills for employability in the modern context. They are listed below:

- **Career & Self Development:** Proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one's organization.
- **Communication:** Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.
- **Critical Thinking:** Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.

- **Equity & Inclusion:** Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures. Engage in anti-racist practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism.
- **Leadership:** Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.
- **Professionalism:** Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.
- **Teamwork:** Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.
- **Technology:** Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.

NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020

Government of today has responded with the hopes and demands of the aspirational youth of today and set in motion a new National Education Policy. The NEP has focus on holistic development, vocational training, skill appreciation, craft-centric learning, technological learning and student entrepreneurship to prepare the youth of today for the world and place them in the drivers' seat to fulfill their aspirations and lead change in the country tomorrow. The skill-focused measures include:

- The NEP, 2020 plans to focus on development of analytical, mathematical and cognitive learning skills. It also plans to bring in more digitized assessment systems in the country's educational institutions.
- The National Educational Policy has sought to re-imagine with the introduction of vocational education early on in a student's life and giving it the weightage it deserves. Vocational Education essentially prepares students to take up employment in a skilled craft. It employs application based learning alongside theory and cognitive skill development for the purpose. In India however, it has always been seen as something inferior to conventional academic courses. The rigid separations between vocational and academic streams have sought to be lifted. Vocational education will be integrated systematically into school and higher education over the next decade. The focus areas of the vocational education will be selected by district authorities via skill gap analysis and mapping of local opportunities. The report envisions a process of mainstreaming vocational education across schools and higher educational institutions. It sets a target of vocationally training 50% of Indian students by 2025. A revamped curriculum and open learning system charted out in the policy would allow even adults to actively engage in skill enhancement. This much needed shift in focus to vocational education comes after a warning from none other than UNICEF in 2019. A report published by the esteemed organisation estimated that by 2030 about 53% of Indian youth would lack skills for 21st century jobs. However with a restructured vocational education regime India seems to reposition itself on the global map, taking advantage of its demographic dividend.
- The policy sets out a plan for a holistic confluence of multidisciplinary fields ranging across the board from humanities and sciences to social sciences, technical and vocational fields alongside nurturing an ethic of social engagement and soft skills like communication and debate.
- The NEP also plans to introduce school internships and apprenticeships thereby promoting craft based learning. The focus areas would again be mapped by district authorities based on local needs. The 'fun' course as it is described will give students an exposure and experience of skill based trades like carpentry, electrical work, pottery making etc. Needless as it may sound, the process sets the ball rolling for a learning based on upskilling as one grows through the process of being imparted education.

- The introduction of multiple entry and exit points in higher education courses in the country is another revolutionary measure in the road to the dream of an Upskilled India. Unlike before, students would not have to wait for the entire degree to receive a certification and to be considered a graduate. The multiple exit points would allow provision of certification after a year, diploma on completion of two years and a conventional degree after three years. Deserved weightage would now be given to skill oriented application based learning alongside theoretical concepts. Students would now be able to comfortably take an exit at one of these levels to work or garner experience only to return back later to complete the degree. This revolutionary concept seems like an absurd dream under the current system.
- The NEP also incorporates the technological needs of the 21st century as it envisions the integration of coding into the curriculum as early as class 6. This reinstates the motive to up skill and nurture the youth of today with basic concepts of coding from an early age given the increasing stress on the field in the current day and age.
- The policy also seeks to promote problem solving, creative and analytical thinking skills. It also seeks to focus on improving communication skills among students.

In India only 45.6% of youth graduating out of colleges are employable (India Skills Report, 2019). The Labour Force Participation Rate (percentage of the working age population actually engaged in the Labour force) stands at a dismal 49.8% (Periodic Labour Force Survey, 2018). This paints a dark picture for the students who are waiting for the opportunities after graduating out of colleges. The Covid pandemic has only aggravated the situation. These realities however do not take away the fact that the average age of the Indian population is just 29 years (State of the Urban Youth, India 2012: Employment, Livelihoods, Skills Report, 2013). 50% of the Indian population is below the age of 25 years (2011 Census of India). This proves that India is a land of youngsters waiting to be up-skilled and explored.

Better skill training and holistic development will form the pillars on which India's future (with over 65% of the population below 35 years - 2011 Census of India) hopes to erect its sky scraping heights. In a country with just 4.69% vocationally trained youth (National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015), the problem was neatly summed up in the National Skill Development Mission of 2015 – “Our country presently faces a dual challenge of paucity of highly trained workforce, as well as non-employability of large sections of the conventionally educated youth, who possess little or no job skills.” It is these issues that the National Education Policy of 2020 seeks to address to solve the majority of the problems plaguing our youth. Due to the lack of skills, vocational education and apprenticeship amongst the youngsters today has remained a concern. Thus, when the Government decided to start concerning these right from the roots, the National Education Policy was born.

REVIEW RELATED LITERATURE

Studies done abroad

An analysis of perception mismatch between employers and graduates conducted by Tharunya & Kottawatta (2014) in Sri Lanka by surveying 45 graduates and 25 employers with six employability skills, namely problemsolving skills, communication skills, information technology skills, adaptation skills, interpersonal skills and learning skills. The researcher found a deficit in communication skills, learning skills and problem-solving skills, although no ability deficit has been found with respect to information technology skills, adaptation skills and interpersonal skills, as these are high in relation to the level of standards.

The research conducted by Rosenberg et.al (2012) in business schools at the University of Southern California with a total sample of 532 (343 students, 92 faculties and 97 HR managers) and the result showed that recruiters find 33 the largest difference in management skills, accompanied by leadership skills and

numeracy skills. The work ethic, interpersonal skills and critical thinking skills rank 4th, 5th and 6th among the eight dimensions of the skills studied, while the standards of employability of students with critical thinking skills have the highest distance followed by management skills and leadership skills. The rating of work ethic, interpersonal skills and system thinking skills is 4th, 5th and 6th, and there is a minimum difference in skills related to information technology and numeracy skills.

Studies done in India

A study was conducted in the NCR capital of Delhi (Bhagwath et al. 2013) to assess the employability skills of MBA students from selected management institutions operating in the region and the study concluded that institutions should pay attention to updating the curricula as required by industry and initiate an industry based interface to enhance employability skills.

Pandey (2012) carried out a study on the knowledge of life skills for the sustainability of work among management students of professional courses with a sample of 100 students from the Nagpur City Management Institute. The results showed that respondents gave priority in order of importance: 1) self-awareness building skills; 2) empathy; 3) interpersonal interaction skills; 4) good communication; 5) critical thinking skills; 6) creative thinking; 7) decision making; 8) problem-solving skills; 9) dealing with stress; and 10) dealing with emotions.

Ravan (2016) "Employable skills require one hour for MBA students" based on secondary data has shown that problem-solving skills, interpersonal skills, communication skills, honesty value, result oriented information, domain knowledge, adaptability, decision-making skills, leadership skills, learning and team player skills are necessary for MBA students to secure a job.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective is to analyse the skills of the PG students in response to the intercultural fluency in education in the context of Internationalisation of education.

METHODOLOGY

The Methodology used is both primary and secondary sources and simple random sampling method has been utilized to improve accuracy and representativeness. Under primary source I have used closed structured questions and there were 86 respondents. In secondary sources I have used Government reports, journals, internet and newspapers and in simple random sampling I have collected responses from the post graduate students.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS RESPONSE

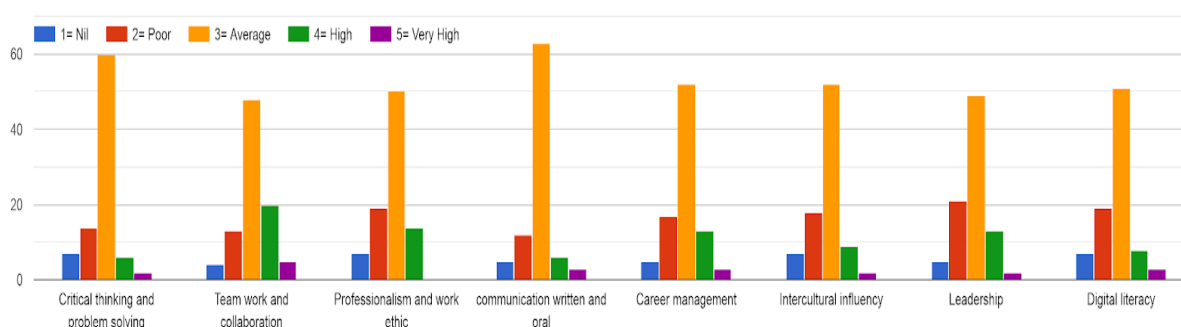


Figure 1: RESEARCH QUESTIONS RESPONSES

The first parameter reveals that for critical and problem solving 8% of the students agree that its nil, 15% of the students agree that its poor, 69% of the students agree that its average. The second parameter reveals that for Team work and collaboration 4% of the students agree that its nil, 14% of the students agree that its poor, 55% of the students agree that its average, 22% of the students agree that its high and 5% of the students agree that its very high. The third parameter reveals that for presentation and work ethic 7% of the students agree that its nil, 20% of the students agree that its poor, 57% of the students agree that its average, 16% of the students agree that its high and 0% of the students agree very high. The fourth parameter reveals that for communication (Written and oral) 5% of the students agree that its nil, 13% of the students agree that its poor, 73% of the students agree that its average, 6% of the students agree that its high and 3% of the students agree very high. The fifth parameter reveals that career management 5% of the students agree that its nil, 18% of the students agree that its poor, 60% of the students agree that its average, 14% of the students agree that its high and 3% of the students agree that its very high. The sixth parameter reveals that Intercultural Fluency 7% of the students agree that its nil, 21% of the students agree that its poor, 60% of the students agree that its average, 10% of the students agree that its high and 2% of the students agree that its very high. The seventh parameter reveals that leadership 5% of the students agree that its nil, 20% of the students agree that its poor, 59% of the students agree that its average, 10% of the students agree that its high and 2% of the students agree that its very high. The eighth parameter reveals that digital literacy 7% of the students agree that its nil, 22% of the students agree that its poor, 59% of the students agree that its average, 9% of the students agree that its high and 3% of the students agree that its very high.

FINDINGS

- 8% of the students agree that their critical thinking and problem solving skill is nil, 15% of the students agree that it is poor, 69% of the students agree that it is average, 6% of the students agree that it is high while only 2% of the students agree that they have very high skill for critical and problem solving.
- For team work skills, 4% of the students agree that it is nil, while 14% of the students agree that it is poor, 55% of the students agree that it is average, 22% of the students agree that it is high and only 5% of the students agree that they have very high skills.
- For presentation and work ethic skills, 7% of the students agree that it is nil, 20% of the students agree that it is poor, 57% of the students agree that it is average, 16% of the students agree that it is high and no students agree on high skills.
- For communication, (Written and oral) 5% of the students agree that it is nil, 13% of the students agree that it is poor, 73% of the students agree that it is average, 6% of the students agree that it is high where only 3% of the students agree very high.
- For career management, 5% of the students agree that it is nil, 18% of the students agree that it is poor, 60% of the students agree that it is average, 14% of the students agree that it is high and only 3% of the students agree that it is very high.
- For intercultural in fluency, 7% of the students agree that it is nil, 21% of the students agree that its poor, 60% of the students agree that its average, 10% of the students agree that its high whereas only 2% of the students agree that its very high.
- For Leadership, 5% of the students agree that its nil, 20% of the students agree that its poor, 59% of the students agree that its average, 10% of the students agree that its high and only 2% of the students agree that it is very high.
- For digital literacy, 7% of the students agree that its nil, 22% of the students agree that its poor, 59% of the students agree that its average, 9% of the students agree that its high and while only 3% of the students agree that it is very high.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENTATIONS

It is found that majority of the students agree that their critical and problem solving is in need of enhancement as 2% of the respondents have high skills in this regard. It implies that education needs to harness resources for improving the problem solving and critical thinking of the students. Regarding team work skills 5% of the respondents are proficient with it and so there is a need to find means to enable the vast 95% of students with team work skills for their daily proficiency. Finding shows that the majority of the students agree that their presentation and work ethic skills is in need of improvement as only 16% of the respondents have high skills and they are in need to enhance the knowledge so that they can work effectively without much error for the growth of economy. For communication skills and career management skills only 3% of the respondents have high skills and so it is found necessary for the development to interact and connect with others and also to cultivate career management skills to enable them to make the right decisions in managing the career competence for the remaining 97% of the respondents. It is found that majority of the students agree that their intercultural fluency skills is in need of enhancement as 2% of the respondents have high skills in this regard. It implies that there is a need to develop an increase in awareness of cultural norms, competencies and values. Regarding team leadership skills only 2% of the respondents are proficient with it and so there is a need to find means to enable the vast 98% of students with leadership skills to increase their integrity productivity and make them capable enough for managing the governance. Findings show that the majority of the students agree that their digital literacy skill is in need for improvement as only 3% of the respondents have high skills. There is a need to include digital literacy in education so that they will be able to navigate, evaluate and create using all forms of digital technologies.

CONCLUSIONS

The study sought to analyse the skills of the P G students in response to the intercultural fluency in education in the context of Internationalisation of education for employability. Evidences from the study show that there is a need for improvement and development to identify one's own cultural norms and values and how culture shapes personal experiences in the area of developing employable skills. There is also a need to analyze how cultural norm and values affect one's interactions with others by engaging with people and ideas from other cultures with courage, sensitivity, openness and curiosity so that there will be productivity of persons with skills that make them self-reliant.

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