

# Promoting Factors of Employability Skills

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**Abstract:** Promoting factors mean the factors that help students to gain and enhance their employability skills. Range of factors has been identified through this study. This study discusses promoting factors which were obtained from the participating students. Promoting factors and its corresponding promoted skills have been explained in the study along with its magnitude. The promoting factors are taking up responsibility, self interest, participating in sports, college education system, reading books, being confident, joint family system, participation in stage programmes, group experiences, family economic conditions, involvement and commitment, industrial interactions, participating in co-curricular activities, peer influences and supports, writing habit, parents' guidance, participation in educational tours, facilities at home, leading activities, facilities available at college, creative tendency, special training, observation of events.

**Keywords —** *Employability skills, promoting factors, employability attributes, motivating factors and encouraging factors.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Employability skills are a set of skills which are required to get an employment. The present study discusses list of promoting factors which are helping the respondents in acquisition of employability skills. The study carried out among the post graduate students who are studying in the Arts and Science Colleges in the Vellore district of Tamil Nadu. The opinion and experience of the respondents have been recorded and presented in the study. The findings of this particular study would help to design activities and programmes to inculcate and enhance the employability skills in a systematic way.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Narayanan (2013) Manpower requirement will be 117.2 million by 2020. Deccan Chronicle (2014) 14% students are considered for suitable jobs. Chaturvedi (2013) 47% graduates are unemployable for any job. These facts show that graduates are lacking in employability skills. Therefore it is need of the hour to help graduates to become employable. To make them employable, there could be factors which facilitate the graduates to acquire employability skills. Hence, it is important to understand the promoting factors of employability skills.

## III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hillage & Pollard (1998) Employability is an ability of students to get a job after graduation. It is also concerned with enhancing skills, knowledge, attitudes and abilities of the students. Robinson (2000) Employability skills are basic and necessary skills for getting, keeping, and doing well on a job. Gravells (2010) Employability skills are the skills which help the people employable. Selvam (2017)

Employability skills are written communication, verbal communication, planning & organizing, teamwork, numeracy, adaptability, continuously learning, and technology using skill. Dania et.al (2014) conducted a study among secondary school students and found that factors such as participation in industrial training, career developmental activities (like visiting industries, attending, career talk, attending a career fair, etc.), extracurricular activities, and leadership experiences are helping the students in enhancing their employability skills. There is no study addressed beyond these factors what are the other factors that helps the students to improve their employability skills. Therefore the current study attempted to bring out the list of promoting factors.

## IV. OBJECTIVE

The objective of the present study is to list out the promoting factors of employability skills among the post graduate students who study art or science degree.

## V. METHODOLOGY

It is an explorative study. The operational definition of Employability skills is, a group of skills which are written communication, verbal communication, planning and organizing, teamwork, numeracy, adaptability, continuous learning, and technology using skill. The study carried out among post graduate students. The field of the study was Vellore district of Tamil Nadu. Data have been collected form 507 students. The samples were identified through systematic random sampling method. Questionnaire was used as tool to collected data. The questionnaire had eight parts. Each part refers one skill of employability. Open ended questions were asked in the each part to discover the promoting factors of employability skills.

## VI. FINDINGS

### A. Taking Up Responsibility

Nearly two fifth (38.9%) of the respondents said that taking up responsibility enhances their planning and organizing skill. Taking responsibility means being responsible towards any assignment or event. A responsible person is able to work without much guidance or supervision. Students get opportunity for taking up responsibility of any assignment at college, home, workplace, etc., There are colleges which organize different types of forums and associations through which students are taking up responsibilities. In home, during any celebrations and ceremonies the students are given responsibility as they are members of particular family. If any student does part-time work, he or she should be responsible towards his or her assigned work. Thus the factor 'taking up responsibility' assists the students in obtaining and enhancing their planning and organizing skill.

### B. Self Interest

Self interest is another factor that promotes employability skills. Self interest generally refers to a focus on the needs or desires. When someone decides something as a need then it motivates him/her to get it fulfilled. The motivation is known as self interest. In this study, more than one third (35.5%) of the respondents said that the written communication skill has been learnt owing to their self interest. More than one fourth (26.8%) of the respondents said that verbal communication skill has been gained by their own interest. More than one fifth (21.9%) of the respondents said that they have gained continuously learning skill through their self interest.

### C. Participating in Sports

Students get many opportunities to take part in sports and games during their course of study. It happens not only in colleges but in their residing places also. Normally students will have friends at their homes so they used to play different games and sports with their friends. More than one third (33.9%) of the respondents said that they learnt or improved the numeracy skills by participating in sports. More than one tenth (15.4%) of the respondents said that participating in sports enhanced their teamwork skill.

### D. College Education System

A little less one third (32.7%) of the respondents said that the education system of the college in which they study supports in learning technology using skill. Education system refers to the way teaching/learning takes place in the colleges. It involves curriculum, pedagogy, resource persons, exposures, etc., Thus the education system of a college could improve the one of the employability skills of the students. Higher education has started to move towards digitalization. In some colleges, students are asked to submit their assignment through online, and teaching-

learning takes place with audio visual aids. Most of the colleges started to use smart class rooms, Students and their parents have been reached through social media, etc., All these factors are included the education system. Therefore the educational system of the college helps the students to use technology frequently.

### E. Reading Books

Reading books is a factor that promotes a few employability skills. Reading books provides the understating about words, sentence construction, the style, creativity, and so on. Therefore reading books would enhance the written and verbal communication skills. More than one fourth (30.2%) of the respondents said that the written communication could be learnt by reading books. Very small number (3.6%) of respondents said that verbal communication skill could be learnt through reading books. Though the magnitude of verbal communication is very small, it is promoted by this factor.

### F. Being Confident

Employability skills will be promoted by being confident. If a person wants to be confident to speak or do something, he needs to have related knowledge. Knowledge could be obtained through continuously learning or willingness to learn. More than one fourth (29%) of the respondents said that the continuously learning skill could be gained by being confident. Therefore, continuously learning skill could be gained by being confident.

### G. Joint Family System

Joint family system also helps to gain and enhance the employability skills. In this study, more than one fourth (28.8%) of the respondents said that the adaptability skills could be enhanced by living in the joint family system. A joint family is a large undivided family where more than one generation lives together in a common house. It is a form of family where the grand-parents, father, mother, and children live unitelly under one roof. Joint family environment provides platform to gain and practice adaptability skill. In a joint family, many people are living together with different ages. Hence protocol must be followed. Person should be obedience and have adjustment, etc., Hence the people in the system can learn to be adaptable towards different situations that occur around them in the family because they are part of the family. The conditions would force the people to have adaptable skill.

### H. Participation in Stage Programmes

Participating in cultural activities is one of the promoting factors to employability skills. The present study found out that more than one fourth (27%) of the respondents agreed that teamwork skill had been enhanced while participating in the Stage programmes. Stage programmes are the events mostly performed by a group of people. Most of the

colleges organize stage programmes and even a few families also organize. This provides opportunity to live and work in a group. It also facilitates interactions within the group towards the common goal. Therefore people who are engaged in stage programmes could gain teamwork skill.

#### I. Group Experiences

It is also an aspect that facilitates employability skills. The study revealed that more than one fourth (26.4%) of the respondents said that group experience promotes the adaptability skills of students. Group is a collection individual. Group experiences can be gained through living and working in and for a group or association or forum. Students obtain group experiences as they belong to different groups such as class room, sports, friends, family, etc., Group will have common goal. Work and assignments will be shared among the group members to achieve the common goal. The group members need to be adjustable and flexible among themselves for accomplishing group goals. To complete any work for the group usually it is needed to adapt to the suggestions, feedbacks, recommendations and criticism that emerge from the group members. Here adaptability is being widely practiced in the group. Therefore group experiences enhance the adaptability skills of the people.

#### J. Good Family Economic Condition

It mainly deals with the financial condition of the family. Few employability skills need financial support to learn and practice them. In this study, a little more than one fourth (25.4%) of the respondents said that good family economic condition is one of the reasons to have adaptability skills. Less than one tenth (8.3%) of the respondents said that it contributes for the continuously learning skill and less than one tenth (6.7%) of the respondents said that it helps to learn the technology using skill. As it is discussed in the previous section, to have adaptability skill, it is needed to have group experiences at least to some extent. If a student wants to go on educational tours, or industrial visits, etc., it all involves financial capacity of the student. Every student wants to take part in stage programmes. He needs to spend money at least costumes. To some extent, continuous learning of something involves financial capacity of the learners. If a student wants to learn any additional course, he needs to pay fee for that. Likewise if a student wants to use any technology, he must have the technology first. For example if a student wants to update his profile on a job search website portal like Nakuri, Mostar, etc., he needs a computer system or smart phone with internet connection. If not, he needs to spend sometimes in an Internet browsing center to update his profile. It involves rent on hour basis. Students from good economic family condition, do not mind in spending money to gain those skills. There are financially burden free students. Therefore a good economic condition of the family will provide the

opportunities to gain adaptability, continuously learning and technology using skills.

#### K. Involvement and Commitment

It is one of the individual qualities. It helps the people in gaining employability skills. The study found out that a little more one fourth (25.2%) of the respondents said that involvement and commitment would improve the planning and organizing skill of the students. If a person involves and commits towards any assignment, then he will very well plan out and organize the works towards effectively implementation. Therefore involvement and commitment of a person will facilitate the planning and organizing skill.

#### L. Industrial Interactions

Industrial interactions help to obtain and improve the employability skills. From this study it is learnt that more than one fifth (23.1%) of the respondents said that teamwork skill would be gained by having industrial interactions. Very few (2%) respondents said that industrial interactions assisted to gain verbal communication skill. Industrial interactions refer to the visits to industry for getting exposure. Most of the plans will be executed by the students. So it is teamwork. It is also involves communication among the team members in carrying out activities for industrial interactions. So they often use verbal communication. Therefore industrial interactions promote the teamwork skill and verbal communication skill of the students.

#### M. Participating in Co-curricular Activities

Harvey & et.al. (2002) Employability skills could be enhanced by participating in co-curricular activities. In this study, more than one fifth (22.5%) of the respondents said that planning and organizing skill could be improved because of participation in co-curricular activities. More than one fifth (21.3%) of the respondents expressed that teamwork could be enhanced through participating in co-curricular activities. More than one tenth (15%) of the respondents have said that involving in co-curricular activities improves the verbal communication skill. At this point, co-curricular activities refers to students gathering opportunity to take part in different forums, associations and clubs such as NSS, NCC, AICUF, YRC, Red Ribbon Club, Sports, etc., Students are executing welfare programme, training programme, campaign, etc., on behalf of their associations. Successful task execution involves many aspects some of them are planning and organizing, teamwork and verbal communication. Therefore participating in co-curricular activities helps the students to gain planning and organizing skill, teamwork skill, and verbal communication skill.



#### N. Peer Influences and Supports

Employability skills are being enhanced among the students by their peer influences and supports. This study found out that a little less than one fifth (19.5%) of the respondents said that technology using skill could also be enhanced by the peer influences and supports. Very few (3%) respondents said that continuously learning skill is reared because of peer influence and supports. It is true that when people use some new things that will naturally influence others who is near to them. a person. For instant when a person starts to use 'Whats App' (Social Network) then his or her friends, relatives and colleagues will also start to use it slowly. If it is not known by the new users they will be supported by their peers in learning the technology. Technology using skill and continuously learning skills are also being enhanced through peers' influences and supports.

#### O. Writing Habit

Writing habit is one of the aspects that helps the students in gaining employability skills. The study revealed that less than one fifth (18.5%) of the respondents said that they gained written communication skill because of their writing habit. Some students have the habit of writing on the paper whatever they think, observe and listen. Sometime, some people do it as hobby. Thus, wiring habit enhances the written communication skill of the students.

#### P. Parents' Guidance

Parents' guidance is one among the important employability skills promoter. The study found that less than one fifth (17.8%) of the respondents said that they gained continuously learning skill by their parents' guidance. It is true because parents have enthusiasm towards their children's future. Therefore they guide and support their children to equip them with sufficient competencies in view of employment. They are doing it with their knowledge. This study also proved that parents' education correlate with the employability skill and it serves as one of the predictors to the respondents. Hence parents' guidance will be one of the important promoting factors of employability skills of the students.

#### Q. Participation in Educational Tour

Participation in educational tour is one among the career developmental activities of the higher education institutions. It is one among the promoting factors of employability skills of the students. This particular study revealed that less than one fifth (17%) of the respondents said that they improved their teamwork skill by participating in the educational tour. Educational institutions organize tour for providing exposures to their students in various aspects such as culture, custom, environment, etc., Usually the educational tour will be planned and executed by students with the supervision of

staff. Therefore it is done properly through effective teamwork. Therefore participating in education tour helps the students to gain teamwork skill.

#### R. Facilities at Home

In this study, it is found that facilities available at home enhanced the employability skills. This is similar to the findings of Selvam and Henry Rozario (2015). Facility refers to infrastructural support system towards enhancing employability skills. The study found that more than one tenth (16.8%) of the respondents said that they gained technology using skill because they had the facilities such as computer systems, smart phones and internet connectivity in their homes. It also depends on economic conditions of the family. If the family is good at economic condition probably that home will have facilities that will also contribute for enhancing the employability skills especially technology using skill.

#### S. Leading Activities

The study found that more than one tenth (16.8%) of the respondents said that the teamwork skill could be improved by leading events or activities. Students have many opportunities to lead events while they are studying. There are schemes, projects, forums, associations and clubs functioning in many colleges. Students will be a member in any of the said groups. They will be given work and expected to do for the respective group. The assistance will be shared among the group members in accomplishing work though it is led by one member. Therefore leading events and activities improves the teamwork skill of the students.

#### T. Facilities Available at College

In this study, less than one fifth (14%) of the respondents said that they obtained the continuously learning skill because the colleges have the facilities. Continuously learning is an ability of looking for new knowledge. When students search for new knowledge, they need a source for learning. Most of the colleges have library that is one of the learning sources. Students can use them. Further few colleges have internet browsing facility which is also another source of learning. Some colleges have career and guidance cell which also provides information when their students need. Thus facilities of the colleges also enhance the continuously learning skill of the students.

#### U. Creative Tendency

Creative tendency is a factor that promotes one of the employability skills. From the study it is learnt that more than one tenth (12.2%) of the respondents said that the creative tendency enhanced the adaptability skills of them. Creative tendency means generating or recognizing ideas, alternatives or possibilities which may be useful in solving problems, communicating with others and entertaining themselves and others. Creative persons are able to view

things in new ways or from a different perspective. They are able to generate new possibilities or new alternatives. It not only deals with alternatives that are being generated but it also deals with the uniqueness of those alternatives. The ability to generate alternatives or seeing things uniquely does not happen by change; it is related more with fundamental qualities of thinking, such as flexibility, tolerance of ambiguity or unpredictability, and the enjoyment of doing things (Franken, 1993). The respondents would have obtained opportunity that were created by colleges to exhibit their creativity and would have experienced the taste of creative tendency and its application. Adaptability skill is one of the applications of creative tendency. Therefore the creative tendency would help in gaining and enhancing adaptability skill for the students.

#### V. Special Training

Dania, & et.al, (2014) and Kinash (2015) Participation in career developmental activities such as special training, industrial interactions, etc., will enhance the employability skills of the students. Less than one tenth (6.1%) of the respondents said that they learnt the verbal communication skill and a few (4.5%) respondents said that they learnt the written communication skill by undertaking a special training. Hence it is possible to learn skills by taking up some kinds of training courses or programme or activity. Special trainings are not only for learning verbal and written communication but they are also applicable to other employability skills. Therefore the employability skills could be learnt by undertaking special trainings.

#### W. Observation of Events or Activities

Observation of events or activities is one of the factors that promotes the employability skills. Very few (3.2%) respondents said that they learnt the planning organizing skill by observing events or activities. Though very little respondents expressed, it is also an important promoting factor for students in gaining planning and organizing skill. Many colleges provide many opportunities to students such as games, cultural events, conferences, seminars, workshops, guest lectures, competitions, functions, etc., for observations. These opportunities are gifts to the students because they create platform to participate and observe them. Therefore there is a possibility for students to learn many employability skills. Though the study found that observation of events or activities helped the students to learn planning and organizing skill, it can help the students to learn other skills also.

### VII. CONCLUSION

The objective of the study is to discover the promoting factors of employability skills. The objective has been fulfilled. The promoting factors which have been obtained from the present study, are taking up responsibility, self

interest, participating in sports, college education system, reading books, being confident, joint family system, participation in stage programmes, group experiences, family economic conditions, involvement and commitment, industrial interactions, participating in co-curricular activities, peer influences and supports, writing habit, parents' guidance, participation in educational tours, facilities at home, leading activities, facilities available at college, creative tendency, special training, and observation of events. The findings of the study would help us to understand the possible ways to improve the employability skills among the students. From this study, it is understood that peers, parents and educational institutions are playing vital role in promoting employability skills. employability skills have been promoted directly or indirectly by these stakeholders. Therefore, present study provides enormous scope to teach employability skills among the graduates in a scientific manner.

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