
Paving the Path from Education to Employment

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Introduction

The paradigm shift in the education system is to improve upon the employability issue. There is a shift in focus from *employment to employability*. Education is perceived as an approach to good jobs and a decent career in life. Parents, children and employers are looking for an institution cum employment exchange.

For acquired Degree, universities smooth the progress of performance indicators so that education can be customised as per the demands of current employment market. Considerable attention is given to individual learning, with skill development to capitulate better employment outcomes for graduates in higher education.

Research Needs

The relationships between education and the employability are the most frequently discussed issues of higher (post secondary) education. We observe vocal

claims of shortage/ oversupply of right skills and the competencies of graduates.

Research and policy literature review give indication that a considerable number of studies have been undertaken and we found the following concerns.

- The impacts of education on graduates' career and the dynamics of employment are surveyed in only a few developed countries and a small number of research studies are available.
- Systematic Information is not available about the employment prospects for graduates and employers requirements. The interface between the educators and the employers are most controversially debated.
- The information on employability skills and work utilization is often asymmetrical or inadequately scrutinized.

- Underlying principle of curriculum development and their impact of the courses offered on employability are not extensively studied.

Evolution of Education

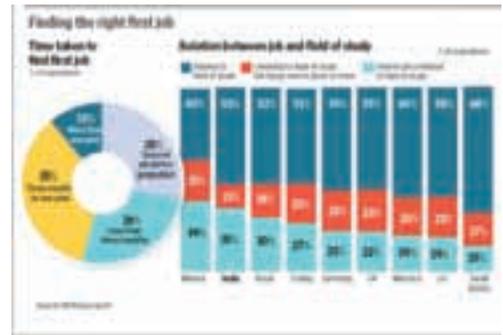
Education is considered to be the progenitors of social transformations and dissemination of knowledge in the context of globalisation.

The common ways in which education is viewed to contribute to social development are: 1. Talent Capital and Capacity Development 2. Liberal Learning 3. Research and Development 4. Academic Research 5. Values and Ethics

Career Education

Although there are different theories and developmental approaches to careers education, the most widely used framework in the UK has evolved from the dynamic relationships between Self, Opportunities, Decisions and Transitions (DOTS):

- *Self-awareness* - the ability to identify and articulate motivations, skills, and personality for career plans
- *Opportunity awareness* - knowledge of opportunities and the ability to research
- *Decision making* - being able to weigh up personal factors to make a sound plan
- *Transition learning* - understanding of how to seek and secure opportunities



The contents of the education system in the evolving knowledge economies need to balance skill development, both the tangible (knowledge of Subject) and the intangible (lifelong learning abilities) with partnerships between institutions, collaboration between experts, government policy- infrastructure and collaboration with local or international businesses to provide internships to students .

University model education

With the input from students, employers and government authorities the progression of higher education systems has been characterised in recent years.

As a result of societal pressures educators have focused on the makeover towards a competence-based learning model to strengthen the employability. The transformation of education system is giving more admittance to the higher education system and universities are improving the professional skills of the students in the current aggressive knowledge-based economy.

Initiatives are being taken in recent years, for streamlining of the university education model. The most important change is from the conventional education model to the model of developing competences and active participation of the student.

Research is required to gauge the level of universities custom-made delivery model to the demands of the employment market so that competence-based learning in university curriculum can be included.

Challenges for Educators

Many educators in developing countries experience some of the challenges e.g. under-resourced, overcrowded, under-funded, brain drain, lack of flexibility that diminishes their ability.

- *Diploma syndrome* -In formal educational system, the credence of educational certificates are the key to obtaining the best paid jobs. People come to make every effort continually for higher degrees for better employability.

- *Skilled unemployment* - The term is given to the rise of being without a job because of oversupply of graduates with the identical degrees and qualifications to find employment due severe competition.

- *Brain drain* - skilled graduates leave your country to flee the unemployment, underemployment and lower payment.

Education Reforms

The need to toughen the quality of foundational skills in school education that provides foundation to students aligned to the higher education levels to be capable of basic arithmetic, communication skills, developing confidence. The current regulatory regime has started empowering institutions to address issues of employability, internship and path to the up gradation of soft skills.

Current era of expanding alternative modes of education to innovative and secure methods of delivery. Expansion of distance education, on-line and virtual education avenues are being explored by increasing access to quality education globally and countering high dropouts in the conventional education system .

Employment and Employability

The concept of employability developed by Yorke in 2004 has been adopted by the UK as :

“Employability is a set of achievements, skills, understandings and personal attributes that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.”

In an another study on the concept of employability, the definition arrived at was: “employability is about having the capability to gain initial employment, maintain employment and obtain new employment if required” (Hillage and

Pollard, 1998, p.1). This is commonly adopted definition of employability goes beyond just finding work but is also about the individual being able to sustain employment (Pool and Sewell, 2007).

Employment is far-reaching in the traditional employment sectors, but relatively weak in newly emerging and informal sectors. The available studies on talent supply demand, job requirements and utilization of competencies often focus on small sector, thus hardly allowing broad conclusions to be drawn.

Employment Reform

Employers' expectations regarding the education system is inconsistent with their recruitment policies. The statements of employer regarding the qualifications are directly taken as the demand in the employment system and about the proactive role higher education could play with regard to the future employment strategies.

There is strong need to establish career centers in public-private partnerships (PPP) model. The internship system is an acknowledged vehicle for effective skill development in the education and HR functions because of the effectiveness of *learning by doing* and *learning while earning*. Employer involvement in Internship enhance the job prospects by providing on-the-job experience. Because of the synthesis of employability and employment, Interns turn out to be employment ready.

There is a need to develop an integrated job framework that can allow real-time interface between the demand and supply of the job markets to not only enable better matching but allow changes to curriculum, job descriptions.

Interface between education and employability

The debate on the mismatch of activities and links between employers, young graduates, educators both at the individual and organisational levels is continuing globally. Research in the university has highlighted that students are accepting challenges to a job related with their degree and individual preferences. Similarly studies evaluating the effects of over-qualification on graduates, shows the pessimistic effects of the education-employment disparity.

The study needed is to analyse the level of match between different degrees and the jobs held by graduates from higher education system and the changes taken place over the last decade in main fields of knowledge in relation to the education job match.

Strategic Organizational Changes and effects on employment

Employers assert that educated and skilled manpower are driving their business to be successful in the current evolving global economy. Most organizations have undergone significant change in the last decade. in terms of downsizing, de-layering, flexible

contractual assignments, outsourcing and working from home. Therefore it is imperative to up-skilling of the work force and the broadening of opportunity. Graduates should be well informed during education process about opportunities and changing nature of fresh jobs. The curriculums ought to extend beyond the boundaries of mastering skills within education or employment.

Involving Employers in the design and delivery of courses

The involvement of employers in the design and delivery of courses in providing guest lectures, workshops, seminars, skill sessions and conducting interview simulations, case study material and data need to be used during program delivery. In technical courses, employers has a supervisory role for project work, making comments and giving feedback to students, but there is no evidence of them being closed involved.

An education institutions often do not involve potential employers in course design as enviable. Career services or Placements cells emphasize on the comments and suggestions of the employers.

Taking account of the employability outline some universities had employment related content in form of short programs that are embedded in academic courses.

Graduate employment ratio is generally taken as the influential factor for evaluating the accomplishment of the educator. But an assessment is needed on the occupational prominence received by graduates at different times in their learning. The professional connotation reflects the impact of education and adding more insights to future program design and delivery.

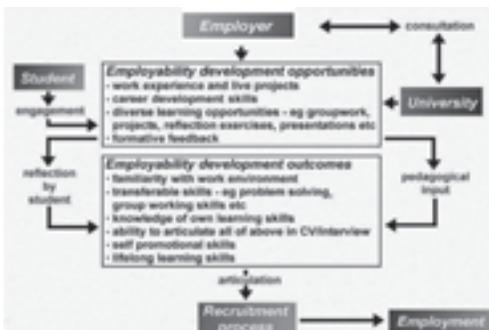
Very few studies had considered the impact of higher education on overall quality index on the returns of university education system.

Conclusions

The literature on graduate employability, and our ongoing research, both reveal that there are some employers and educational Institutes promoting employability of graduates, but still there are gaps between employers and other stake holders responsibility for education policy, approach, prospects and priorities.

The global economic slowdown seen an increase in graduate unemployment. Keeping this in mind, the research paper suggest the following issues for embedding employability.

- Educators and Government should promote strategy-led employability measures to have a greater and sustained impact on graduate employment.



- Higher Education Institutes should take account of graduate employability skills and attributes while planning faculty/departmental level development designs. Appropriate incentives should be implemented as a driver for change in promoting employability measures at faculty/departmental level.
- Educators and employers should adopt to promote employability with integrated placements, internships and work-based learning opportunities of predefined durations.
- Work-related case studies to be done to get evidence that students can use to demonstrate their capacities and skills during education period.

Attention should also be focused on prudent decision-making in the teaching of precise competences for each occupational profile making significant role to the success of new heights in the employment and education.

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