EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS OF THE STUDENTS IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY IN TIRUVALLUR DISTRICT

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Introduction
India has seen rapid growth in recent years, driven by the growth in new-age industries. The increase in purchasing power has resulted in the demand for a new level of quality of service. However, there is a large shortage of skilled manpower in the country. In the wake of the changing economic environment, it is necessary to focus on inculcating and advancing the skill sets of the young population of the country.

India lags far behind in imparting skill training as compared to other countries. Only 10% of the total workforce in the country receives some kind of skill training (2% with formal training and 8% with informal training). Further, 80% of the entrants into the workforce do not have the opportunity for skill training according to the Planning Commission report, 2008.

The accelerated economic growth has increased the demand for skilled manpower that has highlighted the shortage of skilled manpower in the country. Employees worldwide state a variety of reasons for their inability to fill jobs, ranging from undesirable geographic locations to candidates looking for more pay than what the employers have been offering. India is among the top countries in which employers are facing difficulty in filling up the jobs. For India, the difficulty to fill up the jobs is 48%, which is above the global standard of 34% in 2012. The lack of available applicants, shortage of hard skills and shortage of suitable employability, including soft skills are some of the key reasons in finding a suitable candidate for available jobs in the country.

Objective
The objective of the study is to analyze the employability skills of the graduates in IT sector of Tiruvallur district. The aim of the paper is to identify the skill gap of students who wish to join in Information Technology industry and the expectation of the employer.

Data and Methodology
The study uses the primary data which is collected from the employers, HR of the companies, managers who are representing the top level management. The author has developed questionnaires referring various skill framework and have identified 20 skill set as skill inventory. The skill set was classified according to the model developed by World Bank for the study of employability skills of engineering graduates in India. (Andreas Blom, 2011). The author has conducted a study to know the perception of the employers towards employability skills. 60 professionals were identified as employers for the survey. 150 students participated in the survey. All the students were in the final year of their graduate and post graduate studies in Tiruvallur district.

Results and Findings
It was found that employers give importance to personal and behavioural attributes of a candidate whereas students give more importance to their technical skills. Further, there is significant difference between the perception of students with work experience and without work experience. Gender difference also affects the perception of graduates towards employability skills. Demographic details of the professionals who were considered as proxy for employers are as follows:

Table 1: Classification of Employers Based on the size of the Employers

Employer Size	Number	Percentage
Large (More than 2000)	7	11.67%
Medium (500-2000)	22	36.66%
Small (100-500)	31	51.67%
Total	60	100%

Source: Primary Data

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Majority of the respondents were from Small (51.67%) and medium (36.66%) organizations where the numbers of employees were 100 to 500 and 500 to 2000 respectively. The remaining respondents (11.67%) were from large organizations where the number of employees were more than 2000.

Table 2: Classification of Employers Based on the Size of the Employers

Work Experience	Male	Female	Total	Total (in %)
2-4 Years	12	9	21	35%
5-10 Years	16	8	24	40%
More than 10 Years	11	4	15	25%
Total	39	21	60	100%

Source: Primary Data

The author has selected software professionals and human resource personnel with 2 to more than 10 years of work experience in software companies. (35%) of the respondents falls in 2 to 4 years of work experience category, (40%) of the candidates were having 5 to 10 years of work experience and (25%) of the candidates were having more than 10 years of work experience.

Demographic details of the Students are as follows:

Table 3: Classification of Students Based on Age and Gender

Age	Male	Female	Total	Total (%)
20	13	24	37	37%
21	12	18	30	30%
22	10	12	22	22%
23	2	3	5	5%
24	2	2	4	4%
25	1	1	2	2%
Total	50	50	100	100.00%

Source: Primary Data

Majority (89%) of the respondents were in the 20-22 year age group. There were 50 male respondents and 50 female respondents participated in the survey. (11%) of the respondents were in 23-25 years category.

Table 4: Classification of Students Based on Medium of Schooling

	Male	Female	Total
English Medium	29	31	60
Tamil Medium	21	19	40
Total	50	50	100

Source: Primary Data

Majority (60%) of the candidates completed their schooling in English medium and (40%) of the candidates finished their schooling in their respective mother tongue. (48%) of the male graduate students and (52%) of the female graduate students did their schooling in English medium. Male graduates and female graduates who had completed their schooling in their respective mother tongue were (52.5%) and (47.5%) respectively.

Table 5: Classification of Students Based on Work Experience

	Male	Female	Total
With Work Experience	8	6	14
Without Work Experience	42	44	86
Total	50	50	100

Source: Primary Data

The respondents with work experience were very less (14%). Majority of the respondents have no previous work experience. This gave a better picture of the perception of newly graduates' towards employability skills. Out of the 50 male respondents only 8 (20%) students had work experience. In the case of female respondents Only 6 (12%) respondents had work experience.

Table 6: Classification of Students Based on Course

Education	Male	Female	Total	Total (%)
B.Com/B.Sc.	24	26	49	50%
Be	16	22	38	38%
M.Sc.	4	3	7	7%
Me	2	3	5	5%
Total	50	50	100	100.00%

Source: Primary Data

Majority of the respondents were pursuing for their final year B.Com or B.Sc. degree (50%) and Bachelor of Engineering (BE) degree (38%). Post graduate students were (12%) of the total respondents.

Table 7: Highest Ten Employability Skills Employers Vs Students

Employer			Students		
Skills	Mean	S.D	Skills	Mean	SD
Reliability	4.87	0.88	Basic computer skills	4.78	0.69
Integrity	4.45	0.93	Technical skills	4.75	0.66
Teamwork	4.41	0.88	Use of modern tools	4.73	0.66
Willingness to learn	4.4	0.95	Advanced computer skills	4.71	0.64
Entrepreneurship	4.35	0.86	System design	4.65	0.59
Self-discipline	4.26	0.79	Communication	4.4	0.71
Communication	4.26	0.93	Responsibility	4.2	0.62
Self-motivated	4.22	0.68	Verbal communication	4.11	0.69
Flexibility	4.15	0.9	Application of knowledge	4.1	0.68
Understand/take direction	4.14	0.96	creativity	4.1	0.77

Source: Primary Data

Employers gave due importance to behavioural skills whereas students gave importance to technical skills. Top ranked skills like reliability, integrity, teamwork were not in the top ranks of students' rating. This difference in the perception points out the need for creating awareness among the students about engineering employability skills. Table 7 presents top 10 employability skills of both employers and graduates.

Employer and Graduates Gap in Perception
The mean score rating of the students and employers were collected and the discrepancy score was found out by deducting the rating of students from employer rating. Highest discrepancy was found in skills like empathy (1.71) reliability (1.52), integrity (1.32), willingness to learn, knowledge in contemporary issues (1.40) and advanced computer skills (1.00).

Difference in Skill with Respect to Gender of the Graduates Students
Calculation of ANOVA among male and female graduates gave the following results. In Core employability skills, there is no significant difference between male and female respondent's rating. Only one attribute which has significant difference is integrity (0.01). Professional skills like Creativity (0.01), problem solving (0.01), knowledge in contemporary issues (0.02) and customer service (0.01) has significant difference among the respondents. In case of communication and technical skills, there is significant difference between the respondents. Basic computer skills (0.0), Analysis and interpretation of data (0.01) and advanced computer skills (0.03) are the three skills that have significant difference in rating of the candidates.

Difference in Skill with Respect to Work Experience of Graduate Students

There is significant difference among the students with work experience and having no work experience. Integrity (0.02), self motivation (0.02), understand and take decisions (0.03) (Core employability skills) have significant difference in the rating of both category. It is to be noted that these aspects are among the top 10 employability skills rated by the employers. In professional skills, customer service skill (0.01) shows significant difference. Rating of Basic computer skill (Communication and technical skills) shows significant difference. This is because of the difference of opinion among the graduate students with work experience and with no work experience. Basic computer skill was the top skill according to the graduate students.

Conclusion

The study shows that there is a strong need for awareness among the Indian graduates to know the employability skills required by the global talent market. We cannot blame the graduates for this reason. It is necessary to update the curriculum at regular interval to cater the needs of the industry. Further, there should be long and sustainable plan to train our young graduates to raise their bar to attain jobs in the global talent market. It is essential to increase the industry-academia contact. This will assure regular supply of talent to the global talent workforce. The research shows that the students with work experience have better awareness of the employability skills than the students with no work experience. Enhancing the skills and application of knowledge through specific training will enable the workers to perform their jobs in the best possible manner and that is the need of the hour.

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