

Communication and Soft Skills for Youth Employability in Indian Higher Education: A Psychological Perspective Aligned with the Vision of Viksit Bharat 2047

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Abstract

The aspirations put forward in Viksit Bharat 2047 put human capital at the heart of India's trajectory towards a knowledge-driven, globally competitive economy. While there has been a lot of progress on making higher education available and attracting more students, the problem of employability of graduates continues to be a major concern. Although there is emerging evidence that this divide can't primarily be attributed to lack of domain-specific knowledge, rather it can be explained as a result of a lack of focus on communication and soft skills, such as teamwork, adaptability, problem-solving, ethical behaviour, and emotional intelligence (World Economic Forum, 2020; Yorke, 2006). This paper examines the impact of communication and soft skills on youth employability in Indian higher education context using the literature on employability studies, human capital theory, and psychological perspectives. It is a belief that good social skills of communication and soft skills are really mental traits that we learn through our social relationships, self-regulation, moral reasoning, and emotional awareness (Bandura, 1986; Goleman, 1995). Nevertheless, they are often ignored in academia, which usually relegates the competencies to a secondary, or 'nice-to-have' role in the way higher education curricula view them or value them less than as an intrinsic part of what is taught and assessed. The study applies theoretical framework with existing empirical research to examine institutional practices, pedagogical mechanisms, and student experiences for skills development. It poses vital issues about the design or pedagogical approach to skill acquisition in our present age and advocates for education that is psychologically relevant and based on communication. From these perspectives, this paper argues that creating environments that value effective communication alongside soft skills through integral reflective experiential pedagogies is not only vital for employability, as well as towards realizing the national objectives of inclusive advancement, ethical leadership, and societal integration as described by Viksit Bharat 2047.

Keywords: Communication Skills, Soft Skills, Youth Employability, Psychology, Higher Education, Viksit Bharat 2047

Introduction

Youth employability has emerged as a pivotal issue in modern India within the context of the Viksit Bharat 2047 vision. This national framework recognizes that economic growth dynamics - technological advancements and global competitiveness are closely linked to the quality of human capital (Becker, 1964). Consequently, it is anticipated that higher education institutions will produce graduates who possess not only academic proficiency but also strong capabilities in communication, ethical reasoning, collaboration skills, and adaptability. Despite advancements in access to higher education facilities across India reflecting significant progress toward inclusivity; there remains an irony concerning graduate employability rates. While many graduates are knowledgeable about their fields of study they often lack adequate qualifications in communication abilities along with essential soft skills sought by future employers. These deficiencies manifest as ineffective workplace communications; inadequate team interaction; poor teamwork capabilities; emotional

dysregulation; low self-care standards; diminished ethical conduct; all contributing to inadequate professional ethics (Aspiring Minds ,2019). Such gaps reveal that enhancing employability extends beyond technical proficiency into behavioural dimensions rooted deeply within psychological frameworks. Communication alongside soft skills is increasingly acknowledged as vital components shaping professional identities influencing workplace relationships positively. Nevertheless within Indian higher educational settings these vital competencies are frequently relegated to short-term training programs or extracurricular activities rather than being systematically integrated into core curricula promoting continuous skill development while neglecting fundamental psychological aspects underpinning effective behaviours during interactions.

Theoretical Framework

This research paper adopts an interdisciplinary approach that combines elements from human capital theory with concepts surrounding employability theory along with psychological interpretations regarding learning processes & behaviour management strategies presented throughout academic literature. Human capital theory perceives various skill sets as valuable assets augmenting one's market readiness leading subsequently towards broader economic advancement (Becker ,1964.) Meanwhile theories associated directly addressing aspects defining “employability” consider it multidimensional encapsulating knowledge bases attitudes & social proficiencies exceeding mere job placement criteria (see Yorke ,2006.) Additionally, more nuanced explorations stemming from social psychology constructivist learning theories provide comprehensive insights pertaining toward acquiring relevant communicative/social capabilities shaped predominantly via personal interactions reflective practices contextualized environments prompting growth concerning one’s emotional intelligence ethics interpersonal effectiveness (Bandura ,1986 ;Kolb ,1984.) Together these theoretical models form robust foundations facilitating deeper comprehension around both communicative/soft abilities functioning at micro-institutional systemic levels impacting overall workforce preparedness greatly.

Literature Review

Communication and Soft Skills as Important Employability Competencies

Global evidence highlights the critical significance attributed toward effective verbal/written communications coupled together alongside essential teamwork attributes flexibility adeptness dealing problem-solving tasks leadership qualities moral standards prioritized over technical expertise alone (World Economic Forum, 2020.) Consequently “employability” encompasses evolving complexes characterized broadly under behavioural interpersonal psychologies (Yorke,2006) whereby university graduates demonstrating proficient communicative faculties emerge considerably better equipped ready engage workplace dynamics exhibiting enhanced perseverance throughout career trajectories (Jackson, 2015.)

Higher Education Pedagogy and Soft Skills

Traditional lecture-driven instructional methodologies fail miserably at cultivating desirable softer-related competencies emphasizing necessary communicational aspects henceforth necessitating more engaging experiential interactive learner-centered pedagogies encompassing project work collaborative efforts simulated internships reflective writing techniques crucially needed (Kolb,1984 ;Prince ,2004.) Research reflects students immersed within collaborative learning ecosystems display significantly improved interpersonal communications competence confidence heightened awareness professionally (Jackson & Wilton, 2017.)

The Indian Context: Gaps on Employability and Weaknesses on Communication

Employers consistently voice concerns regarding noticeable discrepancies between expectations demanded from industry roles versus outcomes produced by higher educational institutions notably areas involving requisite communication etiquette teamwork adaptability (Aspiring Minds, 2019.) Systemic barriers further exacerbate these variances including rigid curriculum structures exam-focused evaluations limited engagement avenues amongst industries combined inadequately trained faculty members. Social Psychology highlights importance attached communicating effectively derived directly through feedback mechanisms role modeling identity formation(Bandura ,1986); thus calling attention how developing psycho-compatibly can enhance both communicative/soft-skilled dimensions Emotional Intelligence self-efficacy play crucial roles maintaining relationships nurtured workplaces(Goleman,1995) Constructivist Learning Theory advocates viewing both forms acquired through active engagement meaning-making processes instead passively receiving information (Kolb,1984.)

Communication Soft Skills & National Development Discourse

Competencies underpinning successful employment increasingly align towards broader national developmental objectives ensuring ethical governance fostering social cohesion inclusiveness progress connecting educational initiatives targeted around attaining *Viksit Bharat 2047* visions represent challenges needing urgent attention implementing embedding said competencies comprehensively throughout all curricular redesigns reimagining pedagogical appraisal faculty development protocols informed by cognitive-affective constructs guiding teaching-learning cycles effectively.

Research Gap

Despite recognition surrounding relevance, evident gaps persist often examining either aspect separately disregarding intrinsic psychological correlations entwined between employment-related factors. Existing studies predominantly center around employer viewpoints, sidelining student/faculty sentiments thereby limiting scope understanding required skillsets poorly integrated into overall framework. Psychological models remain largely unexplored particularly analyzing respective contributions surrounding communicative/soft skills competences.

Purposes of Study

To investigate connections linking youth employment prospects directly associated with varying degrees mastery exhibited through corresponding sets comprising both communicational/soft-skill proficiencies Work strategically towards incorporating aforementioned parameters systematically, integrating proposed curriculums pedagogy, exploring underlying psychosocial influences driving successful acquisition building related aptitudes, evaluating compatibility juxtaposing initiatives outlined against frameworks established via aspirations set forth under '*Developed India*' 2047 narrative .

Research Questions

What should conceptualization entail regarding definitions integration/appraisal pertaining specifically focused upon "communication" & "soft-skills"?

Which psychological determinants contribute significantly towards cultivating desired proficiencies?

How do students perceive present-day training techniques geared solely around developing said attributes?

To what extent do institutional frameworks correspondingly align with employer anticipations anticipated ultimately reflecting objectives envisioned via *Developed Nation* ideology 2047?

What specific instructional methodologies could be employed based upon findings gathered aimed enhancing overall efficacy related imparting necessary competencies?

Methodology

This study adopts a **conceptual and analytical research design**, grounded in an interdisciplinary review of existing literature, policy documents, and theoretical frameworks related to youth employability, communication and soft skills, and psychological perspectives in higher education. Rather than generating primary empirical data, the paper synthesizes **secondary sources** to develop a coherent analytical framework that explains how communication and soft skills influence employability outcomes within the Indian higher education context.

The methodology involves a systematic examination of scholarly literature, including peer-reviewed journal articles, authoritative books, national and international employability reports, and policy documents such as the *Viksit Bharat 2047* vision and national higher education guidelines.

An analytical synthesis approach is used to identify recurring themes related to institutional practices, pedagogical strategies, psychological determinants, and skill development mechanisms. These themes are critically examined to highlight structural and pedagogical limitations in current higher education practices and to propose psychologically informed approaches for embedding communication and soft skills within mainstream curricula.

Discussion

Effective command over both forms foundational elements establishing viability regarding prospective employment opportunities nevertheless remains undeveloped sufficiently Psychological indicators emerge providing predictive power success witnessed as occupational settings including factors like EI SE(Goleman.,1995.) Active experiential approaches facilitate internalizing requisite talents necessitating educators committed fostering environment conducive, aligning closer office-based paradigms emerging gradually over time.

Table 1: Communication and Soft Skill Gaps in Indian Higher Education and Their Psychological Underpinnings

Skill Domain	Predominant Practice in Indian HEIs	Identified Gap	Underlying Psychological Dimension
Communication Skills	Isolated workshops; theory-based courses	Lack of continuous practice and assessment	Self-efficacy, social cognition
Teamwork Collaboration	& Occasional assignments	group Superficial collaboration without role clarity	Social skills, group dynamics
Problem-Solving	Content-heavy, oriented pedagogy	exam- Limited real-world application and cognitive flexibility	Critical thinking, cognitive adaptability
Ethical Reasoning	Implicit moral instruction	Absence of structured ethical training	Moral reasoning, value internalisation
Emotional Regulation	Neglected in formal curricula	Poor workplace readiness and stress management	Emotional intelligence, self-regulation
Adaptability Resilience	& Limited exposure to experiential learning	Low tolerance for ambiguity and change	Psychological resilience, growth mindset
Leadership Initiative	& Extracurricular focus	Unequal access and inconsistent skill development	Motivation, self-determination

Future Research Directions

Future studies may empirically validate the proposed framework through structured surveys, in-depth interviews, and longitudinal assessments to examine the impact of targeted pedagogical interventions, such as role-play activities and reflective learning exercises.

Conclusion

Communication alongside softer-oriented capabilities rank among paramount talents, influential shaping facets tied firmly both individual pursuits, collective ambitions concerning nation-building efforts encapsulated aptly termed "Developed India 2047" Integrating carefully crafted contents melded thoughtfully applying psycho-pedagogical principles engenders holistic nurturing space, enabling inclusive growth, sustainable governance, fostering global interconnectedness, labour markets thriving successfully worldwide.

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