

## Indian Education System: The Gravest Concern Is Employability Gap

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**ABSTRACT** “Education is the passport to the future” truly said by one philosopher as we all know that education is the foundation on which every person builds his future but unfortunately “Pearson Voice OF Teacher Survey 2015” spilt the bean that education-employment link is still missing in India. According to survey Indian students are educated but not employable as more than 64% students are not employment ready. It is really a gravest concern after knowing this positive fact also that after USA and China India has third largest higher education system. More than 700 Indian universities are producing 20 millions of graduates every year but even half of them are not getting job. A study based ‘on national data was taken up to enquire this question; we got to know that two reasons were highly responsible for this employability gap

1. Outdated Curriculum
2. Lack of Soft Skills in Students

Many universities have outdated curriculum as still they are focusing on theoretical –oriented exams. Indian students are seriously lacking in soft skills including communication skills, interview skills, interpersonal skills and professional ethics. Solution can be an industry based curriculum and a laboratory for soft skills. There should be a curriculum enriched with a syllabus of industrial skills, risk management system and corporate-oriented practical knowledge along with a lab should established in each college campus which would be providing knowledge and training of soft skills.

Indian higher education can be career-friendly for all Indian students if we emphasis these both points and then we can easily link our education to employment.

**KEYWORDS**-(Employability, Indian college, Soft skills, Curriculum, Higher education)

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### I. INTRODUCTION

There is a quote,” The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically, Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of a true education”, but in present era we need to add “employment” also to the goal of true education. An education which does not provide a job to a student, that education considers “useless” in this modern era. Indian higher education system ranks at 3<sup>rd</sup> after the higher education system of USA and China. Indian higher education system is producing more than 20 millions of students in job market but unfortunately more than 64% students are not able to hold themselves in job market as they are lacking in basic employability skills. A gap between education and employment is clearly seen when we take a glance on employment data. Kavita Chowdhury, a famous educationist once said, “India’s demographic dividend- Its young population is in danger of becoming a liability. By a conservative estimate, more than one-third of the millions graduates each year remain unemployable”

Observing the current issue we need to revamp our education system so that we would be able to make our young population an asset not a liability. We need to ponder over this fact as Indian economy is emerging day by day and also India is marking its strong presence on the world globe.

### II. OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the reasons for employability gap among Indian Youth.
2. To evaluate the performance of Indian Universities and other higher educational institutes.
3. To advocate new pedagogical tools and Personality Development Labs in Indian universities and other higher educational institutions.

### **III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study is based on secondary data. The data required has been collected from the annual reports of University Grant Commission, India, website of Human Resource Development Ministry, India. This research paper is an attempt of exploratory research based on the data collected from journals, internet articles, newspapers and the previous research papers.

#### **Facts Which are Spilling the Beans about Indian Higher Education System**

Aspiring Minds issues a report on employability every year. The report titled “Aspiring Minds – National Employability Report” is a national audit of employability of three year bachelor’s degree graduates. Its recent report of 2016 says that 47% graduates in India are not employable in any sector of the knowledge economy. Their lack of English Language knowledge and cognitive skills were identified as the major obstacles. 84% graduates were found to lack the right levels in cognitive ability and 90% did not have required proficiency in English communication. Report said, “Since a graduation degree is considered a pathway to a job in the knowledge economy, sustainable intervention at school/college level is needed to improve basic skills of students”.

Federation of Indian Chambers and Industry had conducted a survey in 2010 and received a tarnishing data about Indian higher education system, according to report majority of graduates are unemployable as they lack adequate “Soft Skills” to be employed in the industry. Almost all findings from report and survey shows that majorly two facts are responsible for making our students unemployable

1. **Outdated Curriculum with Outmoded pedagogy**
2. **Lack of Soft Skill in Students**

#### ***Revamping Curriculum of Colleges: Need of Hour***

Narendra Jadhav, member of Planning Commission and former vice chancellor of Pune University once said, “The quality of teaching in our campuses is outdated. They do not follow the latest market demands” One more remarkable statement has been made over this issue by CNR Rao, Bharat Ratna Awardee and scientist “90% universities and higher educational institutions in India have outdated curriculum. We talk about increasing funds, increasing infrastructure but there is no improvement in the content we are teaching in our hi-tech classrooms. Talent search in our country has always been marginal, we teach our students what Newton and Faraday did but there is no mechanism to look out for the similar talent in interiors of the country.

Each and every word of above statement has an overarching bent toward the revamping the present curriculum which are taught in our universities and colleges. Academic reforms are needed for paradigm shift in higher education.

1. Industry-linked curriculum should be initiated in colleges and universities.
2. Practical-based classes should be given priority in syllabus
3. Industrial visits and educational visits should be compulsory in higher educational institutions.
4. Students should be taught the importance of professional ethics and human values.
5. Workshops seminars, conference on relevant subject and topic should be organized in campus for the better understanding of the topic.
6. Exam-oriented classes should be dismissed.

UGC and AICTE are working for the improvement of present curricula of colleges for the same UGC has initiated recently a choice based curriculum in Indian colleges where students can choose any course of their own choice, in that manner UGC would assess the capability of students. New educational policy has also framed out focusing towards the overall development of students without pressurizing them for marks, moreover creating an interest among them for students. More steps are needed for the improvement of curriculum of Indian colleges.

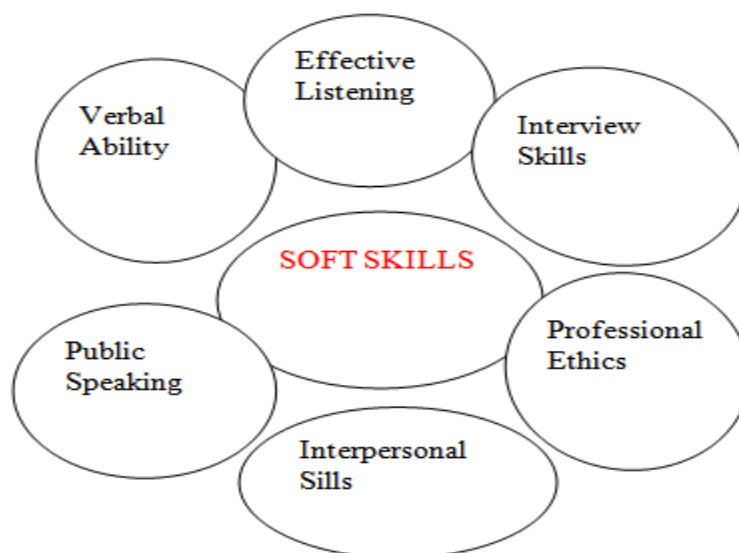
Almost in all universities and higher educational institutions are offering a degree with set curriculum with proper allotment of exam papers and marks. Students at these universities have to secure decided marks for getting the degree. Students have no option to delete or include any subject of this set curriculum. They are bound to study all the subjects which university has decided for any particular subject. In open curriculum students pursue a course of their own choice. This kind of curriculum is a better option for those students who have any special talent as generally their special talent goes off in the set curriculum. Set curriculum does not provide any chance of exploring new ideas, new skills and new innovation as students have to rote syllabus and get the marks anyhow. Open curriculum promotes creativity, innovation and free thinking.

#### **Soft Skills can Bridge the Employability Gap in Indian Students**

Pearson Voice of Teacher Survey 2014 shows “Greater thrust on skill and personality development needed”. Indian teachers feel that 50% of the students entering a job market lack the skills. Teachers consider skill and personality development as a benchmark for gauging learner success. National Employability report also says that lack of soft skills is main obstacle in the path of getting employment for students.

Many of suggestions have been raised for inculcating soft skills among Indian students. Personality development programs, Soft skills training module and other tools have been launched in few universities and colleges. A broad level course should be designed at national level for developing soft skills.

A proper lab should be in Indian colleges with enriched syllabus including speaking skills and verbal ability. Indian government has established a training module for developing personality of their recruited officers so why Indian universities cannot develop such kind of program for the better future of its students. Soft skills labs are mandatory after seeing the ratio of unemployable students. Soft skills labs should contains various things such as-



### **Personality Development Labs**

Effective teaching involves a laboratory of subject for better understanding of concept. We have science, computer and other subjects' labs in schools as well as in colleges but moving one step forward for developing employability skills among students we need to establish Personality development labs in schools and colleges.

N.C.Sridharan, a famous educationist and Neuro Linguisting Programming consultant suggested for a "Personality Development Labs "in colleges which will help the students to have first hand information of what makes a good personality. According to N.C. Sridharan PDP labs should focus on –

1. Communication and public speaking
2. Emotional intelligence
3. Interpersonal relationship
4. Norms for social behavior such as manners and etiquettes
5. Problem solving and thinking skills
6. Assertiveness
7. Leadership and team working
8. Self empowerment and time management
9. Fitness of mind

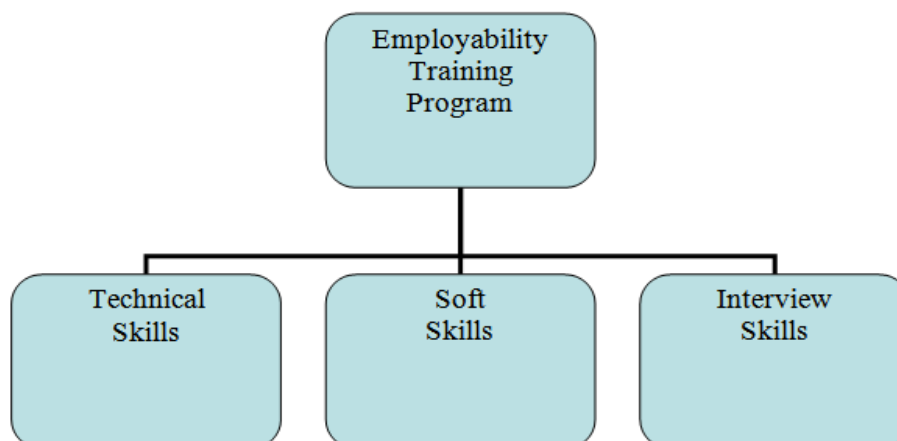
Universities and colleges are running project for soft skill development among students along with many councils and organizations related to higher education in India have also introduced many schemes for soft skill development among students. AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education) has developed a "Skill Development Cell". This cell has been given the responsibility to train students in soft skills. This cell has inaugurated many schemes such as-

National Employability Enhancement Mission

Leadership Development Program All these initiatives are working towards increasing employability skills among students but a little more thrust on PDP is required. The syllabus of Personality development program should be broadening. Not only soft skills containing interview and communication skills should be taught in colleges but also a practical course of logical reasoning and quantitative aptitude should be included in PDP classes. These chapters will develop logical and critical thinking power among students. Along with soft skills a comprehensive course of functional English should be included in PDP classes. Functional English course may include basic grammar ,verbal ability and speaking skills. As we all know that graduation is the stepping stone to the employment market so with a holistic approach there should be personality development

program in colleges to develop all those skills among students which are going to help them out to survive in employment market.

Some foreign universities have initiated a training based module for developing soft skills among their students and the main purpose of this training module is to make their students employment-ready. This training module is based on industry-linked syllabus and only given to under graduate students and overall this course is called “Employability Training Module”



This type of training module Indian universities can also opt so that not only students would be enriched in soft skills but also they would get technical training of their respective subjects. This module should be the part of their curricula and a proper assessment system should be there to check the progress of students.

#### ***Government initiatives for bridging employability gap in India***

Showing activism for bridging employability gap in students, Indian government has taken initiatives and established many organization, institution and agencies for this purpose.

- 1. National Vocational Education Qualification Framework** – It is an initiative by Human Resource Development Ministry, India. It aims at developing a pool of skilled professionals by enriching their curriculum with vocational training. This framework will provide an opportunity to start doing job just after completing intermediate. This framework will link schools, vocational institutes and colleges with one system and will provide placement assistance. Courses and programs in agriculture, BPO, construction, infrastructure, finance, banking and tourism will be offered. The program is expected to cater to at least five million students for vocational degree and diploma every year.
- 2. National Skill Development Corporation** – National Skill Development Corporation was set with public-private partnership with the purpose of catalyzing the skills landscape in India. Main objectives are to upgrade skills to international standards through significant industry involvement and develop necessary frameworks for standards, curriculum and quality assurance, to enhance support and coordinate private sector initiatives for skill development and to play a role of market maker.
- 3. National Skill Development Corporation** – NSDC is working with 21 universities, UGC, AICTE catering to more than 1200 colleges and 400 community colleges. In order to bridge the industry academia gap NSDC has developed a unique model to integrate skill based trainings into the academia cycle of the university.
- 4. National Skill Development Fund** – The national skill development fund was set up in 2009 by government of India for raising funds both from government and non-government sector for skill development.
- 5. Skill Development Bureau** – The vision of bureau has been mentioned on its website “: The education is fundamental to all round human development. Skills and knowledge are the driving forces of economic growth and social development for any country. Countries with higher and better levels of skills adjust more effectively to challenges and opportunities of world of work”. This bureau arranges investment for

harnessing the country's demographic dividend. These types of government initiatives are really boosting skills in India.

### **Innovative Pedagogical Tools Can Link Education to Employment**

There are many pedagogical tools which can link education to employment.

1. Scaffolding Teaching Approach – This approach aims to provide an extra liberty to the students in the classroom to get involve in teaching with the faculty developing their own idea over any topic. This teaching method is very common in all Australian Universities.
2. Practice-based Pedagogy – This teaching method asks students to place themselves in the same given situation, assess the circumstances and finally give his opinion.
3. Business Simulation games based Pedagogy – This pedagogy aims to make business students aware of business related issues like labor strike, launching of product and so on through virtual company.

Apart from all these above mentioned teaching approaches we have got many other one also like multimedia based teaching approach, Industrial interactions to the students, real life case studies and so on which may enable our students to understand the management concepts easily and implement them in their working place. We should be strongly agree with Professor Thillai Rajan, Associated Professor in IIT-Madras who won the Innovation in Pedagogy Award for 2011 says that constant innovation in teaching is the key to getting management concepts across.

### **IV. CONCLUSION**

A famous quote about college education says “A college degree is key to realizing the dream, well worth the financial sacrifice because it is supposed to open the door to a world of opportunity” This quote has very deep meaning as we all know that when a student enters in college parents as well as society think that after getting his degree the student will earn money and he would be able to bear the financial expanses of the house, that's why parents don't hesitate in investing huge money over education of their children as they know that college fees is a kind of investment and a good return they will get when their child will get a fulfilling job. But if after investment in higher studies students are not able to get employed, it seems waste of money as well as waste of time.

A surge of hope is present in revamping and restructuring university curriculum and installing a full flourished lab of soft skill in college campus. We will be able to get ranked among top colleges also where we are not able to shine yet. Holistic approach of development will work here and as we all know that “Education” is a concurrent subject so not only central government but state authorities should also come forward for rebuilding the higher education system of India.

A Golden glimpse of ancient universities is still present in our mind when students from different countries used to come and study in Indian universities like Taxila and Nalanda, these universities used to fulfill the requirement and purpose of education of that time. We need to build-up same kind of curriculum which would be able to fulfill the objective of education.

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