

A Study on Enhancing Employability Skills among the Youth Engaged in Higher Education Institutions in India

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ABSTRACT

Key Words:

Higher Education, Employability skills, Initiatives, Growth.

This paper is about the topic – “enhancing employability skills among youth”. It provides a brief outlook on the topic of employability, skills required for enhancement, Government initiatives taken etc. Firstly, an introduction on the topic is given, where the key words such as Higher Education, Growth, Employability skills and various initiatives taken have been addressed, continued by a brief study on the Indian education system and the growth of higher education in India, with the issues concerned and the problems concerned with the growth is considered. In continuation, employability issues are concerned with, the present scenario of work environment in India is seen, including the worker population ratio and the male-female work ratio in the current work environment. Considering all the above points, the various initiatives taken by the Government and the start-up programmes initiated are contemplated. The process concerned with such initiatives and the success rate of such initiatives are reviewed. In conclusion, considering all the points covered above, the required suggestions are mentioned.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The concern for employability is growing more day by day with the advancement in educational sector on the magnitude of new reforms. Higher Education is an education beyond the secondary level where subjects are studied at advanced level and it is especially provided by a college or university.

In general sense, Employability means having employed. It is a measure of how easily new graduates can gain employment and achieve success in the world of work. In other words

employability is the attributes of a person that makes the person able to gain and maintain employment.

Employability skills are the basic skills that are necessary for getting and doing well on a job and which can apply across a variety of jobs and life context. Enhancement is a change that increases the value of something. An enhancement makes something better.

One of the main purposes of the higher educational Institutions is to prepare all graduates

for labour market or to enable every individual to earn sustainable livelihoods through self-employment or through the establishment of a company or cooperative. But the present situation of rapidly increasing enrolment in higher education without improving employability is to be addressed urgently. In order to avoid unemployment issue among graduates, more focus should be placed on the quality and labour market needs.

1.2 Objective Of The Study

- To find out the growth of higher education in India
- To determine the factors contributing to the growth of higher education
- To understand the issues with higher education
- To know about the steps taken by government to enhance the employability skills and initiatives in higher education
- To analyse the employability skill of both male and female.

1.3 Methodology

Method: Secondary Research.

- On the basis of previous works done relate to the topic, various articles and Government websites and documents.
- The references are provided.
- The issues and suggestions concerned are based on the study and opinion of the authors.

1.4 Literature Review

The concept of employability skills has been active from many years but now a days there is

a more interest in graduate employability. Many of the studies have come up with the suggestions and findings about graduate employability skills.

- Rubitachadha (2014) “Industry Requirement for employability of management student in present scenario” In this study has suggested to offer more and more practical training, develop their conversational skills, outsource to professional organizations which are specializing in improving employability skills, send their students to visit industries periodically, invite experts from industries to interact with students, conduct personality development workshop and industry-institute interaction.
- MasuraRahmat (2012) in her study entitled “Relationship between employability and graduates' skill” The study findings have revealed the relationship between graduates' perception of their own skills and employability and suggests to identify whether the level of skills possessed by graduates during their studies are appropriate in helping them to perform better in the current job market.
- Archer and Davison (2008) founded from their research that regardless the size of company, soft skill, communication skills, team building skills were perceived more important than technical skills. But According to Glass (2008), many of the companies recruit employees based on their technical skills.

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- Padmini (2012) in study entitled “Education Vs employability – the need to bridge the skill gap among the engineering and management graduates in Andhra Pradesh” purpose of the study was to throw light on the aspect of employability skills which is required for technology and management graduates and to discuss about the initiatives of state government towards skill building of graduate students to explore how soft skills can be integrated with curriculum thereby grooming the professionals for employment. It is concluded as Human resource with quality as well as in terms of quantity are India's great assets so study suggested to gear up education system through various initiatives and innovations.
 - Nidhi Pandey (2012) in his study entitled “Awareness of life skills for job sustainability amongst management students”. Objective of study was to know the factors affecting employability of MBA students and findings revealed that the attempt to identify the level of awareness of life skills among professional students, which are deemed necessary by any employer from an employee and the study was concluded that the life skills dealing to train and to cope up the loss, stress and also development critical thinking are required among the youth.
 - Susima Weligamage (2014) in her study entitled “Graduates' employability skills” which was conducted with the objectives to identify the employer skills needs in the different countries and a variety of definitions related to employability skills, previous research which was done in the different countries related to the employability skills requirement and the findings revealed that employer expectation, skills definitions, and requirement change according to the different countries. The learners' skill enhancement capabilities and also the Employers' needs should be taken into consideration in formulating the upcoming skills assessments. Study concludes that universities should recognize the skill sets that will best serve the upcoming labour market and align the programmes to meet those requirements.
 - The approach graduates perceive, invest time and the effort in developing and managing the employability (Nilsson,2010) which reveals that technical and vocational skills have fewer impact compared to soft-skills and the personality attributes and the findings of the study agrees with Clarke (2008) who suggests that employability does not depend only on the Individual quality or characteristics, at the same time the work environment and other relations are also important in shaping one's employability. However the responsibility of developing and managing one's employability is a shared responsibility of individual, organization and university.
 - The research works on Factors Impacting the Employability Skills of Engineers by

Varwandkar Ajit (2013), with the aim to distinguish the variables affecting the employability of engineering graduates in Chhattisgarh state. The conclusion drawn was that the knowledge, communication skills, empathy and managerial ability have major impact on the employability of the engineering graduates. However the independent factor "Motivation" does not have any major impact on engineering graduates.

- The objective of the study entitled "Employability Skills amongst MBA Students In Delhi NCR" by Vani Bhagwath(2013) was to toss light on the employability aptitudes necessary for administrate graduates and to evaluate the employability abilities of MBA under studies specifically in the National Capital Region of Delhi. The study suggested that, the organizations can upgrade the educational modules or the course content which enhances their scholarly capital, adopting the ideal HR arrangements.

2.0 GROWTH OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

Currently India is a developing country and efforts are being made by both central government as well as by the state government to promote the higher education in India. In the year 1950-1951 there were 30 universities and 695 colleges. Today as per the University Grants commission Census, they mentioned that the universities in India have been increased to 799 universities and 39071 colleges. This major development in higher

education took place because of efforts and the policy decisions taken by the government.

In the eleventh 5 year plan the government has provided 44,000 crores for the development of higher education and in the Twelve five year plan the total provision of Rs 1,80,000 crore is made for higher education. This provision is done mainly to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER). Gross Enrolment Ratio in India is calculated for 18-23 years of age group. Currently the GER of India is very low at the rate of 23.6%.

2.1 Issues with Higher Education in India

- **Teaching quality:**

Teachers are not well trained and qualified for the job they assigned to do. Most of the colleges select the graduates as the professors.

- **Financing:**

To improve the quality of the higher education, government need to spend more, but currently the government is not able to spend more for higher education in India.

- **Quota system:**

Debating quota system is very controversial. Talent and merit is more important than the identity. However, quota system is still a challenge, so this is one of the issues lying with the higher education in India.

- **Moral issues:**

Younger generation is not interested in serving their country and they are more interested in just taking up a job and a hefty package.

2.2 Problems with Higher Education in India

- **Gap in supply and Demand:**

India's Gross Enrolment (GER) Ratio is just 19% which is not good. Gross enrolment ratio is 6% below the world average and at least 50% lesser than developed world like Australia and US.

- **Mushrooming of low-quality Institutes:**

Mushrooming of low-quality institutes all over the country is not good for higher education. These new colleges lack capacity and they are all about fleecing money from students and their parents.

- **No project-based learning:**

Higher education lack project-based learning. Young graduates need to learn new skills especially vocational skills that can give them job. So, we are not focusing on project-based learning at all. Just theory is not enough, we also need practical knowledge.

- **No strategy:**

There is no strategy developed to attract the

foreign students to study in Indian Institutes. Government has no plan for this and this is a big challenge.

2.3 Factors Contributing to The growth of higher education:

Education plays a major role in the economic development of any country. India's higher education system is the third largest in the world followed by United States of America and China. Indian higher education is in need of radical reforms by enforcing higher standard of transparency, professionalization for the sector of educational institute and strengthening of the vocational and doctoral education pipelines.

Growth in Government Expenditure: Since independence government is highly focusing on improving literacy rate in the country. Even today government runs many programs in order to provide quality education in India. On the contrary expenditure made by the government on higher education is higher than that of primary education.

Gross Enrolment ratio during last 8 years:

Year	Both	Male	Female
2017 - 18	25.8	26.3	25.4
2016 - 17	25.2	26.0	24.5
2015 - 16	24.5	25.4	23.5
2014 - 15	24.3	25.3	23.2
2013 - 14	23.0	23.9	22.0
2012 - 13	21.5	22.7	20.1
2011 - 12	20.8	22.1	19.4
2010 - 11	19.4	20.8	17.9

Source: Ministry of Human Resource Development

Improving Gender Equity: Since independence more importance was given to gender equality by improving the social status, health care, economic independence and the same can be seen in literacy rate.

3.0 UNEMPLOYABILITY

Unemployability is a situation where people seek for the job but not being currently employed. The unemployment rate in India increased from 3.52% in 2017 to 6.1% in 2018. Unemployment has

reached all-time high of 8.3% in the year 1983 and a low of 3.4% in 2014. The unemployment rate in India measures the number of people actively looking for the job as a percentage of the labour force. A person must have these three criteria to be considered as an unemployed;

1. Has not sought work in a recent past period
2. Is willing to work and seeking for the job
3. Is not currently working

Table showing the scenario of Indian Labour Environment

Indian Labour	Unit	2017	2016	Highest	Lowest
Unemployment rate	Percentage	3.52	3.51	8.30	3.41
Unemployed person	Million	44.85	48.26	48.26	5.10
Employed person	Thousand	29650	28999	29650	17491
Youth unemployment rate	Percentage	12.9	18.1	18.1	12.9
Population	Million	1283.6	1268.96	1283.6	359

Source: Trading economics

3.1 Present Scenario

At present scenario, India has around 18.6 million unemployed people and the rate of unemployment in the rural area is higher (21.7%) in comparison to urban areas. In India, Gujarat has the least unemployment rate and Tripura has the highest rate of unemployment. Where Kerala has the highest rate of woman unemployment which is approximately 47.4% compared to man. In the tertiary sector, Rate of employment is higher in the sector like engineering, laws and medical than the primary and secondary sector.

3.2 Worker Population Ratio

It is used to define number of persons employed per thousand persons. This ratio is calculated by using following formula;

$$WPR = \frac{\text{Number of employed persons}}{\text{Total population}} \times 100$$

It is an indicator used for analyzing the employment situation in the country. This also help in knowing the proportion of population contributing to the production of goods and services in the country.

3.3 Causes of Unemployment

1. Educated youth employment:

Importance for education is increasing in India but due to broad knowledge of educated youth lack of training, job search ability, and professional skill. Where most of the graduates are not able to design their own resume and not able to get the job even after giving the interview.

2.Poverty:

Poverty is the main reason for the developing country like India. There are many families who are below the poverty line so they do not have any other sources of fund for their education.

3.Illiteracy:

Illiterates will remain unemployed most of the time which makes them engage in agricultural works and other wrong works in large number, which may turn bad for the society.

4.Population growth:

Population in India is increasing day by day since independence. The growth of population is one of the major causes for the growth of unemployment. India has a large number of youth employment and unemployment where most of the people are from rural areas (68.8%) and in our defective education

system, everyone knows that rural area people having lack of skill and English knowledge which is the main reason for youth employment.

3.4 Government Initiatives and Policy Measures

- 1.Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)
- 2.Regional Rural Banks (RRBs)
- 3.National Skill Development Mission
- 4.Ministry of Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME)
- 5.Swarna Jayanti ShahariRozgar Yojana (SJSRY)

4.0 EMPLOYABILITY

Employability refers to the attribute of a person that makes that person to gain and maintain employment. It is nothing but having a set of skill, knowledge, understanding and personal attribute.

Table showing the Overall Employability

Year	Overall Employability (Percent)
2014	33.95
2015	37.22
2016	38.12
2017	40.44
2018	45.60

Source: India skill report

According to this survey, the rate of employability in India increased from 40.44 percent in 2017 to 45.60 in 2018.

Further analyses of employability reveal that engineers are highly employable where 52 percent of engineers were found employable. Employability of MBA student witnessed a drop of 3 percent over last year where everyone wants to get MBA degree

irrespective of their graduate degree. ITI and Polytechnic student employability is a challenging task due to less focus on core employable skill and industry alliance. To build future economies we should ensure that there is an equal opportunity for both the men and women. Where employability of woman has dropped from an all-time high of 41% last year to 40% this year. on the other hand, male employability has grown significantly from 40%

in 2017 to 47% in 2018. At present NDA led government is pushing women agenda ranging from health, education, skilling, and employment

but the same is not reflecting in public sector organization if we exclude public sector organization then the ratio will leap to 27% from 23%.

Male and Female Ratio in Work Environment

Company	Male	Female
Public Companies	92%	08%
Private Companies	76%	24%
Multinational Companies	76%	24%
Others	68%	32%

India has among the lowest female workforce participation in the world where 48% of the Indian is female but their participation in the workforce is nearly 28.5%. Female employability is higher in Karnataka with 29 percent of employable female and Delhi take the lead in male employability with 52.70 percent.

4.1 Start-up Program by the Government

Start-up India is an initiative of the Central Government of India. This campaign was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his Independence Day speech in 2015. During his speech, Prime Minister said that “We are trying to the young job creators rather than job seekers”. This initiative has given great scope for the youth of the country in various new businesses like internet marketing, commerce, and E-commerce and this is based on three pillars:

1. Funding support and incentives
2. Simplification and Hand holding
3. Industry-Academia Partnership and Incubation

This event was inaugurated by the finance minister Arun Jaitley on 16th January of 2016. Where

government initiated to set up over 75 start-up hubs in the Indian Institute of information technology, National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research and National Institute of Technology. Investment for this scheme was funded by the Soft Bank, has invested over \$2 billion for this start-up initiative.

Some of the Highlights of this scheme:

1. Startup India Hub:

Under this scheme, start-up hubs were created in order to boost this scheme. Which will help the entrepreneur to access financial aid and exchange the knowledge.

2. Protection of Patent:

Under this scheme examination of the patent can be made at lower cost and this system will promote adoption and awareness of the Intellectual Property Right.

3. Self Certification:

This will help the entrepreneur to reduce their regulatory liabilities this includes payment of gratuity, provident fund management, air and water pollution act, and labour contract.

4.Easy registration:

This scheme made registration procedure easy through an online portal in the form of a mobile application

5.National credit guarantee trust company:

This trust was created by the government in order to facilitate a free flow of fund over the next four year with a budget of Rs 500 crore per year.

6.No Income Tax:

In order to make an essay of start-up government has provided an exemption from various tax and rebate. This also includes exemption from income tax for the next three years.

7.Rebate:

Rebate amounting to the value of 80 percent will be provided back to the entrepreneur on filling the patent application.

8.Easy exit:

If the start-up fails the government will assist the entrepreneur in finding a suitable solution for their problem and if they fail again the government will help in providing an easy way out.

9.Easy rules:

Rules of trading and norms of public procurement This event was in have been simplified for the startup entrepreneur.

10.Dedicated Programmes in school:

The government will introduce innovation related program in order to boost this scheme over 5 lakh school.

11.Atal innovation mission:

This scheme launched in order to boost innovation and thus it encourages talented youth of the country.

12.No tax on capital gain:

At present, the investment made by the venture capitalist is exempted from the capital gain. The same policy is being implemented on the primary level in a start-up.

Changing Economy

The economy consists of various sectors in terms of manufacturing or service sector for employment. In the past days, major importance was given to the manufacturing sector and basic jobs, which never intended for any upgradation or creativity in work.

But as the economy as changing in a speedy pace, more importance is given towards the service sector of the economy. Especially the technological and creative aspects(skills) are considered in an employee. In the other side, even skills such as communication, team work, decision makings etc. are noticed. For availing job/work in a good organisation there are some pre-requisites needed to be fulfilled by the individuals.

People need to enhance their abilities and skills to get updated to the changing and upgrading economy. To keep up with the pace of changing economy, individuals need to strengthen and upgrade their skills needed according to the specified job.

Employability Skills

Skills which are commonly expected in a candidate applying for a job or such specific skills required for a particular job are commonly referred to as employability skills or can also be referred to as soft skills. Some of the employability skills can be listed as below,

- Responsible
- Communication
- Initiative and decision taking ability
- Confidence
- Planning and implementing
- Team work
- Technology

In the current scenario it is seen that the individual seeking job are lacking in the above skills and such other employability skills, because of which the individuals are not able to avail jobs. This has become a major topic of discussion in the current scenario and to manage this condition in the economy the government is taking many such initiatives to enhance the employability and soft skills in the individuals by issuing various schemes and to help the individuals to make their life by boosting the skills required.

5.0 GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

Trade and industry sectors want their potential employees assessed in various ways. It is done to evaluate the candidates' abilities matching the desired work profile. However, most often the grudge is skill deficit or skills mismatch.

Because of the huge effect of technology on the work/labour market for a continuous change, the labour market has also become way too complex and requiring new skills. So as to solve this issue government is coming up with various initiatives and schemes to make the young talent of India potential for the job.

On the occasion of the launch of Skill India Mission in 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said: "In the coming decades, the largest workforce required by the world will be provided by India." The Government thus set a target to create 500 million skilled workforces by 2022, accordingly.

As according to the government statistics in 2011, India's youth literacy rate (15 – 24 years age) is 86.1% and adult literacy rate (15 years & above) is 69.3% and the government has an aim to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education to 25.2% in 2017-18 and 30% in 2020-21.

According to ASSOCHAM (Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry in India) report published last year showed that only 20% of 5 million students who graduate every year get employed.

To solve this issue the Government is taking many initiatives. The Government has also planned in the Governments Draft National Education Policy 2016 that, it anticipates to include training and skills in the curricula to expand the opportunities

to students to gain the required skills and knowledge, including the employability skills and skills needed for entrepreneurship etc

The below given are some of the major initiatives taken by the Government.

5.1 National Skill Development Corporation India:

It is a not for profit public limited company incorporated on July 31 2018 under section 25 of Companies Act 1956. It is a public – private partnership model, set up with the primary charge of creating a skills environment in India.

- Aims to promote skill development by creation of large, quality and not for profit vocational institutes
- Provides funding and capital to organisations, companies and enterprises to provide skill trainings
- Industry led sector skill councils

5.2 Skill India

Skill India is a campaign launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 15 July 2015 which aims to train over 40 crore people for different skills by 2022 in India.

It also includes other such initiatives taken by Government such as,

- National Skill Development Mission
- National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015
- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana
- Skill Loan Scheme

5.3 National Skill Development Mission

National skill development mission was started by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. The aim of the ministry to launch this mission was to provide the whole and final framework of skill development activities to be implemented as rapidly as possible and increase the skill development efforts all over India. The main motive of this mission is to provide the institutional magnitude to teach over 30 crore people by 2022.

The main objectives of the mission are:

- To make an end to end execution of the institutional framework of the mission across the country for skill development.
- To integrate skilling in the curriculums of schools as well as to aim towards long term and short-term quality training.
- Creation of an institutional framework aiming towards best outcome-focused trainings.
- To initiate and apply an internationally and nationally acceptable set of standards for skill training in India and ensure that the quality of the training is maintained.
- To create a proper skill development environment for non-organized sectors, and convert it into a formal employment sector.
- Establishment of teacher training institutions to, so as to create a network of the best and quality trainers.
- To establish and maintain co-ordination between central ministries/states/ implementing agencies in skill development.

- To create and maintain a database (LMIS) for meeting the demand and supply of skilled workforce in India.
- Continuous monitoring
- Kaushal and rozgar mela
- Standardized branding and communication

Schemes under this mission are:

- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana
- STAR
- Polytechnic Schemes
- SANKALP
- Vocalization of Education
- UDAAN

5.4 Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana is a flagship scheme of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. The scheme is an outcome-based training programme for skill development. It is a skill certification and reward scheme and the main motive of this scheme is to transform the huge number of youths of India into employable by taking up skill development trainings and earn a secure living.

Key elements of the scheme are:

- Recognition of prior learning

- Special projects
- Short term training
- Placement assistance

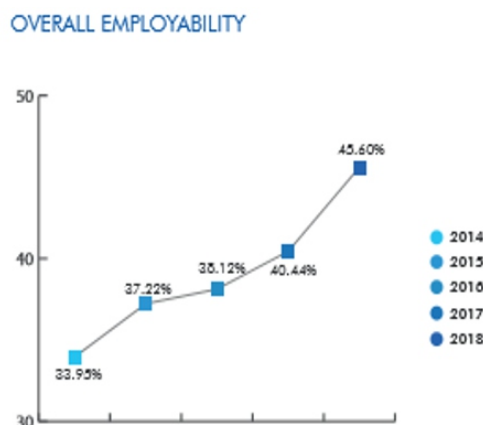
Skill development Schemes launched by the government are:

- First ever Indian Institute of Skills
- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana
- NAPS (National Apprentice Promotion Scheme Skill Development for minorities
- Green Skill Development Programme
- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Kendra
- Craftsmen Training Scheme
- Deen Dayal Upadaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana

New Developments:

- National Career Service India
- Employment Exchanges Mission Mode Project

6.0 RELATED GRAPHS:



Disclaimer: Employability Score here does not include Participation from IITs IIMs NITs and other premier institutes of country

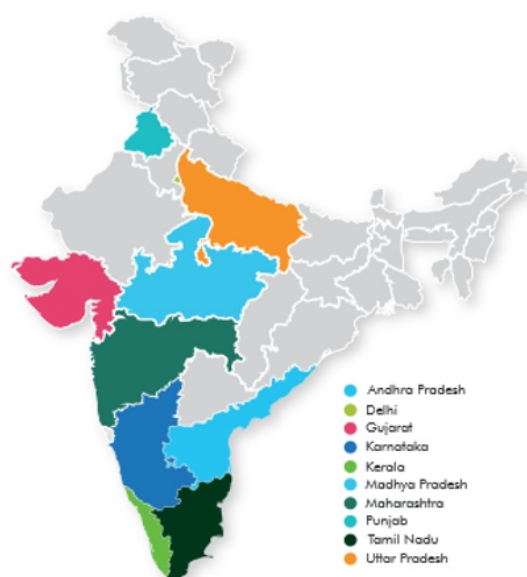
Source: India Skill Report 2018

SKILL AVAILABILITY STATE WISE

LEARNING AGILITY	ADAPTABILITY	INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE	CONFLICT RESOLUTION	SELF DETERMINATION
Karnataka	Gujarat	Delhi	Kerala	Tamil Nadu	Kerala
Delhi	Maharashtra	Karnataka	Gujarat	Andhra Pradesh	Karnataka
Punjab	Kerala	Maharashtra	Karnataka	Karnataka	Maharashtra
Maharashtra	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	Andhra Pradesh	Gujarat	Madhya Pradesh
Uttar Pradesh	Delhi	Kerala	Madhya Pradesh	Madhya Pradesh	Delhi
Kerala	Madhya Pradesh	Uttar Pradesh	Maharashtra	Maharashtra	Uttar Pradesh
Madhya Pradesh	Uttar Pradesh	Gujarat	Tamil Nadu	Punjab	Gujarat
Andhra Pradesh	Punjab	Punjab	Uttar Pradesh	Uttar Pradesh	Punjab
Gujarat	Andhra Pradesh	Andhra Pradesh	Delhi	Kerala	Tamil Nadu
Tamil Nadu	Tamil Nadu	Tamil Nadu	Punjab	Delhi	Andhra Pradesh

Source; India Skill Report 2018

TOP 10 STATES WITH HIGHEST EMPLOYABILITY



Source: India Skill Report 2018

7.0 SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

• Link between Industry and Academics:

Connection between the industry and academic helps the students to improve their skills and

practical knowledge, by this it ensures the students to get good job because of his practical knowledge.

• Innovative practices:

The new technology offers vast opportunities for

progress in all walks of life. It offers opportunity for growth of economic, improved health, better service delivery, improved learning and socio-cultural advances.

Need for some Young professors:

The biggest problem of Higher education system is that most of the professors are above the age of 60s and 70s. with due respect to them, there is also a need for some young professors. Because young professors would be more aware of the changes in the technologies and needs of the students. But most of the youngster goes in the line of teaching, as there is no high pay for them.

• Realize the power of Alumni:

One of the main drawbacks of institutions which provide higher education do not keep contact with Alumni.

Alumni networking is very helpful for the current students because they will understand the various problems related to the academic as well as the skills required to work in the industry.

8.0 CONCLUSION

It is seen that, with the growth of Higher Education in India and the initiatives of the Government towards the enhancement of employability skills yielded results. Though it is seen that results are not in an expected pace but, the implementation process takes time and proper planning is needed, relevant actions are taken by the Government for the same. Overall, there is a significant increase in the employable youth of India.

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- *National Skill Development Mission Booklet*