



"Perception of Final Year Students on Employability of the Course studied with respect to Mangalore University".

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ABSTRACT :

Employability denotes skills and attributes that make an individual desirable to potential employer. For getting employment individual must have or must possess employability skills and these skills requirement can vary from organization to organization because of variety of reasons. The competitiveness of today's labour market emphasizes the importance of students possessing the necessary skills to distinguish them in the competitive employment market. It also highlights the need for students to develop adaptability and flexibility to cope with the changing circumstances and to be dynamic in the maintenance of continuous learning. Equipping students with appropriate skills to enter the workforce is a responsibility of educational institutions. There are often claims that graduates are not employable. Therefore, Universities and educational institutions around the country are bringing new courses and provisions to overcome from this problem. This paper attempts to understand the perception of final year students towards employability of the course. Data for this study is collected through structured questionnaire. 60 students from 4 courses of Mangalore University are selected at random for the study. Several recommendations and suggestions were presented in the study to improve students' competencies as suggested by the students themselves and depending on the findings of the study.

Key words: Employability, competitiveness, skills and attributes.

Introduction :

Global ageing of the workforce is the major challenge ahead of most of developed countries in the world. (World population ageing 1950-20150, 2002). It will affect the economic, technological, educational and social factors and will transform the employment trends of developed and developing countries (World population ageing, 2009). Significant labour shortage will develop in developed countries.

Developing future workforce relies on the current students' mastery of competencies that are needed in the workplace. It is known that the educational system mainly responsible for preparing qualified graduates by providing them with knowledge, skills, and attitudes upon graduation.

Employability in India :

India is one of the emerging markets in the world. As per UN reports, India is expected to have the world's largest population of about 1.4 billion by 2028. Ernst and Young report (2012), estimated that by 2020, the working age population aged 15-26 is expected to increase from 761 million on 2011 to 869 million making India the world's youngest country with an average age of 29 with about 28 percent of the world's workforce. China's demographic dividend is also expected to taper from 2015 while India is expected to retain its advantage till 2040. Some of the benefits of a higher demographic dividend include more production, more productivity, more saving etc. This demographic dividend if leveraged well can get India into the league of developed nations in about 10 to 15 years.

India's change from an agrarian economy to an industrialised economy is lagging due to shortage of skilled labour (The skill developed landscape in India and implementing quality skill training, August 2010). Although the country has enough potential to deliver to the needs of the global talent market, the strong employability challenge of the graduates became the bottleneck for India's growth perceptible (Talent shortage survey, 2005). There were several studies conducted in India to know the employability skills of the students. It is found that 75 percent of the Indian graduates are unemployable (Talent shortage survey, 2005). Globally about 34 percent of the employers (Talent shortage survey, 2005) find it difficult to fill the talent gap in India, 76 percent of the employers find it difficult to find right talent in India. These results point out the need for proper awareness and training among the graduates to enhance their skill.

Objectives of the study

The study is conducted to achieve the following objectives:

- To identify the perception of the graduate towards employability skills.
- To identify the awareness among graduates on skill developed by the course undertaken.
- To assess the importance of skill enhancement activities in promoting employability
- To know the additional requirements of the graduates to improve their employability.

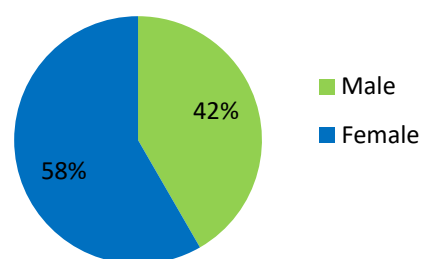
Methodology

It is an exploratory study. A structured questionnaire is prepared to achieve the objectives of the study. 60 students participated in the survey. All the students were in the final year of their graduation. A simple random sampling method was adopted for the study.

Data analysis

1. Gender wise distribution of respondents

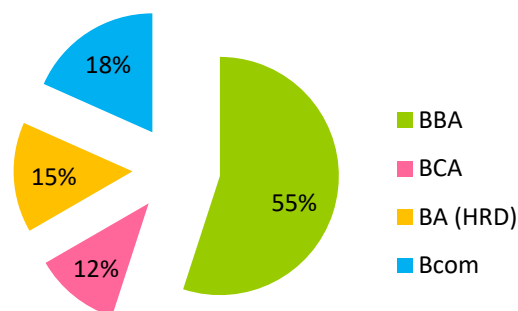
Gender	Respondents	Percentage
Male	25	42
Female	35	58
Total	60	100



Analysis: Above table and chart indicates 58 percent of respondents are female and 42 percent respondents are male.

Course wise distribution of respondents

Course	Respondents	Percentage
BBA	33	55
BCA	7	12
BA(HRD)	9	15
Bcom	11	18
Total	60	100

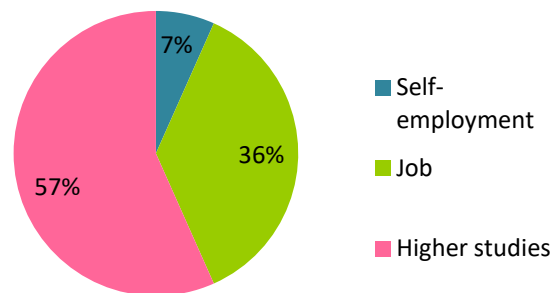


Analysis: Above table and chart indicates 55percent of the respondents belong to BBA course, 18percent to B.Com course, 15 percent of respondents to BA(HRD) course and 12percents of respondents belong to BCA course.

Future plans of the respondents

Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
Self-employment	4	7

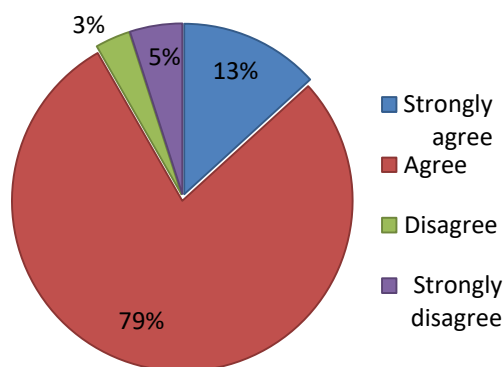
Job	22	36
Higher studies	34	57
Total	60	100



Analysis: Study reveals that 57percent of the respondents are interested in continuing their studies after graduation, 36percent of respondents would like to work and only 7percent are intended to be self-employed.

Opinion of respondents on course content being competent of developing skill as required by the career plan.

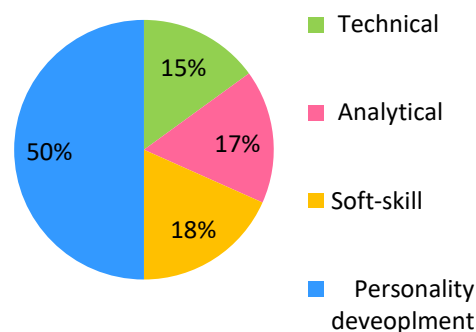
Opinion	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	8	13
Agree	47	79
Disagree	2	3
Strongly disagree	3	5
Total	60	100



Analysis: Above table and graph indicates that 79 percent of the respondents opine that the course content has the scope for skill development, 13percent of the respondents strongly agree on this, 5percent of the respondents strongly disagree that course leads to skill development and only 3percent disagree on this.

Awareness of the respondents on type of skill developed by the course

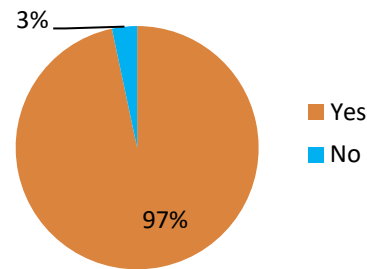
Skill developed	Respondents	Percentage
Technical	9	15
Analytical	10	17
Soft-skill	11	18
Personality development	30	50
Total	60	100



Analysis: The study reveals that 50 percent of the respondents agree that course studied by them develops their personality, 18 percent of respondents believe that course develops soft skill, 17 percent of respondents agree that course develops analytical skill and 15 percent respondents agree that course develops technical skill.

Reply to whether respondents are confident about making application to their future employer

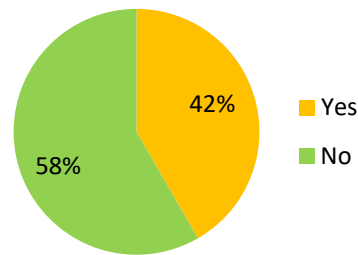
Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	58	97
No	2	3
Total	60	100



Analysis: The study reveals that 97 percent of the respondents are confident about placing the application to the future employer; only 3 percent of the respondents lack the confidence.

Reply to whether respondents have attended any interview for job during campus placement or elsewhere

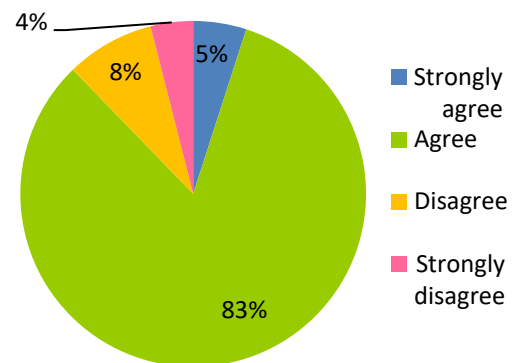
Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	25	42
No	35	58
Total	60	100



Analysis: Above table and chart indicates that 58 percent of the respondents have not attended the interview and 42 percent of the respondents have attended the interview.

Opinion on course content meeting the expectations of the recruiters

Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	3	5
Agree	50	83
Disagree	5	8
Strongly disagree	2	4
Total	60	100

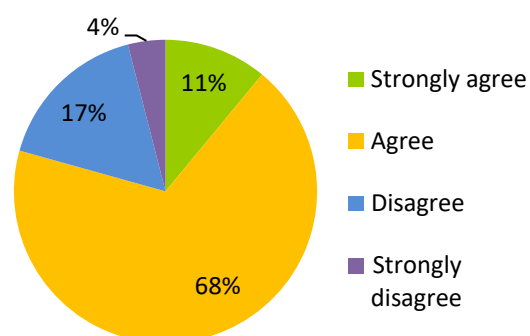


Analysis: Above table and chart indicates that 83 percent of the respondents agree that course content meet the recruiters requirement, 8 percent of the respondents disagrees, 5 percent strongly agree and 4 percent strongly disagree.

Opinion on usefulness of skill enhancement activities conducted in the college towards equipping respondents for working life

Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	7	11
Agree	41	68
Disagree	10	17

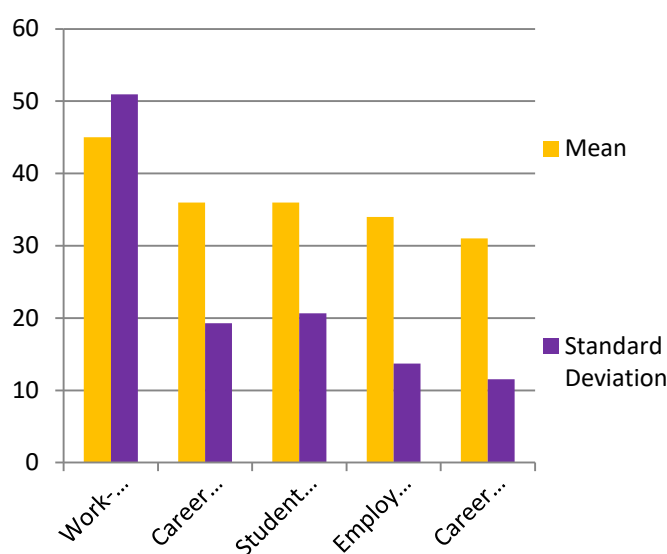
Strongly disagree	2	4
Total	60	100



Analysis: Above table and chart indicates that 68 percent of the respondents agree that skill enhancement activities organized in college equip them for working life, 17 percent disagree, 11 percent strongly agree and 4 percent strongly disagree.

Ranking of option given about the things that university should do to develop career aspiration and employability skills among student

Particulars	Mean	Standard Deviation
Work-based learning	45	50.93
Career guidance	36	19.29
Student-industry interface	36	20.66
Employability-centric syllabus	34	13.69
Career fairs	31	11.52



Analysis: Above table and chart shows the mean score and standard deviation among the five options given to students to rank according to the priority, the area where university can take action to improve the employability of the students. Respondents have ranked Mandatory work-based learning first with mean 45 and standard deviation 50.93, Career guidance second with mean 36 and standard deviation 19.29, Student-industry interface third with mean 36 and standard deviation 20.66, Employability-centric syllabus fourth with mean 34 and standard deviation 13.69 and Career fairs fifth with mean 31 and standard deviation 11.52.

Findings and Discussion

- Majority of the respondents are intended to continue their education after graduation. This indicates that according to students only graduation is not the means to enter job market. Universities need to enhance student's awareness on the job market and the expectations of the job market.
- Even though majority of the respondent agree that course content contributes to develop required skills, there is noticeable proportion of respondents not agreeing on this. Therefore change in the course content is must.
- Majority of the respondents are not aware of the type of skill developed by the course. Students should be given clear information as to the type of specific skill developed by the course.
- Good proportion of the respondent has attended interviews during the campus placement and elsewhere. At the same time majority of the respondents also agree that the expectations of the recruiters are being met. This indicates the course content has substance which can be used to increase the employability of the students.
- Majority of the respondents have agreed that the skill enhancement activities conducted in the college will improve their employability. As such it would be better that college concentrates more on such activities and brings some innovation to match the changing needs of job market.

- As per the study majority of the respondents have ranked mandatory work based learning highest among the other options given for additional support needed from the university. It would be beneficial for students if university takes action in this direction.
- Among other options career guidance programme and student industry interface secure equal weightage. It is observed that most of the institutions have given importance for these programmes. But still the students expect more guidance in this area. Therefore universities should try to guide students by organizing workshops with eminent personalities. This will answer most of the queries of the students and help them to prepare for the job market.
- Organising career fairs would meet the expectations of the students from the university.

Conclusion :

According to the findings of the study, students perceive that the course contents do meet the expectations of the recruiters. But they expect more from university so that they can be prepared for the job opportunities and to find their path in the work place upon graduation. The study also reveals that implementation of mandatory work-based learning will be appreciated by the students.

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