IMPACT OF GRADUATE COMPETENCIES TOWARDS EMPLOYABILITY-ISSUES OF LEARNING IN DIGITAL ERA

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ABSTRACT

Today's organisations are highly complex and dynamic where Human Resource Management play a major role in building the Human Asset, which greatly contributes to organisational objectives and there by effectively dealing with un-certainty. The question to be addressed is how to deal with the un-certainty when businesses are influenced by so many external environmental factors such as social, technological, political, economic and international factors. There is always a gap which exists in terms of understanding the impact of external Business environment and integrating with internal Business Environment especially in terms of People- centric. It is the Human Asset which can really bridge the corporate capabilities towards their expected outcomes. A model which can really ensure HRM sustainability towards pre- defined objectives is a competency –mapping approach, which mainly focus on bringing the right fit between competencies and desired achievements. Competency mapping refers to identifying the desired skills in order to accomplish the tasks with exceptional performance rather than average performance. The present study focus on identifying the competency mapping of MBA graduates towards employability to recognize the impact of key competencies towards a corporate perspective.

KEY WORDS: *Competency Mapping, Human Asset, Sustainability, Business Environment*

INTRODUCTION

The word competency deals with maintaining a right fit between the expected skills and available skills of an individual in order to accomplish desire objectives. In this regard companies are focusing on well-defined competency mapping model where the main aim is to bring match between right skills. The question arises is: "Are MBA students employable?" This is a tough challenge because many number of MBA graduates are completing their degrees but unable to get employed in reputed organisations. The situation has been worsened where the individuals join in compromised hires due to un-availability of competent opportunities in tune with their skills. Every corporate has adopted their own strategies to ensure talented work force to join in the organisation keeping besides the candidates with less potential to perform. In the other end, the academicians and colleges are putting more efforts on candidates already worthy to a high profiled job. This results in lack of spirit in the majority of candidates who are unable to cope with the potential candidates who can get placed in reputed jobs.
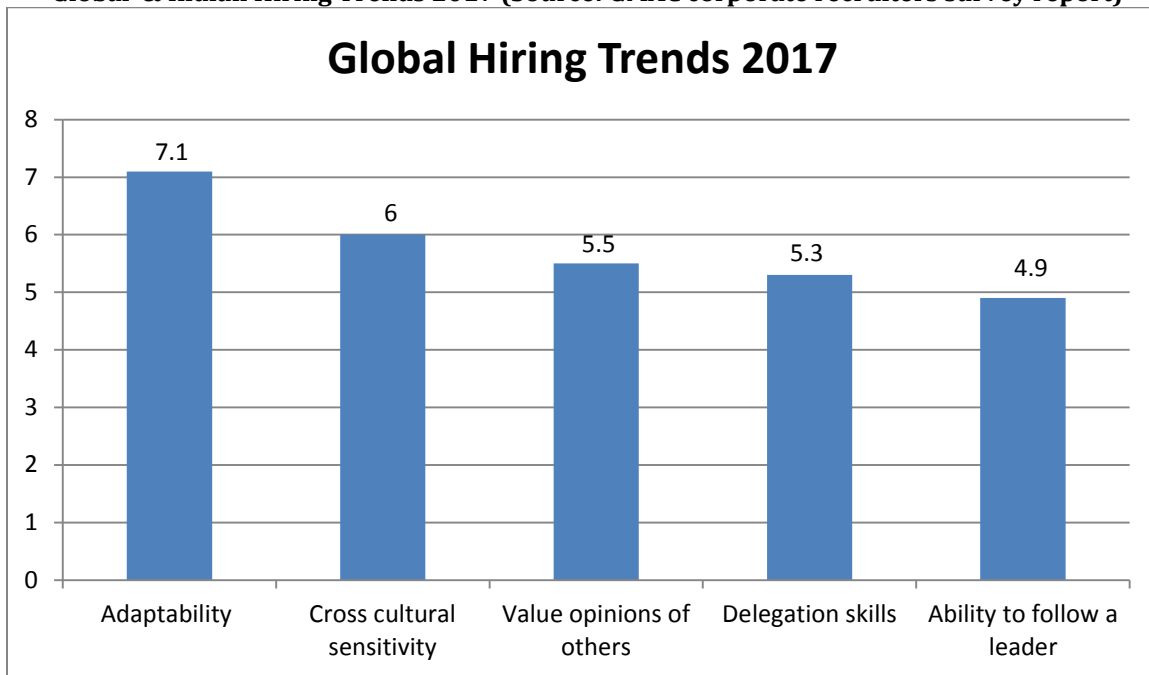
According to ASSOCHAM report, "majority of B schools in India produces unemployable graduates earning less than Rs 10,000 per month if at all they
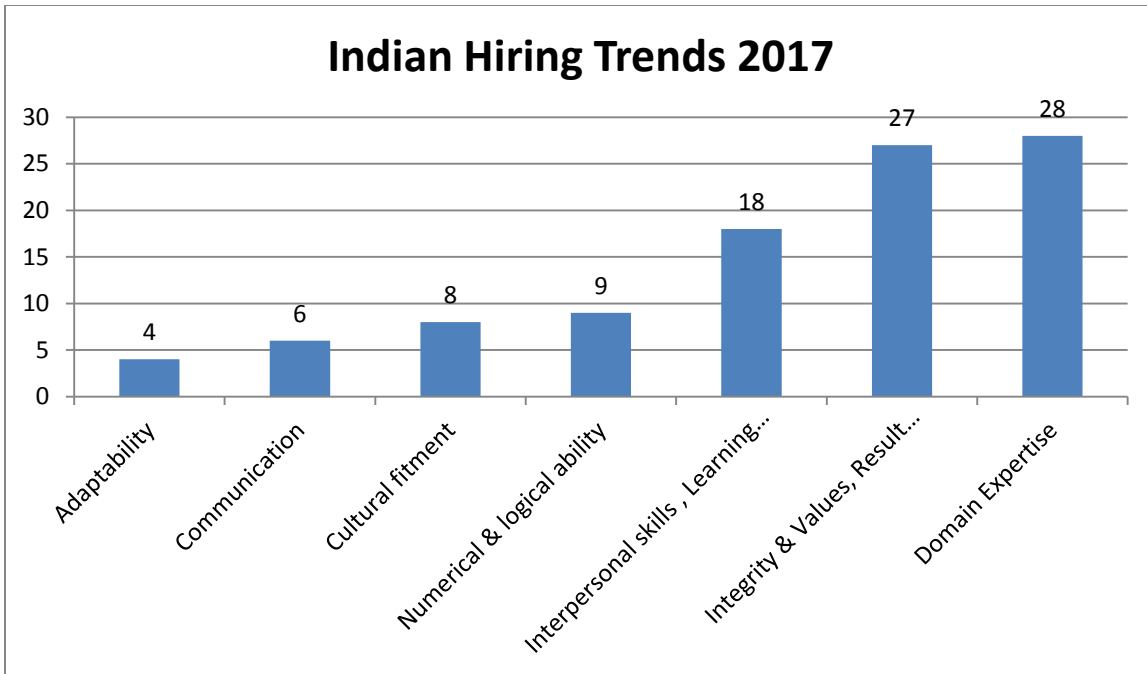
find placements. The main reasons are absence of excellence, least paid jobs over campus drives and poor faculty which are the reasons for India's unfolding Business school disaster. Only 7 per cent of MBA graduates from Indian business schools, excluding those from the top 20 schools, get a job straight after completing their course. The quality of higher education in India across disciplines is poor and does not meet the needs of the corporate world"

Key findings of global and Indian MBA hires in 2017

Globally 65% of companies focus on expanding the business by adopting various strategies such as mergers, acquisitions, new markets, new products etc. This projects the role of adopting competency mapping model for a better performance and achieving expected growth rate. It basically starts at the individual level competencies which ultimately results in building organisational competencies. The following details project the expected work force competencies of the organisations at global level and in India.

" Global & Indian Hiring Trends 2017 (Source: GMAC corporate recruiters survey report)"

Global Hiring Trends 2017

Indian Hiring Trends 2017

Category	Value
Adaptability	4
Communication	6
Cultural fitment	8
Numerical & logical ability	9
Interpersonal skills , Learning...	18
Integrity & Values, Result...	27
Domain Expertise	28

Hiring Practices

Category	Response
Drive to learn & perform	31%
Passion for company's...	20%
Prior work experience	2%
Technical skills	5%
Commitment to stay with...	14%
Recommendation from a...	8%
Educational background	6%
Strong references from...	5%
Performance on skill or...	5%
others	4%

From the survey, the graph reveals the various hiring practices adopted by corporates and it's understood that majority of corporates focused on attribute of drive to learn as a major skill to recruit the graduates.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Competencies of a student are the innate skills acquired by them during the education McLaughlin (1995) revealed that as the nature and look of jobs changed, the level of education and skills required also changed. Many educators faced the challenge of preparing young people to participate in the increasingly complex and changing world of work by calling on employers to articulate and communicate their needs better. Job competencies are those activities and skills judged essential to perform the duties of a specific position (Long, 1977). The link between competencies and employee performance is

very strong. The fundamental propositions that can be made are as follows:

- Competency-based applied learning will contribute to the academic knowledge, problem-solving skills, work attitudes and general employability skills of an individual.
- Provide individuals with coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging standard relevant technical knowledge and skills needed to prepare for emerging professions.
- Skills and Competence would lead to a higher degree of employability.

Tas (1988) defines competence as performance of duties based on one's ability to accomplish specific job related tasks and assume the role connected to the position. Chung-Herrera et al. (2003) postulates that a competency model is a descriptive tool that identifies knowledge skills, abilities and behavior needed to perform effectively in an organization. It is designed to help an organization meet its strategic objective through building human resources capability, competency modeling focus on behavior rather than personality traits. Employability Skills are not job specific, but are skills which cut horizontally across all industries and vertically across all jobs from entry level to chief executive officer. Sherer and Eadie 1987.

Athey and Orth (1999) a job-related competency is a set of observable performance dimensions, including individual knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors, as well as collective team, process, and organizational capabilities that are linked to high performance, and that provide the organization with sustainable competitive advantage. Employers find far too many entry-level job applicants deficient in employability skills, and want the business schools to place more emphasis on developing these skills. (Baxter and Young 1982).

Charner (1988) identified and catalogued the reasons given by employers for not hiring young people for entry-level jobs, including:
- Low grades and low levels of academic accomplishments
- Poor attitudes, lack of self-confidence
- Lack of goals, poorly motivated
- Lack of enthusiasm, lack of drive, little evidence of leadership potential
- Lack of preparation for the interview
- Excessive interest in security and benefits, unrealistic salary demands and expectations
- Inadequate preparation for type of work, inappropriate background
- Lack of extracurricular activities
- Inadequate basic skills (reading, writing, math).

In a recent survey, conducted by Harvard Business Review on whether business schools are to blame for the current global crisis, 67 percent of the respondents felt that business schools were at least partly responsible for the ethical and strategic lapses of their graduates who spawned the economic crisis (Podolny, 2009). Despite the fact that the traditional business education model has incorporated all the major changes regarding structure and curriculum that were considered necessary during the 1980s and 1990s (Paucar-Caceres, 2008), a significant number of researchers and renowned management gurus point out the need for restructuring and improving business education (AACSB, 2002; Donaldson, 2002; Etzioni, 2002; Mintzberg et al., 2002;Pfeffer and Fong, 2002; Ghoshal, 2003, 2005; Emiliani, 2006; Bennis and O'Toole, 2005;Holstein, 2005; Tsurumi, 2005).

Some management gurus have raised the question of business education effectiveness and they have suggested that business education in its present form does not make great contribution to excellence in management practice (Ghoshal, 2005). Hambrick (2007) reports that during the 1950s, business schools were accused of not being as academic as they should be (Porter and McKibbin, 1988).

MANAGEMENT EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND STUDENTS SCENARIO

- ***Employability elements:***

Higher educational institutions are dynamically being relied upon to pass on students that can rapidly go into the workplace and contribute new skills and knowledge that will help to drive countries towards economic development. Graduates are depended upon to change themselves from the relative comfort and routine of student life to the arranged difficulties of the workplace. Surveys such as the Business Today B-Schools rankings are to spur competition among institutions.

- **Academics and Employability of the Management Students:**

The correlation between the CGPA and the achievement in professional life often becomes significantly low. Scoring high percentage of marks as well as CGPA is necessary but not sufficient condition for getting good placement. A student who has scored high CGPA/percentage, maybe he is good in answering question papers/ writing skill but poor in communication skills.

- **Quality of Employability**

The quality of the final placement should be judged on the basis of certain parameters -- compensation package, job profile, location, security, growth opportunity and brand equity of the organization.

- **Qualities expected by the organizations**

-Highly competent, motivated, innovative approach,

negotiating skills

-Great public relations ability and inter personal skills, fair personality, smartness, good academic records

- Creativity, exceptional conceptual, analytical, extremely good and active contacts within the industry

- Good track records of success, go-getter, and dynamic in nature

- Quality of people is a key determinant of success in a rapidly changing world.

- **Bridging the gap between industry-academia**

The done way for the academia and the industry is to work together on research. We need to study the transformations occurring both in the industry due to globalization, technology, the impact of smaller families, and entry of women in education as well as industry and their successes. There is much research required to understand transformations and their impact on the employee industry interface. With the findings of the research, both academia and industry can design appropriate interventions to be more effective and meaningful. Aspirations, ambitions, and life spaces all require understanding so that the academia, students and industry can collaborate to design relevant inputs in education and good practices in organisations so that the employees and organizations can focus on growth.

LATEST TRENDS OF DIGITAL EDUCATION

- **Digital class rooms-** Instead of traditional chalk and board, the class rooms are more modernized where students can have availability of lecture at any point of time.
- **Video based learning –** The audio visuals enables direct learning approach rather than relying on books and other sources.
- **MOOCS –** Today globalization has influenced many more changes even in terms of learning and education. The MOOCS platform enables the students to acquire knowledge from various renowned universities and eminent professors without any global barriers.
- **Game based learning –** This includes simulation exercises where the students can have learning platform based on games or role plays there by inbuilt skills are acquired by participating in the games.

CHALLENGES OF DIGITAL LEARNING IN MBA PROGRAM

- **Resistance to change-** Majority of students are most reluctant to adopt new techniques of digital learning as they are more comfortable with traditional ways of teaching from book to board.
- **Lack of motivation –** The students are also less motivated in this regard because digital learning

requires additional skill set to implement new technology.

- **Poor technological skills of students-** The students are having poor skills set to adopt new technology and there are highly reluctant.
- **Inefficiency of evaluation-** There is improper mechanism available to evaluate the outcomes of digital learning.

MESURES TO OVERCOME THE CHALLENGES OF DIGITAL LEARNING

- **Building effective communication-** The better way to improve efficiency of digital learning is to create an essence of better communication. This also enables the employability skills required to get placed into corporates.
- **Rewards for high performers-** Another measure needed for overcoming the limitations of digital learning is to create an environment where students are self-interested to use the digital technology in education.
- **Easy access –** The student's usage of digital learning also increases when there is a scope for building an easy accessible platform instead of high end technology.
- **Creating appeal of learning -** The student's interest has to be kept in my mind before implementing digital technology in education system. They have to feel ease of using the new techniques.
- **Building motivation-** The students are to be self-motivated for using digital technology rather than forcing them to use it by explaining the benefits of obtaining

KEY OUTCOMES OF DIGITAL LEARNING

E-Learning should be more focused on knowledge creation rather than merely on knowledge acquisition. As knowledge is the integral part of this century.

- Developing collective cultural practices, physical learning is important as learning takes place between people and their cultural surroundings.
- Along with emotional and cognitive development, well-being and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) are also essential for the development of the students.
- Instead of computer-supported learning, it would be advisable to talk about new forms of Socio-Digital Participation (SDP). This includes media literacy, such as using social media and search engines.
- Constant reforms in schools and teacher education is essential for development. The

schools are not following the important developments of society. There is no evidence that learning styles or types would be informative in designing learning environments. Alternatively, it would be advisable to observe users' motivational profiles or study orientations. Meaningful and engaging learning methods are advisable, which support collaboration and self-regulation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BETTER EMPLOYABILITY IN THE DIGITAL ERA

Based on various findings of various studies following are the suggestion and recommendations in terms of match between competencies, Skills and student employability:

- Management curriculum need to be revised at both graduate and post graduate level. Curriculum should also link with Experimental and Action learning.
- The educational curriculum could be likewise changed into a skill and aptitudes based educational curriculum. For this Conducting induction programs to comprehend the changing desires of the industry with the end goal of developing course substance and preparing students for same.
- There is a requirement for intervention by HRD and education ministry. It is proposed that administrative bodies ought to effectively integrate the employability skills in curricula and scholastic exercises; and ought to keep watch on progress, and follow up on improvements.
- Faculty members should be given opportunity to enhance their knowledge related to Sustainable Development, permitting them to apply learning about supportability issues in real life.
- Simulation and business cases have to be used in every subject to give the student the feel of the subject in real life. Management games and role playing play a crucial role in developing the competencies required in real life.
- Students should be focused towards employability from the very first day of their college. They must be having clear idea about the skills and competencies required by the industry and spend the next two years in grooming themselves on a continual basis. The students should also develop professional links with their prospective employers to better understand and appreciate their expectations.

CONCLUSION

There is huge impact of graduate skills acquired in the education towards their success or failure of employability. Especially with the increased digital Era, the impact of skills towards employability has to be greatly explored. In this regard, measures have to be seriously considered for bridging gap between employability and digital learning so that quality of graduating students will be enhanced.

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