

## TITLE: “EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS OF MANAGEMENT STUDENTS: A STUDY OF BANKER’S VIEWPOINT”

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### ABSTRACT:

In the current scenario, employability skills have become a serious matter for the students and educational institutions, and government as these skills are demanded by employers in every sector of the economy. Considering the importance of skills, an attempt has been made to access the bankers' viewpoint towards management graduates' employability skills. A sample of ninety-five officials comprising forty-five from public and private sector banks was taken for the study. The gathered data have been analyzed with various descriptive statistics, and a t-test has been applied to test the validity of the results. The analysis shows that public sector banks' officials give importance to basic skills such as decision-making skills, delegation skills, integrity skills, analytical skills, and perceptual skills. On the other hand, the focus is on trans-disciplinarity skills, cognitive load management skills, design mindset skills, virtual collaboration skills, and novelty skills in private sector banks. For better performance of the management graduates in the banking sector, it is suggested that educational institutions should try to develop modern employability skills also in the students. They should provide practical knowledge to the students by exploring the actual workplace and arranging their meetings with experienced professionals, which will help the students understand the real work environment for their jobs.

### Keywords

Employability, Education, Management, Graduates, Skills.

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### INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, it has become mandatory that the graduates must possess employability skills if they want to acquire employment (Paterson, 2017). Employability skills are applied across various life contexts and varieties of jobs (Bansal, 2018). Employability skills have become a momentous matter for every educational institution, student, and government as employers expect that fresh graduates must have all required skills and work under minimum supervision (Abbasi et al., 2018). Human resource plays a significant role in the better performance of any organization (Cicekli, 2016) and higher education institutions play a major role in fulfilling the supply of skilled and updated human capital (Collet et al., 2015). The precondition for employability demands different kinds of skills, referred to as non-technical competencies and necessary to get success at the workplace (Preez et al., 2019). However, despite various kinds of employability skills, the students

cannot consummate the expectations of the industry's employers (Jackson, 2012). A few years ago, the banking sector recruited only those candidates who belong to commerce background, but the applicants of different backgrounds show their interest in banking, especially engineering students (Meena & Parimalarani, 2020). So banks and other firms who deal in public accounting prefer those graduates who have proficiency in Excel and other ICT skills (Ragland & Ramachandran, 2014). The recent developments in the field of accounting have increased the role of educators and dictated that what kinds of employability skills should be developed in the students' personality (Stone et al., 2013). The skills which were provided by the educational institutions to the students in traditional times are not suitable as per the present demand of the market (Jackling & Lange, 2009). This is why present educational institutions are focusing on quality, not on to enlarge the quantity (Nicolescu & Paun, 2009).

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

*Gibbs et al. (2011)* highlighted the importance of computing skills to be employable in the banking sector and stated that recruiters find the students having sufficient computing skills as per requirement. *Wilton (2012)* highlighted what kinds of challenges are faced by graduates at their workplace due to the lack of skills. Students and bankers consider that students face challenges such as a lack of understanding of the concepts, mental burden, adjustment issues, etc. *Stone et al. (2013)* observed that employers give importance to communication skills and listening skills, but on the other side students do not consider the importance of listening skills. *Ragland & Ramachandran (2014)* examined what functional skills are expected from the graduates by bankers and public accounting organizations. The analyzed data showed that bank officials and accounting firms select those candidates who possess proficiency in Excel and other required functions of a computer. *Collet et al. (2015)* examined bankers' and senior managers' perceptions of commercialization and innovation industries regarding employability skills. The managers' summarized views presented that students must focus on employability skills to get better job opportunities, and the most demanded employability skills include leadership skills, cognitive skills, and intrapersonal skills. *Cicekli (2016)* analyzed which skills are required for productive performance in the banking area. Forty percent of the officials think that higher education institutions do not provide the required skills as per Turkey's banking sector. Educational institutions focus on communication skills and teamwork skills, etc. but ignore the importance of analytical thinking skills. *Saeed and Rashidi (2017)* highlighted the importance of generic skills and believed that the employer gives preference to communication skills, teamwork skills, and leadership skills under the area of generic skills. *Abbasi et al. (2018)* analyzed the perception of the banking industry's managers regarding employability skills and showed a gap

between the skills possessed by the graduates and the skills demanded by bank officials. The gaps were found significant in critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, analytical skills, interpersonal skills, and numeracy skills, etc. *Preez et al. (2019)* identified those employability skills in great demand by the banks and other consumer service sectors. The study results showed differences in the views of employers and freshly graduated employees in terms of various employability skills such as time management skills, communication skills, and problem-solving skills. *Meena & Parimalarani (2020)* concluded that the banking sector employers pay importance to ICT skills. They recruit those graduates who have good command on the latest technology and full knowledge of computer, including software and hardware. The literature's initial review highlighted that different kinds of studies had been carried out in the respective area. Bankers presented their views regarding the basic employability skills of management students only, but in the present study, the bankers' views regarding basic and modern employability skills have been collected and analyzed.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The present study is conducted to analyze bankers' views towards basic and modern employability skills of management graduates.

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following research hypotheses have been formulated and tested to validate the results of the study:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the bankers' viewpoint in the public and private sector towards basic employability skills.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the banker's viewpoint in the public and private sector towards modern employability skills.

## SAMPLE PROFILE

For the present study, a sample of 90 managers of public (45) and private (45) sector banks is taken. Out of ninety respondents, 59 (65.55 percent)

were male, and 31 (34.45 percent) were female. On the other hand, 12 (13.33 percent) respondents were above 25 years, 24 (26.66 percent) were above 30 years, 34 (37.78 percent) were above 35 years, and 20 (22.22 percent) were above 40 years.

### DATA COLLECTION

Both types of data, *i.e.*, primary and secondary, have been used in the present study. For primary data, a pre-tested structure questionnaire was designed on a five-point Likert scale, *i.e.*, Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). On the other side, secondary data were collected from reports, journals, articles, book chapters, magazines, *etc.*

### DATA ANALYSIS

The collected data have been analyzed with the help of various descriptive techniques such as mean, standard deviation, *etc.* An Independent sample t-test has been applied to analyze and compare the bankers' viewpoint in public and private sector banks. Cronbach Alpha coefficient (0.851) has been computed to check the instrument's reliability, which shows that the instrument is a good measure for internal consistency.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results of the frequency distribution of bankers' viewpoint towards basic employability skills show that most of the bank officials strongly

agree/agree towards speaking skills (N=85, P=94.45), teamwork skills (N=82, P=91), strategic vision skills (N=78, P=86.67), presentation skills (N=75, P=83.33), creativity and innovation skills (N=61, P=67.78), leadership and emotional skills (N=47, P=52.22), decision-making skills (N=45, P=50), listening skills (N=38, P=42.22), perceptual skills (N=48, P=40), delegation skills (N=36, P=40), integrity skills (N=29, P=32.22), analytical skills (N=27, P=30) and negotiation skills (N=22, P=24.45).

Table-1 indicates the descriptive and inferential statistics of bankers' viewpoints regarding basic employability skills. The officials of public sector banks focused highly on decision-making skills ( $\bar{x}=3.58$ ,  $\sigma=1.011$ ), followed by delegation skills ( $\bar{x}=3.49$ ,  $\sigma=0.991$ ) and integrity skills ( $\bar{x}=3.36$ ,  $\sigma=0.933$ ). On the other hand, the officials of private sector banks emphasized analytical skills ( $\bar{x}=3.31$ ,  $\sigma=0.633$ ), delegation skills ( $\bar{x}=3.18$ ,  $\sigma=0.535$ ) and perceptual skills ( $\bar{x}=3.00$ ,  $\sigma=0.739$ ). Statistically, the results of the t-test show that there is a significant difference in the viewpoint of officials of public and private sector banks regarding speaking skills ( $p=0.000$ ), creativity and innovation skills ( $p=0.000$ ), decision-making skills ( $p=0.000$ ), and integrity skills ( $p=0.008$ ) at 5 percent level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis ( $H_{01}$ ) is rejected.

Statements	N	Public Sector Banks		Private Sector Banks		t-test	
		$\bar{x}$	$\sigma$	$\bar{x}$	$\sigma$	t	Sig
Speaking skills	45	2.04	0.475	1.29	0.458	7.682	0.000*
Listening skills	45	2.73	0.780	2.49	0.626	1.639	0.105
Presentation skills	45	1.96	0.601	1.76	0.609	1.568	0.121
Creativity and innovation skills	45	1.93	0.618	2.51	0.589	4.542	0.000*
Analytical skills	45	3.04	0.878	3.31	0.633	1.653	0.102
Strategic vision skills	45	1.87	0.588	2.02	0.657	1.184	0.240
Decision-making skills	45	3.58	1.011	1.89	0.573	9.749	0.000*
Leadership and inspirational skills	45	2.58	0.753	2.36	0.529	1.619	0.109
Negotiation skills	45	3.13	0.815	2.93	0.688	1.259	0.212
Delegation skills	45	3.49	0.991	3.18	0.535	1.853	0.067
Teamwork skills	45	1.51	0.549	1.22	0.420	2.804	0.106
Integrity skills	45	3.36	0.933	2.89	0.682	2.709	0.008*
Perceptual skills	45	2.69	0.793	3.00	0.739	1.926	0.057

**Table 1: Descriptive and Inferential Statistics of Public Sector Banks**

**Note:** N=No. of Respondents, \*=Significant at 5 percent level

**Source:** Primary survey (Author's Calculation)

The results of a frequency distribution of bankers' viewpoints regarding modern employability skills show that most of the bank officials agree/strongly agree towards ICT skills (N=82, P=91.11), social intelligence skills (N=81, P=90), cross-cultural competency skills (N=79, P=87.77), sense-making skills (N=78, P=86.67), virtual collaboration skills (N=72, P=80), new-media literacy skills (N=69, P=76.66), novelty skills (N=51, P=56.67), design mindset skills (N=22, P=24.44), cognitive load management skills (N=20, P=22.22) and trans-disciplinarity skills (N=16, P=17.78).

Table-2 shows the viewpoint of bank officials towards modern employability skills. The officials of public sector banks gave the highest priority to trans-disciplinarity skills ( $\bar{x}=3.38$ ,  $\sigma=0.936$ ), cognitive load management skills ( $\bar{x}=2.69$ ,

$\sigma=0.723$ ), design mindset skills ( $\bar{x}=2.58$ ,  $\sigma=0.753$ ) and virtual collaboration skills ( $\bar{x}=2.16$ ,  $\sigma=0.562$ ). On the other side, the officials of private sector banks focused on cognitive load management skills ( $\bar{x}=3.53$ ,  $\sigma=0.757$ ), followed by design mindset skills ( $\bar{x}=3.33$ ,  $\sigma=0.707$ ), novelty skills ( $\bar{x}=3.27$ ,  $\sigma=0.61848$ ) and trans-disciplinarity skills ( $\bar{x}=3.18$ ,  $\sigma=0.535$ ). Statistically, the results of the t-test show that there is a significant difference in the viewpoint of officials of public and private sector banks towards social intelligence skills ( $p=0.011$ ), design mindset skills ( $p=0.000$ ), and cognitive load management skills ( $p=0.000$ ) at 5 percent level of significance, therefore the null hypothesis ( $H_{02}$ ) is rejected.

Statements	N	Public Sector Banks		Private Sector Banks		t-test	
		$\bar{x}$	$\sigma$	$\bar{x}$	$\sigma$	t	Sig
Sense-making skills	45	1.42	0.543	1.60	0.539	1.558	1.123
Social intelligence skills	45	1.60	0.580	1.31	0.468	2.600	0.011*
Novelty skills	45	1.47	0.505	3.27	0.618	13.455	0.157
Cross-cultural competency skills	45	1.67	0.564	1.22	0.420	4.238	0.146
ICT skills	45	1.11	0.318	1.29	0.458	2.138	0.135
New-media literacy skills	45	2.11	0.532	1.33	0.477	7.305	0.108
Transdisciplinarity skills	45	3.38	0.936	3.18	0.535	1.244	0.217
Design mindset skills	45	2.58	0.753	3.33	0.707	4.905	0.000*
Cognitive load management skills	45	2.69	0.723	3.53	0.757	6.126	0.000*
Virtual collaboration skills	45	2.16	0.562	1.71	0.458	4.110	0.172

Table 2: Descriptive and Inferential Statistics of Private Sector Banks

**Note:** N=No. of Respondents, \*=Significant at 5 percent level

**Source:** Primary survey (Author's Calculation)

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The employers of the banking sector recruit not only those graduates who have completed their degrees in management; but also prefer those candidates with technical backgrounds, especially from the engineering stream, due to the importance of ICT skills. The public sector banks' officials prioritize basic skills such as decision-making skills, delegation skills, and integrity skills, whereas the officials of private sector banks focus on analytical skills and perceptual skills. On the other side, under modern employability skills, attention is paid towards trans-disciplinarity skills, cognitive load management skills, design mindset skills, and virtual collaboration skills by the public sector bank officials. In contrast, private sector banks' officials give preference to cognitive load management skills, design mindset skills, novelty skills, and trans-disciplinarity skills. For better performance of the management graduates in the banking sector, it is suggested that educational institutions should consider the importance of the modern employability skills also as there is a great demand for different kinds of modern

employability skills. To provide such kinds of skills, educational institutions should provide practical knowledge to the students by exploring their actual work and arranging their meetings with experienced professionals. Such activities will be beneficial for the students in understanding the real work environment for their job career.

### IMPLICATIONS OF STUDY

The present study will offer students ideas and faculty members to find the loopholes in the system. By analyzing bankers' views regarding employability skills, students can be aware of banking sector requirements and prepare themselves to get different jobs in this sector. On the other side, faculty members in educational institutions can analyze where they are lacking and make hard efforts to inculcate those skills which the banking sector demands from management graduates. This study will also provide a roadmap to the researchers to conduct the study in this area.

### LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study presents bank officials' viewpoint regarding basic and modern employability skills with a sample size of 90 respondents only, which can be increased to a representative level to get



more authentic results. The study was restricted to selected banks of the public and private sectors located in Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, and Delhi, which can be further extended to other states and other economy sectors.

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