



COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING

Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia

## GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY SCENARIO IN INDIA

By

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## GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY IN OPEN UNIVERSITIES: A STAKEHOLDERS' CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOP

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*Dr. B. Shadrach delivering his speech at the inaugural session of the workshop.*

### **What is graduate employability?**

The ability of a learner (in this case, a graduate) to secure employment or succeed in entrepreneurship. To do so, one needs the following:

- **Right skills and competencies:** Not only technical knowledge in the area of one's own domain expertise, but also the ability to demonstrate competences and skills to perform tasks. This would include both soft and hard skills.
- **Work experience:** With provisions being made available for graduate internships, apprenticeships and summer work placements, the learner or the graduate should be able to demonstrate competences for applying his/her mind in applications and practice.
- **Educational background and qualifications** necessary to perform jobs, from an institution of repute that is known for its high quality curriculum.
- **Attitude and attributes** that exhibit ones' traits, such as positive attitude, adaptability, resilience, self-actualisation and ownership.
- **Building professional relationship** at work and outside of work, even in personal setting to ensure that the person possesses 360-degree view of the job market and the industrial demands.

### Key Points on Graduate Employability in India:

1. **Skills Gap:** Many graduates lack essential employability skills such as critical thinking, teamwork, and decision-making. This gap is particularly evident among management graduates, where only about 10% are considered employable by industry standards.
2. **Industry-Academia Mismatch:** There is often a disconnect between what is taught in academic institutions and the skills required by employers. This mismatch leads to graduates being underprepared for the job market.
3. **Economic Impact:** The employability of graduates is crucial for India's economic growth. As the number of graduates increases, their ability to secure employment becomes a significant factor in the country's economic development.
4. **Policy and Curriculum:** There is a need for policies that align educational curricula with industry needs. This includes incorporating practical skills training and internships into academic programs to better prepare students for the workforce.
5. **Employers' Perceptions:** Employers often find that graduates lack practical skills and real-world experience. This perception affects hiring decisions and highlights the need for more industry-relevant education.

Improving graduate employability in India requires a collaborative effort between educational institutions, policymakers, and industries to ensure that graduates are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in the job market.

### Graduate Employability in State OUs in India

Graduate employability in State Open Universities (SOUs) in India presents unique challenges and opportunities.

Here are some key points:

### **Challenges:**

- Quality of education
- Little or no exposure to the job market
- OU graduates seldom go for internships/apprenticeships
- No industrial connections
- Employers' perceptions
- Lack of agility

### **Opportunities:**

- NEP 2020
- Flexible learning
- NSQF
- 50% credits can be accumulated through skill courses
- NCVET recognition
- Linkages with government schemes
- Curriculum update
- Industry-led curriculum
- Embedding soft and employable skills in the offerings