OUTCOME-BASED EDUCATION AS PREDICTOR OF EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS AMONG UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

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Abstract

Background: The outcome-based education values have been adopted from the American accreditation board of engineering technology, which focuses on the dimension of learning outcomes (LOS) for each course and those outcomes will be the basis for continuous quality improvement.

Objective: The purpose of this study was to determine outcome-based education as a predictor of employability skills among university postgraduate students.

Design/methodology: The investigator adopted a descriptive survey method using a small sample of 173 university post-graduate students from Periyar university.

Sampling technique: The stratified random sampling technique was used for the present investigation.

Scale: In the present study Outcome Based Education Scale (OBE) has been constructed and standardized for higher education levels among university post-graduate students. This scale consists of 30 statements. The second tool used to find the employability skills scale is standardized by Wardand Riddle (2003) which contained 25 statements and four dimensions communication skills, attitude skills, team skills, and self-confidence skills.

Results: The results of the study showed that there is a significant positive relationship exists between outcome-based education and employability skills of university postgraduate students. The results also indicated that outcome-based education is a significant predictor of employability skills of university postgraduate students with a magnitude of 73% of the variance.

Keywords: outcome-based education, employability skills, university postgraduate students

Introduction

Outcome-Based Education (OBE) is now considered the compulsory approach for most Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) in Malaysia to adapt to the standards of universities and colleges all over the world. The approach became required in Malaysia in 2007. However, issues related to outcome-based education implementation has been seriously argued among institution of higher learning during the early stage of its introduction. The problems faced by the institution of higher learning in outcome-based education application, its impact on students and lecturers, and its effect on the Malaysian education system are some of the issues raised along outcome-based education implementation (Tan, Oriah, &Senian, 2012). It is crucial to establish a high quality of education as it is an important factor to produce competent professionals, therefore building a strong nation and getting along with global competition (Borsoto et. al., 2014).

Outcome-based education implementation is now compulsory in attaining accreditation from Engineering Technology Accreditation Council (ETAC), the body under Engineering Accreditation Council (EAC), Malaysia (EAC Manual, 2007). The outcome-based education principles have been adopted from the American Accreditation Board of Engineering Technology

(ABET), which it focuses on the dimension of learning outcomes (LOS) for each course and those outcomes will be the basis for continuous quality improvement (Jaafar et al., 2008).

Benefits of Outcome-based Education

Clarity

The focus on outcomes creates a clear expectation of what needs to be accomplished by the end of the course. Students will understand what is expected of them and teachers will know what they need to teach during the course. Clarity is important over years of schooling and when team teaching is elaborate. Each team member and year in school will have a clear understanding of what needs to be talented in each class, or at each level, allowing students to develop.

Flexibility

With a clear sense of what needs to be skilled, instructors will be able to construct their lessons around the student's needs. Outcome-based education does not specify a specific method of instruction, leaving instructors free to teach their students using any technique. Instructors will also be able to recognize diversity among students by using several teaching and assessment techniques during their classes. Outcome-based education is intended to be a model. student-centered learning

Comparison

Outcome-based education can be compared across different institutions. On an individual level, institutions can look at what outcomes a student has achieved to decide what level the student would be at within a new institution. On an institutional level, institutions can compare themselves, by checking to see what outcomes they have in common, and find places where they may need development, based on the achievement of outcomes at other institutions. The ability to compare easily across institutions allows students to move between institutions with relative ease. The institutions can compare outcomes to determine what credits to award the student. The clearly expressed outcomes should allow institutions to assess the student's achievements rapidly, leading to increased movement of students.

Involvement

Student involvement in the classroom is a key part of outcome-based education. Students are expected to do their own learning so that they gain a full thoughtful of the material. Increased student involvement allows students to feel responsible for their own learning, and they should learn more through this individual learning. Other characteristics of involvement are parental and community, through developing curriculum, or making changes to it. Outcome-based education outcomes are meant to be decided upon within a school system.

Employability skills

Employability skills include the soft skills that allow you to work well with others, apply knowledge to solve problems and fit into any work situation. They also include the professional skills that enable you to be successful in the workplace. These are also considered transferable skills because you can apply them to a job in any industry. Employability skills are the core skills and traits needed in nearly every job (Alison Doyle, 2020). These are the general skills that make someone desirable to an organization. Hiring managers almost always look for employees with these skills.

Types of Employability Skills

Communication

All employers look for job candidates with strong communication skills. These refer to one's ability to convey information clearly to others. Employers want employees with strong written, verbal, and nonverbal communication skills (Alison Doyle, 2020). Part of being a strong communicator also includes being a good listener; employees need to be able to understand the questions and concerns of their clients and listen to their employer's directions.

[a] Written Communication

[b] Oral Communication

[c] Interpersonal Skills

[d] Active Listening

[e] Attentive

Teamwork

Teamwork is important in almost any work setting. If an employee works on a number of group projects, they need to be able to get along well with others and carry their share of the workload. Even if an employee does not do a lot of team projects, they still need to be able to work well with colleagues and managers (Alison doyle, 2020).

[a] Collaboration,

[b] Managing Expectations

[c] Conflict Management

[d] Reliability

[e] Professional

Critical Thinking

According to Alison doyle (2020) stated that critical thinking refers to your ability to understand, analyze, and interpret information and draw conclusions. In any job, an employee will have to assess situations and solve problems. Employees need to think logically and make sensible judgments.

[a] Analytical Skills

[b] Problem Solving

[c] Creativity

[d] Inductive Reasoning

[e] Deductive Reasoning

Ethics

Ethics is a broad category that refers to an employee's principles. Companies want employees who understand and follow company rules, are honest and trustworthy, and act professionally and responsibly (Alison doyle, 2020).

[a] Compliance

[b] Integrity

[c] Empathy

[d] Discernment

Objectives

- To find out the significant relationship between outcome-based education and employability skills of university post graduate students

- To examine the influence of outcome-based education and employability skills of university post graduate students

Hypotheses

- There is no significant relationship between outcome-based education and employability skills of university post graduate students

- Outcome-based education as significant predictor of employability skills of university post graduate students

Methodology

Research Design

This study used a descriptive method of research where the quantitative data were gathered using a survey questionnaire. The survey conducted to determine the level of students' general awareness on outcome-based education and their awareness towards commitment for outcome-based education implementation and learning and teaching activities.

Sample

The survey was carried out with one hundred seventy-three (173) university post graduate students from Periyar university. The questionnaires administered personally by researcher.

Instruments

Survey approach was employed. Outcome Based Education in university post graduate students was adopted from a published study by Rhaffor, (2017). The tool was the university post graduate students containing 30 statements Each accompanied by a 5-point Likert scale: (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). Maximum value 150, Minimum value 30. The employability skills scale is a standardized by Wardand Riddle (2003) which contained 25 statements and four dimensions communication skills, attitude skills, team skills and self-confidence skills. Each accompanied by a 5-point Likert scale: (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). Maximum value 125, Minimum value 25.

Statistical Techniques

- In order to there is no significant relationship between outcome-based education and employability skills of university post graduate students - correlation was used.

- To examine the prediction of outcome-based education as significant predictor of employability skills of university post graduate students- multiple regression was used.

Table 1: Relationship of outcome-based education and employability skills of university post graduate students

Variables	Pearson Correlation 'r' Value	P value	Level of Significance
Outcome-based education and employability skills	0.821	0.000**	Significant at 1% level

- There is a significant positive relationship exists between the outcome-based education and employability skills of university post graduate students

Table 2 - (a) Summary of Regression Analysis of outcome-based education and employability skills of university post graduate students

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.823	0.758	0.735	11.918

The above Table 2 (a) shows the multiple correlation of outcome-based education and employability skills of university post graduate students. The multiple correlation of outcome-based education on employability skills is 0.823 with square is 0.758. Multiple regression suggests that outcome-based education on employability skills can explain 73% variance of the predict the variable.

Table 2 - (b) Summary of ANOVA for Regression

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Significant
Regression	295164.388	6	36185.424		
Residual	16579.034	948	124.230	26.214	0.000**
Total	423694.436	954			

Table showing that the significance value of 0.000 indicates that the combination of these outcome-based educationsignificantly predicts the employability skills of university post graduate students.

Table - 2- (c) Summary of Coefficient of Regression

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-value	p - level
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	47.039	3.423		13.007	<0.05
CS	1.156	0.244	0.213	4.493	<0.05
AS	0.078	0.278	0.067	0.628	<0.05
TS	0.426	0.017	0.382	0.823	<0.05
SCS	0.248	0.032	0.459	15.711	<0.05

From the above table shows that the research variable outcome-based education of four dimensions had a significant predicting the employability skills at 0.05% level of significance. It is inferred that among the predictor's outcome-based education and four dimensions had the highest significant standardized beta co- efficient, which indicates that it was the most important factor contributing to the employability skills of university post graduate students. In the raw score form, the equation is,

POBE=47.039+1.156 CS+0.078 AS+0.426 TS+0.248 SCS

Conclusion

- The outcome-based education is dependent on the employability skills of university post graduate students.

- Outcome-based education and is significant predictor the employability skills of university post graduate students with the magnitude of 73% of variance.

Discussion and Conclusion

The present study found that the outcome-based education as predictor of employability skills among university post graduate students. The results of the study showed that there is a significant positive relationship exists between outcome-based education and employability skills of university post graduate students. The results also indicated that the outcome-based education and is significant predictor of employability skills of university post graduate students with the magnitude of 73% of variance.

Outcome-Based Learning can change students learning experience, and universities need to adapt it to improve their knowledge and skills. It doesn't encourage students to get better grades than other students and become topper. Instead, it enables them to gain experience and establish a better thought process that would help them earn bread and butter and be productive in the long run. While outcome-based education approaches demonstrate encouraging effects towards improving student skills at university, a more difficult experimental research design with larger sample sizes is required, assessing other outcome measures such as other areas of expertise and student satisfaction. Human resources, in terms of quality and quantity, are India's biggest assets.

Employability skills are very vital for the success in the labor market in all sectors. Along with good technical understanding and subject knowledge, employers often outline a set of skills that they want from an employee. These skills are what they believe will equip the employee to carry out their role to the best of their ability. However, to capitalize fully on this opportunity and not face the possibility of a skills-shortage, it is essential to gear up the education system through innovative initiatives. This study provided areas where employers supposed the areas that needed to be improved. The feedbacks can improve and increase the standard of education to create a better curriculum to fulfill the needs of students, employers, culture and the whole nation. At the same time, faculty timely inspired and stimulated students, so that students maintain their enthusiasm and initiative in learning, build up learning confidence, and improved communication skills.

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