

The Role of Career Planning in Shaping Student Career Aspirations

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ABSTRACT

Career planning plays major part in building their career, it is a roadmap for the students to understand their aptitudes, skill, values and understanding the salary, skill required for real time environment in the labour market also play another important factor while selecting their job for their career. This is a descriptive in nature and questionnaire is used as a tool for data collection. The result found that, among the respondents 89.2% of them were opined to go for immediate job through campus placement and among them 50% of the students stated that they want to go for any job. 44.6% of the students are expecting salary more than Rs.25,000 per month.

Keywords: Career preparation, salary expectations, skill assessment, academic and domain skill, skill requirement.

INTRODUCTION

According to Frank Parsons, occupational decision making is a process that involves understanding one's own traits, such as aptitudes, interests, and personal abilities, as well as knowledge of jobs and the labour market. This relationship between individual traits and the labour market allows individuals to make rational and objective decisions about their career planning. The main objective of your study is to understand the requirements of students as they move from campus to corporate, including their career planning, salary expectations, awareness of industrial requirements, and pre- and post-test results of aptitude and English communication after training. This is an important study, as it can help to identify the areas where students need the most support as they transition from academia to the workplace. The findings of the study can be used to develop programs and services to help students succeed in their careers.

REVIEW ARTICLE

The recruiters should educate the students on the current industry trends and justify the salary levels to the students. Corporate should connect with the students (*Eddy S.W.Ng, Ronald J.Burke, 2006*), while on campus regularly to understand their perceptions. Students need to do their research on various parameters before choosing a company in a campus recruitment process. The general complaint was that the entry level salaries offered by the software services companies were on the lower side. Based on the feedback from the HR managers, it is suggested that the students should lower the expectations on the entry level salaries as the present salary offered by the software services companies is based on the industry standards taking into consideration the demand and supply of the entry level graduates. (*Dr. V.Samuel Rajkumar 2015 et.al*). The data analysis of this study has revealed that most of the participants in this research did not clearly know their own desired post-course employment goals until graduation and were then positively surprised that their first careers were consistent with their choices. (*Kinash, S., Crane, L., Capper, J., Young, M., & Stark, A. (2017)*). Employers perceived a lack of appropriate skills as the biggest barrier to employing graduates. With regard to the importance of skills, students considered only three skills to be more important than employers did; experience in the field, leadership and authority, and field knowledge. Compared to students, employers regarded engagement and willingness to take on extra work as the most important. In terms of satisfaction, students were more satisfied than employers in nineteen skills from a total of thirty-two. To reduce the satisfaction gap between graduates and employers, higher education institutions can promote students' self-awareness through career psychological services centres.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is a descriptive and exploratory in nature and includes questionnaire as tools for data collection. The research

was carried out in students of undergraduate and postgraduate students of Coimbatore districts in Tamil Nadu. Random sample were selected for the data collection. A structured questionnaire was administered among the sample respondent of 74 students to know their nature of career planning, salary expectations and skill assessment based on their academic and non-academic parameters. The secondary data were collected from the various journals, articles, newspapers, books. Percentage analysis was adopted for the framed objective for analysis and interpretations. Interpretations were done through collected and tabulated data.

Research objective

The research article has provided focuses on the following objectives:

- To access the demographic profile among the students of entry level job seekers
- To assess career planning among the students of undergraduate and postgraduate students
- To find the salary expectations among undergraduate and postgraduate students
- To assess the students English Competency and Aptitude before and after training
- To access their aptitude and English communication skill based on their pre and post- test academic parameters

These objectives are all important for understanding the career planning and aspirations of undergraduate students.

Demographic Profile of the students

64.1% of the participants were male and 35.1% were female. This means that the study had a slightly higher proportion of male participants than female participants.

Graduation Jitters: A Tale of Ambition and Options

The air crackled with anticipation as graduation loomed. A whopping 89.2% expressed interest in securing an immediate job after tossing their caps. This overwhelming desire wasn't just about financial security. Sure, the prospect of a steady paycheck played a role, but the story went deeper. However, the path forward wasn't always clear-cut. Among the eager job seekers, a significant portion (around 50%) displayed a flexible approach. Open to "any job," they were willing to explore diverse opportunities. This openness could indicate a touch of uncertainty regarding their ideal career path. Perhaps they hadn't yet pinpointed their dream job, but they were eager to gain experience and a foothold in the professional world.

The national economic landscape added fuel to the fire. The National Bureau of Economic Research reported an incredibly low unemployment rate for college graduates - a mere 2.2%, near a historic low. This abundance of job openings undoubtedly instilled confidence in the graduating class. With a plethora of opportunities seemingly within reach, students envisioned a smooth transition from academia to the workforce. But the narrative wasn't entirely uniform. A smaller, yet noteworthy, segment (around 6.8%) charted a different course. For these individuals, the immediate allure of a job wasn't the only option. Roughly 4.1% opted for the path of higher education, while another 2.7% set their sights on government exams or entrepreneurial ventures. These students, perhaps with specific career goals in mind, were willing to invest additional time and effort to pursue their desired paths. Graduation marked a turning point, a springboard into diverse futures. While most students craved the immediate launch into a career, others explored alternative routes. The story unfolds as these graduates navigate the exciting, yet challenging, landscape of the professional world, each on their own unique path.

Fresh Grad Frenzy: Confidence and Reality Clash

A wave of optimism washed over the graduating class. A whopping 44.6% of students set their sights on salaries exceeding Rs.25,000 per month. This confidence stemmed from their belief in their skills and a grasp of the current job market. However, a dose of reality lurked around the corner. Reliable sources like Ambition Box and Glassdoor revealed the average fresher salary in India to be around Rs.18,000. This stark difference hinted at potential disappointment for some graduates. The game of salary wasn't a simple one. Several factors played a role, including qualifications, skillsets, and experience. Industries also mattered. In-demand fields like software engineering or data science promised higher salaries compared to less sought-after sectors. Internships and work experience became valuable weapons in the salary negotiation, potentially boosting initial pay compared to those without such experience. But salary wasn't the only battlefield. Graduates, with their newfound awareness, began to consider the holistic job experience. Work-life balance, opportunities for professional development, and the company culture itself emerged as equally important factors. The hunt for a good job transformed into a quest for a fulfilling career path, with salary playing a crucial, yet not exclusive, role.

Learning Takes Flight: A Story of Progress

An educational program aimed at improving student performance yielded promising results. The story begins with pre-test scores, where the average English score indicated a need for improvement (mean value of 21.31). However, after the program, the average score on the English post-test soared to 72.0, reflecting a significant shift into the "good" category. This trend continued in the aptitude test. The pre-test revealed an average score of 31.13, again suggesting

room for improvement. Following the program, the average aptitude test score jumped to a commendable 57.61, signifying a positive move into the "good" range. The improvement across both English and aptitude tests paints a clear picture: the program facilitated significant progress for the participating students. Their pre-test scores highlighted the need for intervention, and the post-test results showcased a remarkable leap towards mastery. This positive outcome suggests the program's effectiveness in propelling students towards academic success.

A Disconnect in the Job Hunt

Overconfidence might be hindering graduates in the job market. Despite 87.83% of students feeling their technical knowledge exceeded 65%, more than half (51.4%) reported struggling with technical interview rounds. This disconnect suggests a gap between perceived knowledge and its practical application. Students could be overestimating their abilities, potentially due to limited experience applying their knowledge in real-world scenarios or an overreliance on rote memorization. The challenge deepens when considering that 47% of students lacked awareness about crucial job market factors. These factors included soft skills, domain-specific skills, identifying reputable companies, understanding job roles within those companies, recognizing sought-after skillsets, and grasping salary expectations. Nearly half the student population might be entering the job search unprepared. This lack of awareness creates hurdles. Students might have difficulty pinpointing companies that align with their skills and interests. Tailoring resumes and cover letters to specific positions could prove challenging. Moreover, negotiating competitive salaries might be out of reach. These roadblocks highlight the need for universities to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical job market preparation.

Equipping students with the right awareness and practical skills can empower them to navigate the job search with greater confidence and success.

Facing the Job Market:

Many graduates were feeling unprepared for the job hunt. A staggering 75.67% reported never having a mock interview, a crucial tool for practicing interview skills and building confidence. The lack of guidance extended to resumes, with only 24.32% of students receiving help crafting effective CVs. This suggested a significant gap in preparing for the all-important first impression. There were some glimmers of hope. Over 63.5% received training for aptitude tests, often used as initial screening tools by companies. Additionally, 71.6% reported some form of general career guidance. However, just 7.5% benefited from personalized advice from a career counselor. This highlighted a need for universities to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical job market preparation. By offering more comprehensive and personalized career counseling services, universities could empower graduates to confidently navigate the job search process.

Recommendations for students

- Start career planning early. Don't wait until your senior year to start thinking about what you want to do after graduation. Take some time to reflect on your interests, skills, and values. What kind of work do you find meaningful? What are you good at? What are your career goals? Once you have a better understanding of yourself, you can start to explore different career options and develop a plan to achieve your goals.
- Gain work experience. Internships and part-time jobs are a great way to gain work experience and learn about different career paths. They can also help you develop your skills and build your network.
- Network with professionals in your field of interest. Attend industry events, connect with people on LinkedIn, and reach out to people you admire for informational interviews. Networking is a great way to learn about different job opportunities and get your foot in the door.
- Develop your soft skills. Soft skills, such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving, are essential for success in any job. Look for opportunities to develop your soft skills through extracurricular activities, volunteer work, and on-the-job training.
- Prepare for job interviews. Practice answering common interview questions and be prepared to talk about your skills and experience. It's also a good idea to research the companies you're interviewing with so you can ask informed questions.

Recommendations for universities and colleges

- Provide students with more support and guidance in career planning. This can be done through career planning workshops, seminars, and one-on-one counseling.
- Offer mock interview training to all students. Mock interviews are a great way for students to practice answering common interview questions and to receive feedback on their performance.
- Provide students with guidance on resume/CV writing. Resumes/CVs are the first impression that students make on potential employers, so it is important that they are well-written and tailored to the specific jobs that students are applying for.
- Hire career counselors to provide students with personalized guidance. Career counselors can help students to

identify their strengths and weaknesses, explore different career options, and develop a plan to achieve their career goals.

- Partner with businesses and industries to provide students with opportunities to learn about different career paths. This can be done through internships, job shadowing programs, and industry talks.
- Help students to develop their soft skills, such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. Soft skills are essential for success in any job, but they are especially important in technical fields.
- Expose students to the technical interview process. Students should be aware of the different types of questions that are typically asked in technical interviews. They should also have practice answering these questions.
- Encourage students to network with professionals in their field of interest. Networking is a great way to learn about different job opportunities and to get your foot in the door.

By following these recommendations, we can help students to be more successful in their job search and to build rewarding careers.

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Skill Assessment	Yes	No
Do you know the soft skills to be upgraded for your job?	63	11
Do you know the domain skill to be upgraded for domain-oriented job?	58	16
Do you know any reputed companies from your job sector?	47	27
Do you have knowledge about the job role of your listed companies?	49	25
Do you know the skill set expected by the companies?	59	15
Do you know the salary package of your listed companies?	44	30

Placement training	Yes	No
Whether your Institutions have given you mock interview?	18	56
Have you got any Aptitude training?	27	47
Have you got any guidance for resume/CV preparation?	56	18
Have you got any guidance for your future career path?	53	21

Academic and Skill Assessment	50-65 % (average)	66-75% (Moderate)	above 76% (Distinction)	above 85 % (outstanding)
What is your academic Percentage?	6	24	24	20
How would you rate your domain technical knowledge?	12	24	28	13
How would you rate your English oral communication skill?	13	19	27	15
How would you rate your English written communication skill?	10	11	25	28

Content	min	mean	median	max	sd	n
EnglishAccuracy pretest	21.1000	21.3031	21.1590	21.9900	0.3014	119
English posttest	16.0000	68.2017	72.0000	100.0000	23.1361	119

Test	min	mean	median	max	sd	n
Aptitude pretest	0	31.1303	29.1650	100	15.0202	119
Aptitude posttest	10	57.6190	70.0000	90	23.0987	119