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## Comparative Study of Skills of Employability among Male & Female Postgraduate Students and Initiatives of Skill Development Programs for Females

Dr.Shilpa.V<sup>1</sup>,Dr.S.S.Patil<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty Member, Department of PG Studies and Research in Education, Kuvempu University, Jnana Sahyadri, Shankaraghatta, Shivamogga, Karnataka. India.

E Mail:shilpav03@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>Professor of Education, Department of PG Studies and Research in Education, Kuvempu University, Jnana Sahyadri, Shankaraghatta, Shivamogga, Karnataka. India.

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### ABSTRACT

Graduate employability is a key issue for higher education. Accessing higher education in today's rapidly changing labour market is not only about earning a degree, but it's also about preparing oneself with the abilities, skills, and know-how required to succeed in the workplace. Many research findings show that male and female students have different ways of capturing quantities of knowledge, skills, and values given to them for learning purposes. The research findings show the potential differences in graduate male and female students' inclination towards developing employability skills. (Theresia Dominic, Katherine Fulgence -2019). Hence, graduates acquiring employability skills, especially female graduates, should improve their employability skills in the twenty-first century, considering the changing nature of the present workforce. The skill development programs aim to assist young people and recognise their potential by providing the opportunities and encouragement they need to succeed in the workforce. Therefore this study identifies employability skills in higher education and compares employability skills among male and female postgraduate students of Kuvempu University. This study also aims to explore the initiations of the Government of India & Karnataka in inducing employability skills through skill development programs and policies as a powerful tool to promote female empowerment.

Keywords: Skills of Employability, Female Postgraduate Students, Male Postgraduate Students Higher Education, Skill Development Programmes..

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### Introduction:

Higher education plays an important role in a graduate's life, as education can help in enlightening the living conditions of an individual. A person who is educated has better career opportunities, and

education ensures success in future life. According to the Economic Survey 2023-24, 65% of India's fast-growing population is under the age of 35. It also stated that about 51.25% of the country's youth is deemed employable. This is to say that about one in two graduates are not yet readily employable straight out of college. However, it must be noted that the percentage has improved from around 34% to 51.3% in the last decade. There are some challenges, including a low coverage of apprenticeship programs, insufficient skill curriculum, declining women labour force participation, unorganised sector employment with low productivity but no premium for skilling, non-inclusion of entrepreneurship in the formal education system, lack of mentorship, and assured wage premium for skilled people. Around the world, finding a job is much tougher for women than it is for men. When women are employed, they tend to work in low-quality jobs in vulnerable conditions, and there is little improvement forecast soon. The current global labour force participation rate for women is just under 47%. For men, it's 72%. That's a difference of 25 percentage points, with some regions facing a gap of more than 50 percent. (ILO, InfoStories)

**Concept of Employability:** Hillage and Pollard (1998) viewed employability is about having the capacity to gain initial employment, maintain employment and obtain new employment. Employability and capabilities that enable individuals to get employment and be successful in their professional careers.

**Concept of Employability Skills:**

Employability skills are necessary to obtain, maintain and succeed in a career.

Education and experience can be important when applying for a job, but success in your career can only be achieved if you demonstrate a set of skills called "Employability Skills".

Employability skills comprise of the following skills. Skills sought by graduate employers include the adopted dimensions are Communication Skills, Team work Skills, Problem solving Skills, Planning and Organisational Skills, Self-Management Skills, Initiative and Entrepreneurship Skills, Learning Skills, and Technology Skills.

**Need and importance of the Study:**

According to Feminist closure theories Witz; in Aluko, Yetunde,( 2014) gender inequality from a different perspective, identifying occupational closure strategies, as the mechanisms through which "male power stakes claims to resources and opportunities" which result in employment opportunities being denied to women. The research study revealed that both male and female postgraduate students are supposed to possessed employability skills as they prepare for the world of work. Johansen (2013) showed that, although women were provided with courses to equip them with employability skills, they were under-represented in the self-employment sector. Some studies have attributed the differences to gender discrimination, lack of mentors and female's lack of interest in male-dominated fields. The study would also advantage the university levels, as it furnishes the graduates with relevant data and information to improve the delivery of certain generic skills lacking pre-essential employability skills among female graduates. Theoretically, the study highlights gender differences in terms of employability skills in higher education. Therefore, the objective of this research study identifies and comparison employability skills of male and female postgraduate students of Kuvempu University. As regards various skill development schemes and programs initiated by the Government of India as well as the Government of Karnataka to empower and support females in enhancing employability skills.

**Objectives of the study:**

1. To study the comparison of Employability Skills among Male and Female Postgraduate Students of Kuvempu University.

2. To study the initiations of the Government of Karnataka as well as Government of India in inducing Employability Skills for females.

**Hypotheses:**

1. There is no significant difference in the skills of Employability between Male and Female Postgraduate students of Arts discipline.
2. There is no significant difference in the skills of Employability between Male and Female Postgraduate students of Science discipline.
3. There is no significant difference in the skills of Employability between Male and Female Postgraduate students of Commerce discipline.

**Methodology**

Descriptive survey research design was used for this study because it was found to be most appropriate to collect information directly Postgraduate Students.

**Sampling Design:** In the present study purposive sampling technique was used by the researcher. Researcher has taken 350 students as representative sample from 1,125 population of 4th semester postgraduate students of Kuvempu University. The sample comprised 218 females and 132 males from 14 departments have been considered pertaining to Arts Science and Commerce discipline of Kuvempu University for the research study.

**Tool used for the study:** The investigator has used the following tool for the collection of relevant data. Analysis of Employability Skills among Postgraduate Students. Developed by Shilpa.V and Patil.S.S.

**Data Analysis Techniques:** The researcher has used Percentage analysis and inferential statistics analyse for the data.

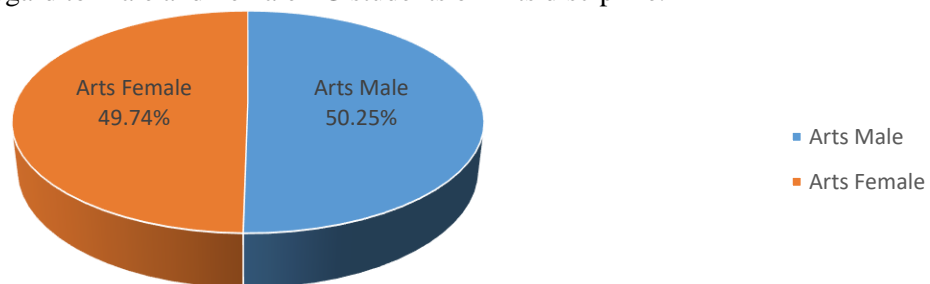
**Objective 1.** To study the comparison of Employability Skills among Male and Female Postgraduate Students of Kuvempu University.

**Hypothesis-1.1** There is no significant difference in the skills of Employability between Male and Female Postgraduate students of Arts discipline.

**Table-1.1:** Table showing the percentage score of the Skills of Employability with regard to Male and Female Post graduate students of Arts, discipline.

Group Statistics	Disciplines	Gender	N	Mean	Percentage %
Skills of Employability	Arts	Male	64	408.23	50.25
		Female	86	404.02	49.74
		Total	150	812.25	100

Fig-1.1: Shows the percentage score of the Skills of Employability with regard to Male and Female PG students of Arts discipline.



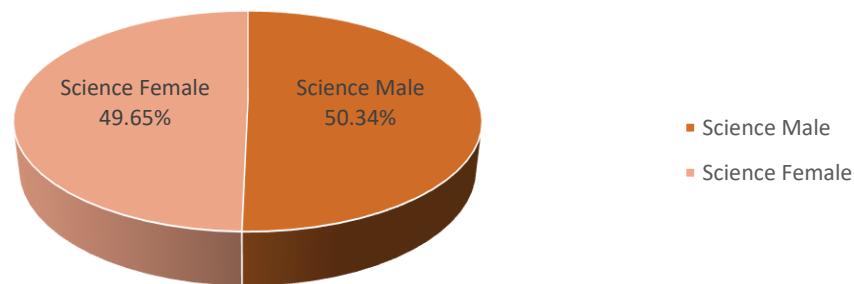
The percentage scores of Employability skills among Arts, male and female students were calculated. The table (1.1) revealed that of among the overall students the Arts male postgraduate students have 50.25 % employability skills, followed by Arts female postgraduate students 49.74 %. The investigator observed that there is more or less equal amount of employability skills among the male and female students of the Arts disciplines. However Arts male postgraduate students possessed comparatively higher than 50.25 % employability skills than the female students of Arts disciplines.

**Hypothesis-1.2:** There is no significant difference in the skills of Employability between Male and Female Postgraduate students of Science discipline.

**Table-1.2:** Table showing the percentage Skills of Employability with regard to Male and Female Post graduate students of science discipline.

Group Statistics	Disciplines	Gender	N	Mean	Percentage %
Skills of Employability	Science	Male	48	416.56	50.34
		Female	102	410.87	49.65
		Total	150	827.43	100

Fig-1.2: Shows the percentage score of the Skills of Employability with regard to Male and Female PG students of Science discipline



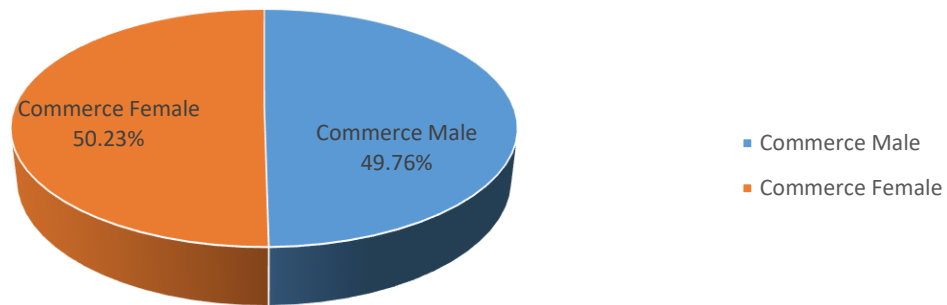
The percentage scores of Employability skills among science male and female students were calculated. The table (1.2) revealed that of among the overall students the Science male postgraduate students have 50.34 % employability skills, followed by science female postgraduate students 49.65 %. The investigator observed that there is more or less equal employability skills among the male and female students of the Science disciplines. However, Science male postgraduate students possessed comparatively higher than 50.34 % employability skills than the female students of Science disciplines.

**Hypothesis-1.3:** There is no significant difference in the skills of Employability between Male and Female Postgraduate students of Commerce discipline.

**Table-1.3:** Table showing the percentage score of Skills of Employability with regard to Male and Female Postgraduate students of Commerce discipline.

Group Statistics	Disciplines	Gender	N	Mean	Percentage %
Skills of Employability	Commerce	Male	20	404.95	49.76
		Female	30	408.76	50.23
		Total	50	813.71	100

Fig-1.3: Shows the percentage score of the Skills of Employability with regard to Male and Female PG students of Commerce discipline.



The percentage scores of Employability skills among Commerce male and female students were calculated. The table (1.3) revealed that among the overall students the Commerce female postgraduate students have 50.23 % employability skills, followed by Commerce male postgraduate students 49.76 %. The investigator observed that there is more or less equal amount of employability skills among the male and female students of the Commerce disciplines. However Commerce female postgraduate students possessed comparatively higher that 50.23 % employability skills than the male students of Commerce disciplines.

These findings compare skills of employability among male and female postgraduate students of arts, science, and commerce disciplines. Arts male postgraduate students possessed comparatively higher that 50.25 % employability skills than the female students of Arts disciplines. Science male postgraduate students possessed comparatively higher that 50.34 % employability skills than the female students of Science disciplines. But Commerce female postgraduate students possessed comparatively higher that 50.23 % employability skills than the male students of Commerce disciplines.

**Objecties-2:** To study the initiations of the Government of Karnataka as well as Government of India in inducing Employability Skills for females.

This research explore comprehensive analysis of existing skill development India in inducing Employability Skills for females programs. In the current situation, the policies and skill development authorities of the government of India as well as the government of Karnataka ensure that all the gender students have equal opportunities to develop employability skills for the workplace. The government following initiatives have been undertake to facilitate and supporting skill development among females.

**Major Skilling Program: (2012-2017):** The common norms applied to the skill development schemes of the Government of India were implemented through various Ministries/Departments. Major Skilling Program about 20 central ministries/ Departments/ NSDC are implementing over 70 plan schemes for skill development.

**Training to rural youths (2017):** The placement-linked Aajeevika scheme has been renamed the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana, which aims to train 10 lakh rural youths by 2017.

#### **Long Term Skill Development Training via Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs)**

Through a wide network of 15,042 ITIs, spanning the country, over 22.82 lakh candidates have been enrolled (in the trades of one year and two-year duration) and special focus is laid on enrolment of women. There is nearly 97% increase in admissions in 2018 as compared to 2014 to reach 173,105 women trainees from 87,799. There are 18 National Skill Training Institutes (for Women) are imparting skill training exclusively for women. Further, exclusive batches to provide basic/ theoretical training to women have been started under National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) in all Centrally Funded Institutes (CFIs). The NSTIs(W) organize NCVT approved skill training programmes under

Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS) and Craft Instructors' Training Scheme (CITS) in several areas such as Office Management, Electronics, Fashion Design & Technology, Computer Aided Embroidery & Designing etc. We are also seeing active participation from women in new age job roles aligned to Industry 4.0 like those in Artificial Intelligence, 3D printing, Data Analytics etc. and also across in skills like welding, automobile mechanics etc.

**Short Term Skill Development Training:** The flagship program of the Ministry, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojan strives to promote increased participation of women in the workforce through appropriate skilling and gender mainstreaming of skills. Close to 50% of the candidates enrolled and trained under PMKVY are women; out of the total 56 lakh candidates who have benefited from the scheme. The efforts are made to continually revise job roles taking into account market demand and are cognizant of industry requirements for female professionals. Programs under the Skill India Mission are designed to not only train women in relevant skills that are sought by employers, they are also sensitive to their needs by providing safe transport, flexible schedules and childcare support while women dominate sectors such as Apparel, Beauty & Wellness and Healthcare, there is significant presence in non-traditional roles such as those in Electronics and Hardware, with a large number of female enrolments (1.03 lakh) under the Field Technician - Computing and Peripherals job role in this sector.

**Women's participation in Skill Development:** Increase Women's involvement in Skill Development, Women can have viable incomes, and decent work and can contribute equally to the economic growth of the country. At least 25% horizontal reservation to Women may be provided in all skill schemes.

- a. Government has promoted the setting up of more training and apprenticeship institutions exclusively for Women.
- b. Promoted training in non-traditional fields for women through the establishment of specific training programmes that focus on life skill training and literacy training.
- c. Efforts has made to increase the pool of women Trainers by earmarking a certain percentage intake in training of trainer institutions for Women.
- d. Government has increased the participation of women by introducing a safe and gender-sensitive training environment, employment of Women trainers and complaint redressal mechanism.
- e. Private sector to also encourage a conducive environment for women skill training and for women workforce already working in the private sector. Government may promote setting up of more training and apprenticeship institutions exclusively for Women.

**National Policy for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, (2015):** To attain this vision, the policy has four thrust areas. It addresses key obstacles to skilling, including low aspirational value, lack of integration with formal education, lack of focus on outcomes, low quality of training infrastructure and trainers, etc. Further, the Policy pursues to align supply and demand for skills by bridging existing skill gaps, promoting industry engagement, operationalizing a quality assurance framework, leveraging technology and promoting greater opportunities for apprenticeship training. Equity is also a focus of the Policy, which targets skilling opportunities for socially/ geographically marginalised and disadvantaged groups and especially skill programmes for women are a specific focus of the Policy. In the entrepreneurship domain, the Policy seeks to educate and equip potential entrepreneurs, both within and outside the formal education system.

**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** Under the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) more than 4 lakh women candidates have been oriented in different skill areas, recognizing their existing skills through a formal certificate and giving them a means to earn better livelihood.

**Economic Empowerment of Women Entrepreneurs and Start-ups by Women (WEE): 2018** To improve the framework conditions for women-led enterprises in India and help them in setting up or scaling up their business, WEE project has been launched by the GOI (MSDE) in 2018 initially for a duration of 3 years (2018-21) in collaboration with GIZ, Govt. of Germany, which has been extended by one year to July, 2022. Region-wise data for number of women entrepreneurs as part of the incubation and acceleration support programmes in the WEE project upto 2021.

**Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) (2016):** To impart skill development training, the main focus of the scheme is women, Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes, minorities and other disadvantaged groups of society. To identify and promote local demand/traditional skills in the district through skilling/upskilling.

**Directorate General of Training (DGT) (2015):** DGT in MSDE is an apex organization for the development and coordination of the vocational training including Women's Vocational Training of the employable youth in the country and to provide skilled manpower to the economy and dated 16th & 21st April, 2015.

**Projects in Pradhan Mantri Mahila Kaushal Kendra (PMMKK):** Recently, more than 6000 training targets have been allocated to train women in 4 PMMKs. The crèche facility is also available at these canters so as to facilitate the new mothers to take up skill training. Trainings are being conducted for Self Employed Tailor, Beauty Therapist, Customer Care Executive, Hair Stylist, Yoga Trainer etc

**Future jobs and industry-oriented courses Aligned to NSQF,** there are nearly 450 job roles which are concentrated towards skill training of women. Skill India is encouraging participation of women in new-age job roles aligned to Industry 4.0 such as Artificial Intelligence, 3D printing, Data Analytics etc. and has witnessed increased participation of women in hard skills like welding, automobile mechanics etc. Our programs have sparked interest in young girls to train themselves in skills for job roles in unconventional and new-age areas like CNC mechanics, artificial intelligence, cyber security, that are in line with the future of jobs. For instance, in the past two years alone, as many as 892 females were trained as automation specialists while about 500 were trained as CNC Operators. Skill India has also partnered with global industry leaders like SAP, Adobe, IBM to create skill development programs aligned to the needs of Industry 4.0.

**Entrepreneurial Initiatives** MSDE is committed to facilitate growth of women entrepreneurs in facilitate growth of women entrepreneurs in the country. NIESBUD under the MSDE has designed Entrepreneurship Development Programs for the rural women with the objective to inculcate entrepreneurial values, attitude and motivation among the rural women to take up challenges to set up an enterprise/Group Enterprises.

**Skill Universities (2015):** As per the National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship 2015, National Skills Universities and Institutes will be promoted in States as centres of excellence for skill development and training of trainers. The MSDE has encouraged States to open Skill Universities with an objective to promote skills education in an integrated and holistic manner with general education so as to ensure pathways for progression and mobility across forms of education and skills.

UGC has released guideline for the Degree Apprenticeship program in July 2020. University while at the same time undertaking apprenticeship training as an integrated component of the curricula.

In India there are many unemployed females with degrees. Females should have the necessary skills and training development facilities for success in employment. The government of India and Karnataka have made several efforts to uplift women workers in the formal and informal sectors through numerous innovative skill development programmes. Hence, it prioritises youth skill development as one of its pillars, intending to create opportunity, space, and scope for developing the skills of the Indian young and enhancing their employability skills.

### **Conclusion:**

This study emphasizes how important it is for female graduates to improve their Employability skills in order to fulfill the demands of the job market in the twenty-first century. In the case of women, in particular, the goal of skill development is not only to prepare them for the workforce but also to enhance the performance of women employees by raising the quality of their work. The courses in skill development help find work and advance one's career. Policies such as increasing access to skill development by providing more seats for women, gender mainstreaming of training content and delivery, and usage of digital platforms for women's empowerment should be simplified. The higher education graduate courses in skill development help find work and advance one's career. The importance Communication Skills, Team work Skills, Problem solving Skills, Planning and Organisational Skills, Self-Management Skills, Initiative and Entrepreneurship Skills, Learning Skills, and Technology Skills in determining women's employability highlights the necessity of focused initiatives and deliberate interventions in higher education institutions. The National Education policy 2020 aims to create an educated, competent, and skilled nation capable of devising and implementing effective solutions to its own issues.

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