



## Employability Skills for Education Graduates: A Narrative Literature Review



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**Abstract:** This literature review explores the concept of employability skills and their importance for graduates, especially in the education sector. Employability skills are the abilities that make a person suitable and capable for a job and improve their career prospects. The review examines the various definitions, dimensions, and sources of employability skills and the factors that influence their development and acquisition. The review also analyses the relationship between employability skills and the job market and how graduates can enhance their employability by having the skills in demand. The review concludes that employability skills are essential for graduates to succeed in a competitive and changing environment and that there is a need for more research on how to measure and foster these skills among pre-service teachers.

**Key Words:** Employability Skills, Graduate Employability, Pre-service Teachers, Labour Market, Pakistan

### JEL Classification:

### Introduction

Employability has been essential for many years, especially in higher education sectors and institutes (Asonitou, 2015; Nisha & Rajasekaran, 2018). Now different universities conduct job fares for their graduates to ensure their employability when they finally graduate from the institute. Through this, they try to collaborate with the job market to know the demands and requirements of the market. However, with all these efforts, it is a matter of concern that after these rigorous efforts, many graduates remain unemployed, and others are

employed (Tomlinson, 2012). It is likely that why some educated graduated persons get employment according to their desire, taste, and interest while many remain unemployed or underemployed (Arif, Mir, & Gul, 2023).

Employability is a group of skills that a person possesses and those that are suitable or in demand in the market, which make them capable and suitable for a job and improve their carrier (Harvey, 2001). Employability skills are the aptitudes that make a graduate capable of doing any profession (Arif et al., 2023; Tan, Laswad, & Chua, 2022). These

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abilities are based on the attitudes and requirements of various stakeholders. Research has shown that having employability skills provide people with a perfect edge, yet those skills are uncommon (Bikse, Grinevica, Rivza, & Rivza, 2022). These abilities enable individuals to increase their production, and as a result, employers will seek them due to the widespread global shift. Study shows that personal skills carriers market demand and job satisfaction for graduates.

These employability skills are more in demand at institutions than in some specific disciplines or other professional talents. That is accurate since having these employability skills increases your chances of landing a job (Fulgence, 2015a, 2015b). In the workplace, aspirations and competition are growing (Bret Lee, 2010), and firms are constantly displacing more flexible and adaptable young workers (Bonutt, 2002) to keep up with the advancing global information economy and shifting consumer demands. Giving pre-service teachers the skills to teach and learn from their education is one method to meet this objective.

These qualities will make employment opportunities easier and more attractive and help build intellectual, private, and social resources (BretLee, 2010) that will enable pre-service teachers to thrive in a diverse and changing environment. Regularly acquiring knowledge, skills, and abilities increases graduates' likelihood of success in their chosen profession (Harvey & Morey, 2002). These abilities are crucial in both the corporate and educational sectors. They genuinely increase a person's graduate's chances of finding employment. Having employability skills is particularly important when evaluating a graduate's employability (Yorke & Knight, 2004a).

A particular set of employability skills increases graduates' chances of finding employment, particularly in Pakistan's education sector. Therefore, it is clear that there is a favourable relationship between the school where graduates study and the job market. Knowing which talents are essential,

considering market demand is crucial first, and having them will ultimately improve a graduate's employability. According to this definition, recent grads are people with bachelor's degrees who have not worked for more than three years.

### **Employability Skills and Employability of New Graduates**

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The quality of labour and graduates' employability abilities by disseminating educational knowledge through educational courses improved by the higher education system (Yorke & Knight, 2004b). According to (Yorke & Knight, 2004a), employability and related skills are prerequisites for comprehending employability. These abilities could be separated into hard and soft talents and described in various ways depending on the viewpoints of the researchers. As a result, it can be challenging to understand the definition of skills, and it is occasionally replaced with terms like critical skills, competencies, and attributes. Additionally, the definition of skills varies across employers, sectors, regions, and markets.

Now different universities conduct job fares for their graduates to ensure their employability when they finally graduate from the institute. Similarly, through this way, they try to collaborate with the job market to know the demands and requirements of the market. However, with all these efforts, it is a matter of concern that after these rigorous efforts why many of the graduates remain unemployed, and others are employed ideally. It is likely that why some educated graduated persons get employment according to their desire, taste, and interest while many remain unemployed or underemployed. Employability is a group of skills that a person possesses and those that are suitable or in demand in the market, which make them capable and suitable for a job and improve their carrier (Harvey, 2001). The catalyst for socio-political thinking, and a factor in determining a person's persona, core skills graduates' technical knowledge and educational abilities are essential skills in teacher education).

Businesses prioritize employability skills to enhance the long-term productivity of recent graduates. They hire for organizational success and seek the association between an individual's smooth capabilities and future performance. Employability traits, such as a cheerful attitude, are crucial for a person's career success (Nur Farahah Mohd et al., 2022). Employers also prioritize talents and behavioural attitudes when hiring recent graduates, as they are more likely to have less experience and soft skills. Qualification remains crucial in hiring, even if soft skills are used as a stand-in for employability (Ogunrinde, 2022).

### **Role of Higher Education**

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To close the gap between education and employable abilities, higher education institutions (HEIs) and teacher preparation programs could play a significant role. As a social machine, HEIs comprise connected parts cooperating to achieve a common goal or an aggressive gain. In the workplace, aspirations and competition are growing (Cole & Donald, 2022), and firms are constantly displacing more flexible and adaptable young workers to keep up with the advancing global information economy and shifting consumer demands (Yeongjun, Won-Sik, & Jeong-Dong, 2023). Giving pre-service teachers the skills to teach and learn from their education is one method to meet this objective. These qualities will make employment opportunities easier and more attractive and help build intellectual, private, and social resources (BretLee, 2010) that will enable pre-service teachers to thrive in a diverse and changing environment.

Regularly acquiring knowledge, skills, and abilities increases graduates' likelihood of success in their chosen profession. According to studies, institutional settings and support uniquely impact professional inputs and outputs. For instance, studies show that in many ways, departmental reputation, recognition, and instructional program by the hierarchy body all favour graduates' understanding. Studies have also shown that an institution's age and ownership impact graduates' employability. Prestigious firms

favour hiring graduates from well-known and reputable institutions.

### **Employability and Institution Reputation**

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Employers prefer reputable, well-established institutions for their talented students and top-notch instruction. Employability status is essential for graduates to adapt to the global information economy and changing consumer demands. Pre-service teachers should be given the skills to teach and learn from their education, making employment opportunities easier and more attractive. Employers' experiences with graduates from well-known institutions also influence their decision to hire from these institutions.

### **Employers Prefer Soft Skills**

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Recent graduates' employability is highly valued by employers, with soft skills being the most important factor (Espina-Romero et al., 2023). Institutional factors like educational popularity have minimal impact. Colleges provide similar programs and study aids to attract graduates. Special provisions for discipline learning are crucial for improving employability skills in higher education. Discipline-centred methods are preferred by students, leading to better graduate employability outcomes.

High-level professional and managerial positions demand skills in vocational science, with vocational science graduates demonstrating more crucial collaborative abilities (Rashidi, binti Abd Majid, Hashim, & Khairi, 2023). Companies need flexible, adaptable workers to keep up with the global information economy and changing consumer demands. Providing pre-service teachers with these skills makes employment opportunities easier and more attractive, building intellectual, private, and social resources for success in their chosen profession (Kangalgıl, Özgül, Kocaekşl, & Dönmez, 2022).

Studies indicate that job distribution and employability among graduates are significantly influenced by their education and field of study (Dinesen, Blix, & Gramstad,

2023; Lohberger & Braun, 2022). Non-vocational arts have a less positive influence on common fields. Vocational education programs and social sciences-related degrees are more likely to lead to employment (Lohberger & Braun, 2022).

(Thorlindsson, 2004) define non-graduate positions as those held by individuals without a college degree (Goyette, Gaudreau, & Baril, 2022). Current labour market shifts require more extensive skills and a college degree. Research by Blesken et al. (2002) shows that graduates studying non-vocational subjects have a higher risk of unemployment in the first three and a half years. Specialization and employment have a tenuous relationship, with a disproportionate number of graduates finding employment in related fields (Tomlinson, 2012).

### **Employability of new Graduates**

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Employability is a multifaceted concept (Finch, Hamilton, Baldwin, & Zehner, 2013). When we recruit recent graduates, employers place the most outstanding value on soft skills while placing the most negligible value on institutional factors like educational popularity. Zhu (2003) also comes to the same result, saying that the impact of a college's reputation on employability is minimal. In order to make their graduates appealing to employers, all colleges provide additional or substantially identical programs and study aids (Madoui, 2015). Several studies also suggest a moderating link between employability and employability. Making special provisions to nurture employability skills in the context of discipline learning is critical to the growing importance of improving them in higher training (Asonitou, 2015; Cassidy, 2006).

Discipline-centred methods are generally regarded as preferable by students, which eventually results in more significant graduate employability outcomes. The literature also offers illustrative evidence of the differences between various subjects. Hiring for many high-level specialist and managerial positions requires these skills (Brown & Sase, 1994). Conversely, vocational science graduates

ought to demonstrate more vital collaborative skills than graduates from non-vocational studies.

Employability skills have been linked to organizational success, job satisfaction, and man or woman employability. (Thorlindsson, 2004) define non-graduate positions as traditionally held by people without a college degree and list jobs like amusement and other hand-to-mouth jobs as examples. Because of the shifts in the present labour market, many positions call for more extensive skills and a college degree. According to Blesken et al. (2002), graduates who studied non-vocational subjects had almost double the risk of being unemployed in the first three and a half years following graduation compared to graduates from technical education. Similar studies suggest that specialization and employment have a tenuous relationship in various contexts. In this sense, a disproportionate number of graduates find employment in professions related to the fields they studied.

### **Development of Employability Skills in Prospective Teachers**

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This study highlights the impact of social-demographic factors on employability and abilities. Factors such as age, parents' occupation, education, and job experience influence employability. Students should reflect on themselves and enhance their abilities and character traits. Employability skills are crucial for long-term productivity and organizational success. A cheerful attitude supports employability traits.

Effective curriculum, teaching, learning, and evaluation techniques enhance achievements in the labour market. Special provisions for nurturing employability skills in discipline learning are critical for improving graduate employability outcomes. Discipline-centered methods are preferred by students.

### **Soft Skills**

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Soft Skills are a group of qualities crucial for completing tasks at work, and they have no specialized abilities but are closely related to character traits and attitudes, as well as social

and Leadership abilities (Pirzada, Muhammad, & Anis, [2020](#)). Some are difficult to identify, gauge, assess, and develop due to their intangibility. In order to effectively handle various contextual scenarios, educators must develop these abilities, and soft skills are essential for interpreting and comprehending complex situations and designing lesson plans that highlight students' unique personal traits.

Therefore, these serve as the “new basic alphabet” for both teachers and other professionals that the European Commission (2018) believes are required to live and manage complexity, ambiguity, and less predictability. The demands of parents, the kids' issues, and the lesson plan's planning and implementation are daily challenges that teachers face in this complex and pervasive society (Saleem, Muhammad, & Masood, [2021](#); Saleem, Muhammad, & Siddiqui, [2021](#)). Teachers who possess cross-disciplinary competencies, as well as technical competencies, can effectively manage these difficulties. According to Hattie ([2003](#)), professionally educated teachers who possess the necessary soft skills directly affect students' interest in and dedication to achieving academic achievement. Based on those above, our effort intends to provide a tool capable of measuring the Soft Skills required to support actions to strengthen them in the teacher training courses (initial and itinerary).

### Soft Skills Essential for Teachers

The five essential competencies for beginners in teaching include effective communication, problem-solving, teamwork, lifelong learning, and leadership. Communication involves speaking both languages and English fluently, expressing thoughts clearly and confidently, being engaged listeners, and using technology effectively. Communication styles are crucial in the teaching-learning process, with perceptions of the effectiveness of instruction influenced by fashion practices. Problem-solving involves critical thinking, creativity, innovation, and analytical thinking, while teamwork involves collaboration with diverse individuals from different backgrounds

(Muhammad Jamil, Muhammad, Masood, & Habib, [2020](#); Muhammad Jamil, Muhammad, & Qureshi, [2021a](#), [2021b](#)). The Problem-Solving Inventory is a popular tool for identifying potential problem-solving abilities.

Lifelong learning involves self-regulated mastering independently, using relevant data, being open to new ideas, and developing an investigative mind. Leadership skills involve cultivating extraordinary behaviours, understanding the roles of a leader and a crew member, and adapting to different tasks. The Lifelong Learning Inventory is a useful tool for acquiring skills and knowledge.

### Skills needed by University Graduates to be ready for Work

Employability skills are essential for enhancing graduate employability, and globalization has broadened the range of skills desired by college graduates. These skills include transferable, soft, core, fundamental, personal, process, teaching, attitude and competencies, and twenty-first-century abilities. Employer feedback reveals a knowledge and skill gap in graduates entering the teaching profession market, which is linked to inadequate university training and the inability of graduate education programmers to adapt to changing realities. To improve employability skills among pre-service teachers, there is a need for closer engagement between trainer educators, employers, and the government (Saleem, Muhammad, & Masood, [2020](#); Saleem, Muhammad, & Qureshi, [2021](#); Zahid, Muhammad, & Waqar, [2022](#)).

The three most important attributes for graduate employability are qualities, skills, and understanding. Core competencies and interpersonal skills are considered essential for graduate employment. Personal skills include self-awareness, self-confidence, openness to learning, independence, flexibility, self-management, written and verbal communication, critical analysis, problem-solving, teamwork, computer literacy, honesty, work ethics, planning and prioritizing tasks, and dealing with ambiguity.



In some educational environments, learning outcomes are included in challenging assignments to develop soft skills and course material knowledge. Employers are looking for graduates with conversation skills, empathy, motivation, decision-making skills, planning competencies, and improvisation skills. These skills must be taught through deliberate real-life or practical activities with a strong focus on conversation, explanation, decision-making, and problem-solving.

### **Role of Teaching Practice**

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In order to close the skills gap in graduates' employability, researchers have advised teaching practice as one of the techniques to enhance teaching professional skills among pre-service teachers. Pre-service teachers are introduced to the workplace through teaching practice. At some point throughout their teacher preparation, pre-service teachers are required to be able to articulate their particular and individual educational philosophies, assumptions, and understandings. Regardless of the duration or breadth of the teaching experience, pre-service teachers should take advantage of the chance to experiment with, assess, and appreciate their educational philosophies and theories in a relevant teaching and learning context.

Employability competencies are the wheels of our increasingly more complicated and interconnected administrative centre, and non-cognitive abilities such as crew working, communication, and assertiveness are sections of the attributes required for employability. Teaching practice was referred to by David and Hallen (2003) as a socialization journey into the teaching profession. In general, endorse the three most important attributes for graduate employability: qualities, skills, and understanding. Private traits, core competencies, and interpersonal skills are the characteristics that are thought to be necessary for graduate employment.

Prospective teachers get the opportunity to authenticate the viability of microteaching in a typical teaching and learning setting through teaching exercises. Teaching practice

was referred to by David and Hallen (2003) as a socialization journey into the teaching profession. When pre-service teachers begin their actual working lives, the socialization they experience during teaching exercises frequently results in more self-belief in enhancing their students' learning, job happiness, and a greater sense of instructor efficacy. Pre-service teachers must engage in teaching practice due to the importance of acquiring pedagogical skills in institutions that provide teacher training.

### **Employer's Suggestions and market Demand**

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Most studies on teacher education do not reveal how employers may improve prospective teachers' overall performance to make them more employable after graduation. Instead, these studies focus on the advantages pre-service teachers should get from teaching exercise and the difficulties that come with it. Pre-service teachers can challenge their beliefs and presumptions while teaching, which helps them gain pedagogical knowledge and avoid practices not based on sound and essential pedagogical information and theories. In order to increase pre-service teachers' appreciation for teaching, conversation during the teaching exercise enables knowledge construction and reflective cooperation.

Supervisors can help novice teachers by analysing the situation around the problem or shortcomings and developing criteria or goals for improvement. To do this, instructional activities are used. Our increasingly complex and linked administrative system runs on employability competencies, and non-cognitive skills like teamwork, communication, and assertiveness are key components of the necessary traits for employability. In general, support the characteristics, talents, and understanding as the three most critical factors affecting graduate students' employment. The qualities considered important for graduate employment include personal attributes, core competencies, and interpersonal abilities.

Plans for teaching can also be improved by utilizing the student-personal teacher's

resources and talents. Additionally, graduate teachers might get over entry shock when they enter the job market by participating in teaching exercises. An investigation conducted by Pomerant and Pierce in 2004 determined to what extent pre-service teachers were “organized for this issue” by their courses (p. 55).

### **21<sup>st</sup>-century Learners’ Skills**

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Academic planners and theoreticians in education seek to create frameworks that will help students flourish in a global society that is information- and technology-based. While there is disagreement over what skills look like in the twenty-first century, employability skills are crucial for success. Qualities, abilities, and understanding are three essential components for graduate employment. Information, media, and technological skills, as well as life and career skills, are all examples of 21st-century learner abilities. Critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, agility, entrepreneurship, effective communication, and curiosity are all survival qualities.

The focus should be placed on face-to-face information sharing. Additionally, alternative cognitive skills, cultural practices, and expectations for teaching and learning are essential for new-century novices.

### **Socio Factors of Employability**

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Some studies revealed that socio-background factors, i.e., parents’ role and family support, significantly impact people’s behaviour and learning both within and outside of school. Additionally, studies show that parents’ educational attainment, goals, and financial success are the most significant factors that affect achievement. Graduate teachers might get over entry shock when they enter the job market by participating in teaching exercises. An investigation conducted by Pomerant and Pierce in 2004 determined to what extent pre-service teachers were “organized for this issue” by their courses (p. 55).

The social classification history of parents’ occupation, profession, ethnicity, and other factors) also affects an individual’s success in

the workplace, according to studies (Smith, 2001), and this has a different effect on graduates from privileged backgrounds in terms of their employment prospects (Blesken et al., 2002). Similar Education and Employment Research include that graduates with mothers and fathers in partially professional occupations are 30% more likely than others to have a non-graduate job 18 months after graduation, and this risk will increase to 80% for graduates with mothers and fathers who are not in the workforce.

The sort of institution they attended, the courses they took, the degree type they obtained, and their entry qualifications all contribute to the lower labour market results graduates from these backgrounds experience. Similar studies show that graduates’ job market outcomes are influenced by household history, including the family’s financial situation and business.

### **Effects of Pre-graduation Teaching Practice**

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The study suggests that prior job experience will mitigate the association between new graduates’ employability and employability skills. Pre-graduate job experience can also include academic programming that combines theory and practice, such as practical learning opportunities on campus. Most studies on teacher education do not reveal how employers may improve pre-service teachers’ overall performance to make them more employable after graduation. Instead, these studies focus on the advantages pre-service teachers should get from teaching exercise and the difficulties that come with it. Pre-service teachers can challenge their beliefs and presumptions while teaching, which helps them gain pedagogical knowledge and avoid practices not based on sound and essential pedagogical information and theories. In order to increase pre-service teachers’ appreciation for teaching, research studies claim that the conversation during the teaching exercise enables knowledge construction and reflective practice (Ahmed, Muhammad, & Anis, 2020; Imran, Muhammad, & Waqar, 2022; Maham Jamil, Muhammad, & Akhtar, 2022).

When hiring graduates, businesses use adequate job experience as a selection criterion since it exposes workers to the workplace. Work experience among graduates is also considered a sign of their preparation for the workplace. The opportunity for pre-service teachers to experiment and evaluate their knowledge and skills in a suitable teaching and learning environment, along with their appreciation of their educational philosophies and theories, is excellent regardless of the length or scope of the teaching experience. Preservice teachers get the opportunity to authenticate the viability of microteaching in a typical teaching and learning setting through teaching exercises.

### Changes in the Labour Market

Enhancing graduates' employability skills is one of the crucial duties that HEIs, in collaboration with other stakeholders, must carry out. The value of the skills comes from their ability to keep graduates employable in the labour market (Watts, 2006). Research suggests that there is a mismatch between university-acquired skills and the competencies that employers are looking for. For instance, while businesses usually need employees who can cooperate, pick up new skills, and communicate effectively, recent grads frequently lack these talents. Additionally, because of the rise in enrolment, adjustments in labour market demands, and altering stakeholder expectations, HEIs must now support the development of employability skills to boost graduates' employability.

Additionally, academicians and HEIs have diverse perspectives on the definition, methods utilized to produce them, and results connected to graduate competencies. Barrie (2004) has the same opinion and adds that prior educational experiences likely led to the development of graduate traits. Given the requirement for employability skills in the labour market, HEIs must, therefore, expressly outline goals and objectives aimed at doing so.

In order to build employable skills, people should engage with opportunities and reflect on their abilities and experiences (Harvey &

Morey, 2002). The idea that employable skills develop at home and as a result of good parenting is another perspective. According to the research by Hellies et al. (2009), when we consider some elements, the mother's education considerably impacts how mentally and intellectually capable their offspring become. Zinser (2003) contends that while parents can help somewhat, instruction of employable skills should also be a component of any educational institution. Career and skills development should therefore be taught in schools and included in the undergraduate curriculum. Washer (2007) makes the case that graduates ought to depart higher education in a better condition than when they entered.

While the need to address employability inside HEIs appears to be widely agreed upon, it is still unclear whether to emphasize specific skills and qualities within or across disciplines. Robinson & Garton (2008, p. 102) suggested that the curricula emphasize students' ability to solve problems and make decisions. In addition, Oates (2001) contends that for graduate qualities to be used in new contexts and activities, pedagogical methods must first be used. Second, ESDP is required to incorporate extracurricular activities, where college students participate in practical practice. Another path that is more appropriate for fostering the growth of these workplace qualities to a degree is the pursuit of a technical degree, which includes extensive immersion in the social environment of the workplace and fosters the development of these qualities directly (Winch, 2006).

### Learning and Assessment of Employability Skills

Alternative evaluation methods should be objective, encourage student interaction, and promote self-reflection. Soft skills, such as interpersonal, teamwork, negotiating, verbal communication, time management, group administration, and delegation, are essential for improving business operations. Employers seek graduates with conversation skills, empathy, motivation, decision-making, planning competencies, and improvisation skills. These skills must be taught through real-



life or practical activities, focusing on conversation, explanation, decision-making, and problem-solving.

Cox and King (2006) identify competencies as transferable skills and situation-specific competencies. Students can complete tasks in real-world environments, classroom-based techniques, and flexible or distance-learning approaches. Using a variety of learning and development methodologies is advantageous for improving employability skills. Employability competencies include non-cognitive abilities such as crew working, communication, and assertiveness.

The concept of employability now more frequently refers to a person's level of job competency than their employment status. Employability skills include academic skills, career- or job-specific skills, and various attitudes and habits. Effective communication, interpersonal and personal interaction skills, problem-solving skills, and organizational management strategies are crucial. Employability should be associated with a person's level of preparation for employment, as an employable graduate has completed their education, is available for employment, possesses job-related skills, and plans to begin working.

### Employability and Curriculum

Employers are increasingly seeking broader types of abilities due to changes in organizational and employment structures. Employability skills refer to cognitive abilities such as learning, critical thinking, creativity, and communication. Graduate recruiters value a variety of abilities, personal qualities, and mental qualities, including oral communication, group collaboration, self-management, problem-solving, and management. Measures should be implemented to equip staff with as many employability capabilities as possible.

The University of Western Australia's Career Advisory Board advised against conducting a study on final-year college students' development of normative abilities. The survey identified fifteen approved skills, and Liew (2005) found that the five skills with

the most significant differences between the Development Index and Importance Index are oral English communication, information, communication, technological knowledge, computer skills, written English communication, risk-taking, and creative thinking.

The "Skills Plus Project" considers personal qualities as essential for employability, as they can significantly impact a student's success. Students with malleable self-belief believe that poor performance can result in additional learning and blame failure on a lack of effort. Self-efficacy, or the ability to develop, organize, and carry out tasks, is crucial for an individual's employability, as it influences their choice of degree program, job, and non-public development. Personality attributes are also crucial for developing problem understanding and skill progress.

### Conclusion

Employability skills empower graduates to achieve career success and workplace advancement. This review synthesizes key issues surrounding employability skills, their value for graduates, and implications for Pakistan's education sector. While disciplinary knowledge is necessary, soft skills significantly influence graduate work readiness and labour market outcomes. Developing pertinent cognitive, social, and behavioural competencies requires strategic efforts by multiple stakeholders, including universities, employers, and policymakers. For pre-service teachers in Pakistan, improving critical skills alongside subject mastery can enhance their employability in a dynamic education landscape. Focused research and policy reforms are vital to strengthen the higher education-employment linkage. Investing in employability skills serves the interests of individual graduates, universities, employers, and the economy.

Some areas requiring further investigation include: Developing localized frameworks and measures to assess employability skills tailored to Pakistan's needs and exploring disciplinary differences in the valuation and development of soft skills, and designing

interventions, curricula, and assessments to improve skill acquisition and investigating students' and employers' perceptions of essential competencies and evaluating teaching practices and vocational programs in fostering employability and examining the

impact of socio-demographic factors on skill attainment, studying the relative importance of different competencies for employability. More empirical research can guide evidence-based policies to enrich graduate capacities and employment readiness.

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