

Exploring Global Employability Skills for Entry Level Graduate Jobs in Human Resource Development

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Definition of Employability Skills

The term employability skills refers to the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and other abilities that are necessary for a graduate to secure and keep a first entry job into the labor force (Yorke and Knight, 2004).

Significance of the Study

- Today's employers require employees to have soft or non-technical skills in addition to technical skills. (Alpern, 1997; Clagett, 1997).
- While such skills may vary with industries; they include knowing how to learn, communication skills, creativity, problem solving, interpersonal skills, leadership, and ability to function as part of a team (McNabb 1997)

Importance of Employability

- The central issue facing all countries today is for education and training to help students develop global skills that translate into the transferability of skills and qualifications acquired in any country to any host country

Purpose of the Study

- The purpose of the study was to explore employability skills as perceived by employers and university faculty of human resource development (HRD) for entry level graduate jobs

Research Questions

- *Question 1:* Does a significant relationship exist between any of the types of employability skills investigated with faculty and employers of HRD graduates?
- *Question 2:* Does a significant relationship exist between any of the types of employability skills investigated with respondents in the U.S. and abroad?

Methodology

To assess the relative importance of specific employability skills, questionnaires were developed and sent to faculty and employers in the U.S., Morocco, and Europe.

Research Instruments

Two questionnaires were developed; faculty, and employers. The questionnaires were validated and piloted prior to the distribution. The content of the questionnaires was adopted from the literature, i.e., Everse et al (1997) and Robinson et al (2007) employability lists

Population of Study

- From the survey implementation, a total of 22 faculty members completed the instrument (12 from the U.S., six from Morocco, and four from Europe). In addition, a total of 50 employers of HRD graduates completed the instrument (30 from the U.S., 15 from Morocco, and five from Europe). Thus, a total of 72 respondents successfully completed the instrument utilized in this investigation

Analysis

- The results of this study indicate that with exception of communication skills and the use of technology, there is a significant relationship between 16 of the 18 variables investigated and the type of respondent. This result provides support for the first research question of this investigation. Furthermore, the results of a significant interaction ($p < .05$) remain consistent for all other variables when comparing domestic and international personnel as well as when comparing all employee and faculty members.

Conclusion

- As a result, the second research question of this investigation is supported as well. Ultimately, the results of this investigation indicate that with the exception of communication skills and the use of technology, HRD faculty in both the U.S. and abroad are providing the skills required by employers of HRD programs.