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Research Article

DO BEHAVIORAL SKILLS HAVE AN IMPACT ON GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION? A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON INDIA AND UGANDA

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to explore those behavioral skills graduates should possess to attract employability in higher education in India and Uganda. The study adopted a mixed methods approach which combines both quantitative and qualitative methods. Data was collected by both questionnaires and interviews from university students and staff and a sample size of 278 respondents and participants were involved in the study. A descriptive cross-sectional survey was used on the side of students while in-depth interviews were used on the side of academic staff to get their insights. Correlations were used to establish the relationships between variables while the thematic approach was used on the side of the qualitative approach. Results of the study indicated that there was a strong Positive PLCC, r = 0.739 between behavioral skills and graduate employability and PLCC, r = 0.622, both at Makerere and Andhra University respectively. There was a limited number of participants in the study.Implications of the Study **ar**e **the** integration of employability skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, digital literacy, teamwork , and leadership across disciplines, not just in career-specific courses to enhance employability and technology integration to Utilize technology for virtual experiences, collaborative tools to enhance digital fluency and adaptability.

Key Words: approach, employability, fluency, higher education, outcome, skills, teamwork

Introduction of the study

The history of higher education in Uganda dates back to 1922 when the British colonial administration established Makerere as a Technical College, for colonial administrators (Nakanyike & Nansozi, 2003). In 1970, Makerere became the first national University after the dissolving of the University of East Africa. Makerere remained the sole university in Uganda responsible for the provision of university education and graduate employability to train national labor for better employability outcomes. In recent years, employability has grown in popularity. Through the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, people started to locate employment by focusing on their labor market history.

In India, every year, around 3.5 million graduates and 22,000 graduate students leave Indian higher education institutions, but all of them are not getting employed. The 300 million able-bodied unemployed people in the country between the ages of 18 and 50 who do not have the necessary skill sets make up more than half of the unemployed population. Employability firms assert that many degree holders are not equipped with the employability skills necessary to find work. It is projected that 300 million young, educated workers will be unemployed nationwide by 2025. Employers in India, however, are having a difficult time locating qualified candidates. Consequently, there isn't much of a connection between students' education and employability. According to Reddy (2019), Numerous young Indians are unemployed,

underemployed, laboring long hours for little money, or holding low-quality jobs. A sizable percentage of them have temporary or irregular employment contracts or work in dangerous jobs. Nearly 50% of young people in employment face disadvantages as a result of a lack of working skills. However, in major cities like Bangalore, Delhi, and Chennai, employability rates are appallingly low at the moment. The HRD minister at the time, Rajnath Singh, stated in October 2014 that skill development must be given high priority. However, none of the 275 best universities in the world, including any Indian university, were included in the Times Higher Education Survey. The minister cited Wheel Box's Employability statement, which states that "only 34% of our graduates are employable." A Confederation of India Industry (CII) poll indicated that just 17% of graduates with an engineering degree and 10% of those with an MBA were found to be employable. While fifty percent of the population is only accessible for labor and GDP contributions, twenty-five percent of candidates are used in the employment market. There is a discrepancy between supply and demand in the major professions of 82% to 86%, and the market can only use 25% of the pool. The IT sector alone may lack sufficient skilled personnel to meet demand.

In Uganda, the eventual destination of graduates from Makerere University was determined by a graduate tracer study carried out in 2012. As per Sembatya and Ngobi's (2015) findings, 67% of the graduates were able to secure full-time jobs. Analysis of the same data from 2015 showed that 49% of graduates had secured employment, which was an 18% decrease from the year before. It is evident from the tracer studies that variables like employers' opinions of Makerere graduates, their contractual years of service, job mobility, ease of employment, and foreign citizenship status are not taken into consideration when deciding whether or not to support the graduates' continued employment. As a result of rising employer demands, it is becoming increasingly difficult to prepare graduates for the industry through coursework, student internships, and lectures (Molla & Guthbert, 2022). The outcomes of these employment innovations' inefficiency are these inefficiencies. According to this trend, employability skills are becoming more and more crucial for recent graduates in local, regional, and global employment markets. Businesses and industries have been critical of the low caliber of graduates coming out of developing nations, according to Bandele and Faremi (2012), which highlights the importance of this study. Of the primary concerns, this one needs to be taken care of right away. According to several studies, graduates of higher education are generally quite employable, but they do not possess employable skills. This research attempted to improve graduate employability goods both domestically and internationally by examining the teaching of generic skills in higher education institutions, mostly in Uganda and India.

Theoretical Perspective

The research's theoretical underpinning is Schultz's 1961 Human Capital Theory (Cai, 2013). This theory holds that education enhances one's professional, linguistic, and cultural capabilities, all of which directly impact one's productivity at work. Because businesses value the marketable talents that employees acquire from their education about the financial outcomes of their employment, graduates with greater levels of education often earn more money. The theory focuses on acquiring knowledge to succeed in the workplace. The theory does not concentrate on behavioralskills acquisition to succeed in a workplace. This is genuine since one cannot practice human resources at a workplace for example without behavioral and personality skills. This is emphasized by the signature theory/ screening theory by Stiglitz in 1975 (Cai, 2013) Where job seekers send their ability levels through credentials to the employers for employment.

They become lenses as the innate abilities to increase productivity in the labor market. The fact that the labor market is often associated and uncertainties both the underlying and the behavioral competencies need to be addressed by higher education as employment output according to this study as observed by Mc Cleland supported by Boyatzis (Stones et al., 2000; Armstrong, 2014). The study will concentrate on Human Capital theory because it synthesizes the graduate employability skills. The behavioral attributes training in higher education attract employment. Graduates can be retained on the job and have the ability for job mobility with the casual ascriptions of individuals' interpretations of work events, thinking, and behavior as positive effects.

In this study, graduate behavioral skillsmeant the inherent or the underlying characteristics that the individual possesses to predict and control inferences to cause and effect behavior. Thus, the study applied the behavioral,skills, and research discoveries of the university products. The absence of this will imply that graduate employability training in Makerere and Andhra University is poor or non-existent and the reverse is true.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to explore contemporary Behavioral skills graduates should possess to enhance the employability of higher education.

Objective

To explore behavioral skills graduates of Makerere and Andhra University should possess to attract employability.

Research Question

What behavioral skills do the graduates of Makerere and Andhra University possess to attract employability?

Research hypothesis.

Behavioral skills do not affect graduate employability at both Makerere and Andhra University.

Conceptual Review

Behavioral Skills that Attract Graduate Employability.

Cranmer (2006) conducted research on graduate employment chances for higher education funding Council of England through employability skills instruction and learning These abilities cannot be properly fostered in the classroom, according to the study's findings. To evaluate the attitudes and approaches used by instructors to teach and acquire employability skills, extensive data was collected at the departmental level of the institution.Despite academics' best efforts to increase graduates' employability, it is argued that the agenda's intrinsic limits would inevitably create a range of outcomes. There is also the notion that money would be better used for programs that support employers, enhance employment-related training and expertise, or improve the prospects of recent graduates in the labor market. It has been found that these programs facilitate graduates' entry into the workforce and increase their chances of landing a job quickly.

Crossman and Clarke (2009) argue that increasing globalization and internationalization has heightened the need for graduates with the ability to operate in culturally diverse contexts. Universities have focused upon exchange as part of internationalization to prepare students for work but there is still limited literature on the nature of the relationship between international experiences, more broadly, and graduate employability. The findings suggest that all stakeholders identify clear connections between international experience and employability given outcomes associated with the forging of networks, opportunities for experiential learning, language acquisition, and the development of soft skills related to cultural understandings, personal characteristics, and ways of thinking. Research on the employability of Ugandan public university graduates and university governance was conducted in 2013 by Rwakoma. Despite their substantial contribution to the human capital stock of the country, universities do not equip their students with the skills necessary for the workforce, which may increase unemployment, according to the survey results.

Evans, Maxfield, and Gbadamosi (2015) looked at the benefits of working part-time while pursuing a degree, and they looked at employers' perceptions of the worth of a graduate's job experience. Recruiters who specialize in graduate employment programs can check applicant records to ascertain the extent to which job experience is required.To find out more about employers' perceptions of part-time employment for graduates, additional interviews were done with a group of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Employers use a graduate's work experience not only to set them apart but also to evaluate how well they performed after graduation. Employers noted that while work experience was not explicitly highlighted in graduates' applications, they were aware of its importance.

Mackay, Morris, Hooley, and Neary (2015) developed a framework for career management skills (CMS) based on a comprehensive analysis of the literature. This framework included five essential components of career guidance treatments that greatly increase efficacy, particularly when combined. The importance of establishing a safe environment, the adviser-client relationship, the use of storytelling and writing techniques, the need for flexibility in approach, the availability of specialized information and support, and the goal and objectives of action planning are just a few of these. However, Kinas (2015) reflected on eight ways to enhance students' graduate employability to succeed in the workplace. It was observed that one may examine and determine the ten distinct skill sets that are in demand worldwide across all industries and geographical locations by utilizing the current international literature on graduate employability. Universities need to adjust the curricula to address the employers' demands.

Okolie, Igwe, Eneje, et al. (2019) conducted a study on business owners and policymakers' Centre on whether higher education institutions (HEIs) are failing to transform the young generation by reorienting education to develop higher competencies, skills, values, and behaviors in Nigeria. While previous studies have considered the importance of skills development and its assessment in many contexts, there appears to have been limited scholarly research on employability issues within the Higher education system (HES) in Nigeria. In seeking to address this, it is vital to understand how HEIs in Nigeria conceptualize generic skills and why HEIs have problems with teaching generic skills in their graduate program. This study found that many HEIs do not facilitate the teaching of high-level generic skills in their program. Some of the factors attributed to this include poor learning environment, lack of staff with industry experience, and over-dependence on 'theoretical content' teaching. The findings were significant for re-orienting the HE curriculum to align with the needs of the industry and society.

A study by Bhatti et al. (2023) focused on the employability skills that business graduates need to have. The questionnaire used to collect the data consisted of questions on a 5-point Likert scale. The results show that, although graduates and industry professionals evaluate different employability skills, they largely agree on

what is required. Furthermore, the participants expressed their belief that employability qualities such as creativity, goal-oriented attributes, teamwork, problem-solving abilities, sub-related entry digital level skills & organizational skills. The findings of the research will assist decision-makers in comprehending the employability skills that business school graduates should possess as well as the best approaches for imparting these talents to students.

Jackson & Rowe (2023) carried out a study on the impact of work-integrated learning and co-curricular activities on graduate labor force outcomes in Australia, the work-integrated learning activities included volunteering, leadership, and mentoring programs. A perceived association between graduate employability and work-integrated learning was found in the study, which examined how various co-curricular and work-integrated learning experiences affected labor force outcomes among recent college graduates. A similar study was conducted by Jackson, O'Brien, and Richards (2023). They investigated the impact of experiential learning on employability skill development and employability outcomes from the sub-Indian continent. The survey research design was employed. The findings indicate that international students developed key employability skills which significantly increased their propensity to obtain subsequent employment.In a study, Mabic, Gasper, and Coric (2024) looked into whether business schools can provide their students with the soft skills that employers in the modern workplace require. The survey's subjects were business teachers in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The results show that while teachers acknowledge the need to impart soft skills to students, the existing curriculum might use some strengthening in this area. With the complicated nature of employability, this study synthesized the employability skills into two sets constituting the behavioral skills required by graduates for employability a case of Makerere and Andhra University.

Research Design

This is a plan for the study that provides a framework that is overall for collecting data procedures and selecting subjects and research sites in alignment with the research questions (Tobi and Kampen, 2018; Abutabenjeh and Jaradat, 2018). This study will adopt the mixed methods approach which combines the quantitative and qualitative methodology. Ezati, Opolot-Okurut, and Ssentamu (2014) explain that mixed methods fit a specific case of context. Concurrent Nested Strategy will be adopted where the quantitative approach is nested within the qualitative. Thus, the primary data collection approach is qualitative. Terrell (2012) posits that such an approach serves the purpose of enabling the study to benefit from a broader perspective. This strategy is chosen over others because it is less time-consuming since the two types of data can be collected simultaneously while providing advantages of both methods.

A descriptive cross-sectional survey design will be used to conduct the study. The design will enable the researcher to collect detailed and factual information across the two chosen Universities in Uganda and India at one point in time and with minimal costs. Qualitatively case study characteristics of the phenomenon will be described; the relationships will be observed by viewing recording and examined through experiential learning and understanding. The researcher will gain insight; and explore the in-depth, richness, and complexity inherent phenomenon of the single variable.

Data Collection Methods

This is the procedure for gathering data from all pertinent sources to solve problems and assess the results (Creswell, 2007).Interviews and systematic text analysis were employed to collect data for the study since they provided a deeper understanding of the social phenomenon elements. These interviews were for administrators and academic staff. Data collected through interviews will be recorded through field notes, transcripts, and tape recordings. Conclusively, data in the proposed study was collected using questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis. Questionnaires were administered to the target population because it is literate and poses no problems responding to questionnaires. This combination of different sources of data and methods of data collection is meant to enable the researcher to achieve high internal reliability and validity through triangulation.

Data Collection Instruments

These are the resources that are utilized for information gathering and source identification (Creswell, 2007; Creswell, 2013; Benoot, Hannes & Bilsen, 2016). The researcher prepared situations, tasks, or activities that engaged the participants to interact around the study theme. Qualitatively the study involved the use of an interview guide, an appropriate interview guide for academic staff and administrators in chosen case studies was used in data collection. This is because interview guides allow participants to give insights and perceptions regarding the phenomenon. A self-administered questionnaire with a Likert-type ordinal scale will be used for collecting quantitative data (Amin, 2005).

Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation of Results

Behavioral Skills

Behavioral skills were conceptualized as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, analytical, and professionalism. Thus, using nine (9) quantitative questions, respondents rated themselves on behavioral skills based on Likert's scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree (SD), 2 = disagree (D), 3 = not sure (NS), 4 = agree (A), 5 = strongly agree (SA). Table 4.6 shows pertinent frequency tables:

Table 1.0: Descriptive Statistics on Respondents' Self-rating on Behavioral Skills

No.	Items	Responses rated from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Options (1 = SD, 2 = D, 3 = NS, 4 = A, 5 = SA)											
		Makerere University						Andhra University					
		1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)	Total	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)	Total
1	I work effectively in teams and I have much respect for other people's opinions	6 (5.5%)	20 (18.2%)	00	70 (63.6%)	14 (12.7%)	110 (100%)	5 (7.5%)	10 (11.1%)	4 (7.0%)	81 (42.0%)	20 (32.4%)	120 (100%)
2	I can communicate through writing, speaking, and presentation	5 (4.6%)	12 (10.9%)	2 (1.8%)	35 (31.8%)	56 (50.9%)	110 (100%)	7 (5.8%)	2 (1.7%)	10 (8.3%)	83 (69.2%)	18 (15.0%)	120 (100%)
3	I can achieve the set objectives in a specified period.	8 (7.3%)	6 (5.5%)	00	31 (28.2%)	65 (59.0%)	110 (100%)	6 (5.0%)	1 (0.8%)	7 (5.8%)	72 (60.0%)	34 (28.3%)	120 (100%)
4	I can use basic computer applications such as Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, and Excel & I know how to browse the internet to search for necessary information.	10 (9.1%)	00	10 (9.1%)	40 (36.4%)	50 (45.4%)	110 (100%)	10 (8.3%)	10 (8.3%)	20 (16.7%)	40 (33.3%)	40 (33.3%)	120 (100%)
5	I can provide solutions to challenging problems.	30 (27.3%)	8 (7.2%)	11 (10.0%)	21 (19.0%)	40 (36.3%)	110 (100%)	00	8 (6.7%)	11 (9.1%)	31 (25.8%)	70 (58.3%)	120 (100%)
6	I normally come up with innovative ideas during group work.	12 (10.9%)	30 (27.3%)	13 (11.8%)	32 (29.1%)	23 (20.9%)	110 (100%)	12 (10.0%)	00	13 (10.8%)	72 (60.0%)	23 (19.2%)	120 (100%)
7	I can freely interact with diverse groups of people	00	11 (10.0%)	6 (5.5%)	53 (48.2%)	40 (36.4%)	110 (100%)	4 (3.3%)	14 (11.7%)	7 (5.8%)	49 (40.8%)	46 (38.3%)	120 (100%)
8	I am good at decision-making	18 (16.4%)	10 (9.1%)	8 (7.2%)	21 (19.0%)	52 (47.3%)	110 (100%)	00	18 (15.0%)	00	51 (42.5%)	51 (42.5%)	120 (100%)
9	I can use basic mathematical applications of additions, subtractions, multiplication, and division.	7 (6.4%)	8 (7.2%)	7 (6.4%)	60 (54.5%)	28 (25.5%)	110 (100%)	3 (2.5%)	10 (11.1%)	14 (11.7%)	68 (56.7%)	25 (20.8%)	120 (100%)

Descriptive statistics on respondents' self-rating are displayed in Table 1.0 on behavioral skills at Makerere and Andhra Universities. Concerning Makerere University, on the item "I work effectively in teams and I have much respect for other people's opinions," cumulatively, 84 respondents (almost 83%) agreed that they work effectively in teams and they have much respect for other people's opinions, while 26 respondents (almost 24%) disagreed with the matter. Since the majority of the respondents were in agreement with the statement, this empirically implies that respondents work effectively in teams and I have much respect for other people's opinions. Looking at item "I can communicate through writing, speaking, and presentation," cumulatively, the majority, 91 respondents (almost 83%) agreed with the statement, 2 respondents (almost 2%) were not sure whereas cumulatively, 17 respondents (almost 16%) did not agree with the matter. Such results indicate that they can communicate through writing, speaking, and presentation. From the table, it is also revealed that the majority, of 96 respondents (over 87%) revealed that they can achieve the set objectives in a specified period while only 14 respondents (almost 13%) did not agree with the matter.

Table 1.0 further indicates that from Makerere University, 90 respondents (almost 82%) agreed that they can use basic computer applications such as Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, and Excel they know how to browse the internet to search for necessary information. Only 10 respondents (over 9%) were not decided while a similar number of respondents (over 9%) disagreed with the statement. Cumulatively, 61 respondents (over 55%) revealed that they can provide solutions to challenging problems. Only 11 respondents (10%) were not decided while 38 respondents (almost 35%) disagreed. These empirical findings indicated that respondents can provide solutions to challenging problems. From Table 4.6, it is indicated that 55 respondents (55%) agreed that they normally come up with innovative ideas during group work, 13 respondents (almost 12%) were not sure and 42 respondents (over 38%) did not support the statement.

Table 1.0 also indicated that at Makerere University, 93 respondents (almost 85%) reported that they can freely interact with diverse groups of people, only 6 respondents (almost 6%) were undecided while 11 respondents (10%) disagreed. Cumulatively, the majority, 73 respondents (over 66%) agreed that they are good at decision-making, 8 respondents (over 7%) were not sure while 29 respondents (almost 26%) disagreed with the matter. Cumulatively, 88 respondents (almost 80%) agreed that they can use basic Mathematical applications of additions, subtractions, multiplication, and division while 15 respondents (almost 14%) were not able to use and apply basic Mathematical applications.

From Andhra University, it was revealed that cumulatively, 101 respondents (over 74%) agreed that they work effectively in teams and have much respect for other people's opinions. A total of 4 respondents (7%) remained neutral about the matter cumulatively,whereas 15 individuals, or nearly 19%, disagreed with the statement. This suggests that the majority of those surveyed agreed that they work effectively in teams and have much respect for other people's opinions. Table 4.6 shows that cumulatively, 101 respondents (over 84%) supported the statement that they can communicate through writing, speaking, and presentation.Nine respondents (nearly 8%) in total disagreed with the question, while a total of 10 respondents (more than 8%) were unsure. This implies that the majority of them agreed that they can communicate through writing, speaking, and presentation. According to Table 4.6, cumulatively, 106 respondents (over 88%) agreed that they can achieve the set objectives in a specified period while 7 respondents (almost 8%) refused to declare a side.7 people overall, or nearly 8%, disagreed. Such findings imply that they can achieve the set objectives in the specified period.

Table 1.0 indicates the majority of respondents, 80 respondents (almost 67%) agreed that they can use basic computer applications such as Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint Point, and Excel and they know how to browse the internet to search for necessary information yet 20 respondents (almost 17%) were undecided. Cumulatively, 20 respondents (almost 17%) disagreed with the statement. Such findings suggest respondents agreed that they can use basic computer applications such as Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, and Excel and they know how to browse the internet to search for necessary information. Table 4.6 shows that cumulatively, over 84% (101) of respondents supported the view that they can provide solutions to challenging problemsEight respondents (nearly 8%) disagreed with an idea in the question, while a total of 11 respondents (more than 9%) remained unsure altogether... Such findings indicate that respondents can provide solutions to challenging problems. From Table 4.6, cumulatively, the majority, 95 respondents (over 79%) agreed that they normally come up with innovative ideas during group work.While a total of 12 respondents (10%) disagreed that group members are enjoyable in all circumstances, 13 respondents (nearly 11%) remained silent. This finding corresponds to the fact that respondents normally come up with innovative ideas during group work.

Table 1.0 shows that cumulatively, over 79% (95) of the respondents agreed that they can freely interact with diverse groups of people, 7 respondents (almost 6%) were undecided while cumulatively, 18 respondents (15%) disagreed with the matter. Cumulatively, 102 respondents (85%) agreed that they are good at decision-making,18 respondents, however, did not agree with the statement.These results suggest that the respondents had strong decision-making abilities. According to Table 4.6, cumulatively, 93 respondents (almost 78%) agreed that they use basic mathematical applications of additions, subtractions, multiplication, and division while 14 respondents (almost 12%) did not take a side.

The above quantitative findings are in agreement with those obtained qualitatively. For example, Do your students have the behavioral skills that can enable them to succeed in the world of work?

*"We try to see how students can fit in. They are involved in research & projects and most of the examples we base on focus on personal experiences, we engage them in teaching and learning. We engage them in group discussions meant to make them socialize with people of different backgrounds. They come, present, and discuss, and can acquire skills like teamwork which are needed in the world of work. With self-expression, we believe that by the time they complete, they can deal with academic pressure. We encourage them to take a lead in discussions, research & presentations, they become more confident and more self-directed"***(Mak3)**

These qualitative findings indicate that the graduates of Makerere University have the behavioral skills that enable them to succeed in the world of work because their lecturers engage them in activities such as projects, and research presentations which make them confident, self-directed, and collaborative which behavioral skills are needed in the world of work. These findings are in agreement will the quantitative findings.

Whilst AU

"Our students can exhibit teamwork and self-awareness and they are so confident. For example, we give group activities to promote teamwork among our graduates, especially at the master's and Ph.D. levels. We also encourage innovative thinking amongst our graduates, we give them tasks that enable them to get engaged to develop critical thinking skills that would enable them to handle complex tasks in the

world of work. Also, Andhra University conducts some internal exams using ICT, these help them to enhance ICT skills that would enable them to excel during the world of work" **(AU3)**

The above findings are in agreement with the quantitative findings, that Andhra graduates have behavioral skills such as teamwork, critical thinking, and ICT skills among others that can enable them to succeed in the world of work

To give an overall picture of how respondents rated themselves on behavioral skills at Makerere and Andhra Universities, an average index ("BehavioralS" to Behavioral Skills) was computed from the ten questions in Table 1.0and Table 1.2 presents the findings:

Table 1.2: Summary of the Statistics on Behavioral Skills

Makerere University		**Andhra University**	
Statistics	**Value**	**Statistics**	**Value**
Mean	**4.13**	**Mean**	**4.42**
95% Confidence Interval Lower	**4.02**	**95% Confidence Interval Lower**	**4.36**
Upper	**4.56**	**Upper**	**4.48**
Median	**4.01**	**Median**	**4.40**
Minimum	**1.00**	**Minimum**	**3.20**
Maximum	**5.00**	**Maximum**	**5.00**
Standard Deviation	**0.72**	**Standard Deviation**	**0.42**
Range	**0.88**	**Range**	**1.80**

When examining Makerere University, Table 1.2 above's results showed that respondents' assessments of their behavioral skills were generally good (mean = 4.13, median = 4.01), with opinions ranging from 4.02 to 4.56 at the 95% confidence level.Despite the average rating, some respondents received a low score of 1.00, which is very poor, and others had a maximum score of 5.00, which is very good. This resulted in a large difference, as indicated by a high range of 0.88. Secondly, respondents' perceptions of Makerere University's behavioral skills were similar (small deviation value = 0.72). This finding suggests that respondents' views on behavioral skills at Makerere University do not differ so much among themselves.According to the previously indicated standard deviation (0.72), there was a 0.36 difference in opinion between those with poor and high levels of behavioral skills at Makerere University. Also, there was almost no skew, suggesting that the respondent's opinions were almost normally distributed that is to say their opinions were centrally located as illustrated in Figure 4.4:

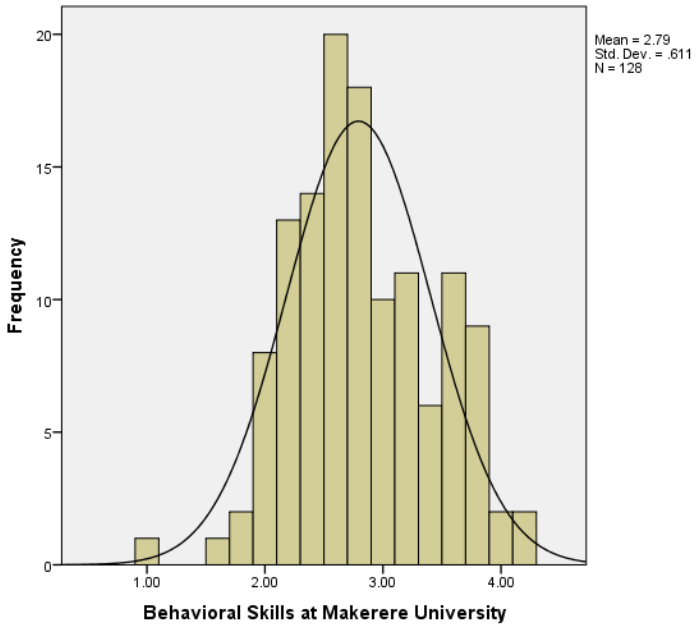
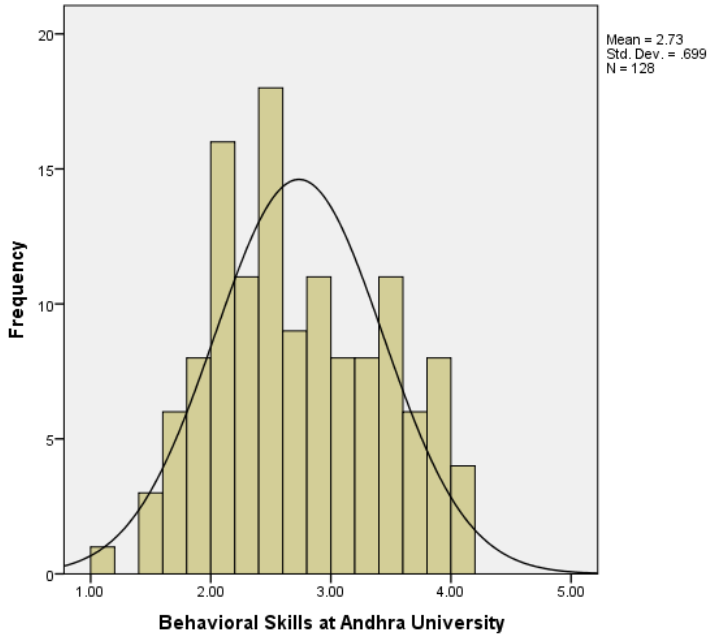


Table 1.2 shows that concerning Andhra University, the respondents' assessments of their behavioral abilities were good (mean = 4.42 and median = 4.40), with opinions ranging from 4.36 to 5.00 at the 95% confidence level.The results indicate that, despite the average rating, some respondents scored as low as 3.20, while others obtained the highest ratings possible, up to 5.00. A large variation of 1.80 indicates the resultant big divergence.Secondly, there was a degree of similarity (small deviation value = 0.42) in respondents' perceptions of behavioral skills at Andhra University, indicating that respondents' perspectives on these talents are not considerably different from one another.Regarding low and high behavioral skill levels at Andhra University, the difference in opinion was 0.38, which is corroborated by the higher standard

deviation (0.42). Also, results show that there was almost no skew, suggesting that the respondents' opinions were almost normally distributed i.e. their opinions were centrally located as illustrated in Figure 4.5:



To provide a general overview of the respondents' self-ratings on behavioral skills at both universities, an average index was computed from the summary statistics in Table 1.2 and Table 1.3 presents the findings:

Table 1.3: Overall Index of Common descriptive statistics on respondents' self-rating on behavioral skills at Makerere and Andhra

Statistics	Value
Mean	3.210
95% confidence interval for mean Upper Lower	3.485
	2.935
Median	3.375
Standard deviation	0.837
Range	3.500
Skewness	-0.429

The descriptive statistics presented in Table 1.3 indicate that the graduates of Makerere and Andhra Universities assessed their behavioral abilities as average, with a mean score of 3.210. The median score was 3.375, and opinions ranged from 2.935 to 3.485 at the 95% confidence interval level.Secondly, there was agreement among respondents on teachers' subject-matter expertise (small standard deviation = 0.837), indicating that graduates' perspectives on behavioral skills are not that dissimilar from one another. The aforementioned standard deviation (0.837) supports the 3.50 difference in opinion regarding low or high behavioral abilities. Moreover, Table 4.8 shows that there was virtually little skew, indicating that the respondents' opinions were nearly normally distributed (Skewness = -0.429)

1.4 Testing Hypothesis using Correlation: Bivariate Level

The hypothesis of the study was tested using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. Table 1.4 gives the necessary correlation matrix.

Table 1.4: PLCC output from IBM SPSS statistics for behavioral and GraduateE

		Makerere University					Andhra University				
		GraduateE	BehavioralS	personality	ProcessS	GlobalCS	GraduateE	BehavioralS	personality	ProcessS	GlobalCS
GraduateE	Pearson Correlation	1					1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)										
	N	110					120				
BehavioralS	Pearson Correlation	.739**					.622**				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000					.000				
	N	110					120				

****Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

At Makerere University, according to Table 1.4, PLCC was computed for BehavioralS and GraduateE and the results (r = 0.739, p = 0.000) indicated that there was a strong positive PLCC (r > 0) between BehavioralS and GraduateE. However, since its significance level (p = 0.000) was far less than α = 0.05 (p > 0.05), the null hypothesis to the effect that there was no statistically significant relationship between BehavioralS and GraduateE was rejected at the 5% level of significance. This suggested that BehavioralS and GraduateE were significantly positively linearly correlated. In other words, PLCC did not support the first hypothesis.

At Andhra University, according to Table 1.4, PLCC was computed for BehavioralS and GraduateE and the results (r = 0.622, p = 0.000) indicated that there was a strong positive PLCC (r > 0) between BehavioralS and GraduateE. However, since its significance level (p = 0.000) was far less than α = 0.05 (p > 0.05), the null hypothesis to the effect that there was no statistically significant relationship between BehavioralS and GraduateE was rejected at the 5% level of significance. This suggested that BehavioralS and GraduateE were significantly positively linearly correlated. In other words, PLCC did not support the first hypothesis.

Discussion of the findings.

Behavioral skills and graduate employability

The first hypothesis of this study stated that there is no significant relationship between behavioral skills and graduate employability among the graduates of Makerere and Andhra University. Data analysis and interpretation using Pearson's linear correlation coefficientrevealed that the relationship between behavioral skills and graduate employability was positively, and significantly linearly correlated at a 5% significance level.For instance, PLCC was calculated at Makerere University for graduate employability and behavioral abilities, and the results (r= 0.739, p= 0.000) showed a significant positive PLCC between the two, whereby its significance level p-value = 0.000 was far less than a = 0.05 (p > 0.05), the null hypothesis to the effect was that there was no statistically significant relationship between behavioral skills and graduate employability was rejected at 5% level of significance and this suggested that behavioral skills and graduate employability were significantly positively correlated hence the PLCC did not support the hypothesis that behavioral skills have no significant relationship on graduate employability.

Whilst Andhra University, the PLCC was also computed for behavioral skills and graduate employability (r= 0.622, p = 0.000) this also indicated that there was a positive PLCC between behavioral skills and graduate employability since the significance level (p= 0.000) was far less than a = 0.05 (p > 0.05) the null hypothesis to the effect that there was no statistically significant relationship between behavioral skills and graduate employability was rejected at the 5% level of significance, instead behavioral skills were significantly positively linearly correlated. The results of this study confirmed what.

Evans, Maxfield, and Gbadamosi (2015) found out on the benefits of working part-time while pursuing a degree, and they looked at employers' perceptions of the worth of a graduate's job experience. Recruiters who specialize in graduate employment programs can check applicant records to ascertain the extent to which job experience is required.To find out more about employers' perceptions of part-time employment for graduates, additional interviews were done with a group of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Employers use a graduate's work experience not only to set them apart but also to evaluate how well they performed after graduation. Employers noted that while work experience was not explicitly highlighted in graduates' applications, they were aware of its importance.A similar study was conducted by Jackson, O'Brien, and Richards (2023). They investigated the impact of experiential learning on employability skill development and employability outcomes from the sub-Indian continent. The survey research design was employed. The findings indicate that international students developed key employability skills which significantly increased their propensity to obtain subsequent employment.

However, the results of this study disagreed withCranmer (2006) who conducted research on graduate employment chances for the higher education Funding Council of England through employability skills instruction and learning These abilities cannot be properly fostered in the classroom, according to the study's findings. To evaluate the attitudes and approaches used by instructors to teach and acquire employability skills, extensive data was collected at the departmental level of the institution.Despite academics' best efforts to increase graduates' employability, it is argued that the agenda's intrinsic limits would inevitably create a range of outcomes. There is also the notion that money would be better used for programs that support employers, enhance employment-related training and expertise, or improve the prospects of recent graduates in the labor market. It has been found that these programs facilitate graduates' entry into the workforce and increase their chances of landing a job quickly.

Conclusions

There was a strong significant positive linear correlation between behavioral skills and graduate employability at Makerere and Andhra University. The research found that behavioral skills such as communication ability, problem-solving, teamwork, time management innovativeness, and decision-making are impactful on graduate employability in both Universities. However, more research is needed to be carried

out to establish whether there would be a positively significant relationship or rather a negative relationship between behavioral skills and graduate employability.

Recommendations

As the study findings revealed, the following recommendations are suggested.
There should be more emphasis on the integration of behavioral skills in the graduate curricula at both Makerere and Andhra University to enhance the employability of graduates. This is because the quantitative findings and qualitative findings found a significant positive and linear relationship between behavioral skills and graduate employability. universities and colleges should integrate these behavioral skills into their curricula to produce graduates with employability behavioral skills to enhance graduate employability.

Implications of the Study

Integration of employability skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, digital literacy, teamwork, and leadership across disciplines, not just in career-specific courses to enhance employability. Active learning methods move beyond passive lectures to incorporate project-based learning, internships, simulations, and real-world problem-solving activities.Technologyintegration to Utilize technology for virtualexperiences, simulations, collaborative tools, and personalized learning, enhancing digital fluency and adaptability.

Contributions of the Study

Curriculum Review and revision to analyze current curriculum against industry demands and emerging technologies, focusing on practical skills and application-oriented learning to enhance graduate employability. Industry Engagement to build partnerships with local and international companies for internships, guest lectures, and joint research projects to boost graduate employability.Skill Development Programs that offer workshops and courses in soft skills like communication, teamwork, and leadership, along with digital literacy training encourage graduate employability.

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