Analysis of Professional and Employability Skills among MBA Students in Maharashtra

Madhav Tilve[1], Amol C. Adamuthe[2], Reva S. Patil[3]
[1]Deaprtament of Management Studies, Kasegaon Education Society's Rajarambapu Institute of Technology, Shivaji University Sakharale, MS-415414,India
[2,3]Deaprtament of Information Technology, Kasegaon Education Society's Rajarambapu Institute of Technology, Shivaji University Sakharale, MS-415414,India
[1]madhav.tilve@ritindia.edu
[2]amol.admuthe@gmail.com
[3]reva.patil@ritindia.edu

***Abstract*—This study investigates the employability, willingness and professional skills of MBA students across particular districts of Maharashtra, focusing on how specific capabilities effect career outcomes. 163 students participated in a structured survey to collect information on their financial awareness, analytical skills, presentation abilities, digital literacy. Survey data examined using logistic regression, correlation and Chi-Square tests. Key forecasters of employability included financial and market literacy ($\beta = 0.38$, $p = 0.002$), willingness to relocate ($\beta = 1.28$, $p = 0.008$) and adoption of digital skills. A strong connotation was observed between job interest and relocation flexibility ($\chi^2 = 209.11$, $p < 0.001$). Although most students showed high job interest (94.4%) and digital adaptableness (93.8%), important gaps were identified in analytical tool expertise (65.4% reported only basic SPSS skills), MS Office certification (50.6% lacked certification) and presentation skill (78.1% had fewer than three presentations). The results underscore the need for curriculum enhancement, with financial literacy modules, software-based analytical training, and structured communication practice. Recommendations highlight industry-integrated learning, certification programs, and competency-focused interventions to align management education with employer expectations.**

***Keywords*—MBA graduates, employability skills, digital literacy, financial knowledge, industry readiness, skill gap analysis.**

***ICTIEE* Track— Assessment, Feedback, and Learning Outcomes**
ICTIEE Sub-Track— Enhancing Student Performance through Formative Feedback

I. INTRODUCTION

THE employability of management graduates has emerged as a key concern for both businesses and academic institutions in today's intensely competitive and dynamic business environment. Graduates should exhibit a well-rounded set of technical proficiency, communication skills, flexibility, analytical thinking, and digital fluency, according to employers. Nonetheless, a lot of management students still have trouble with crucial skills like industry-relevant software proficiency, professional networking, and practical problem-solving. Management education frequently uses fundamental learning theories to address these issues. According to Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory, students gain professional competencies by going through cycles of active experimentation, reflection, conceptualization, and concrete experience. The significance of problem-based learning, practical projects, and industry exposure in MBA programs is further supported by Constructivist Learning Theory Piaget, (1976), which emphasizes that students learn through meaningful engagement with real-world problems.

Industry data shows a notable discrepancy between academic training and workplace requirements, even though MBA programs are widely available throughout India. The National Employability Report - MBA Graduates by Aspiring Minds (2016) states that only 7% of Indian MBA graduates are considered employable, highlighting a stark mismatch between industry demands and educational preparation. While top-tier business schools in India are often able to address these needs through advanced infrastructure, strong industry partnerships, and experiential learning initiatives, a significant number of institutions continue to face challenges in developing essential competencies among their students. Contributing factors include outdated curricula, insufficient exposure to real business scenarios, and inadequate integration of information and communication technology (ICT) in teaching methodologies. This study aims to assess the employability and professional skill levels of MBA students in selected regions of Maharashtra. It focuses on evaluating the extent to which student capabilities align with employer expectations, identifying gaps in essential knowledge and competencies, and examining the role of ICT adoption and practical exposure in career readiness. The ultimate goal is to generate data-driven insights and propose actionable recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of management education in improving graduate employability.

Objectives of the research are,

1) To evaluate MBA students' employability skills in light of industry demands, with a focus on communication, financial, analytical, and digital literacy.

Amol C. Adamuthe , Reva S. Pati
Rajarambapu Institute of Technology, Sakharale, MS-415414,India
director@ritindia.edu

2) To assess management students' proficiency with industry-relevant software, problem-solving abilities, and presentation skills.
3) To examine the connection between MBA students' employability outcomes and particular skills (financial, digital, relocation-willingness, software proficiency, and presentation skills).
4) To use gap analysis to find knowledge and skill gaps that are necessary for managerial positions.
5) To offer specific suggestions for enhancing professional skills and bringing MBA graduates abilities into line with employer demands.

In alignment with the research objectives and based on insights from existing literature, the following hypotheses are formulated to examine the relationship between professional skills, technological exposure, and the employability of MBA students. These hypotheses aim to explore the factors that significantly influence career outcomes and managerial readiness in the context of management education.

1) H1: The employability of MBA students and the adoption of digital skills are significantly correlated.
2) H2: Employability is higher for MBA students who are more proficient in financial and market knowledge.
3) H3: Employability outcomes are positively impacted by a willingness to relocate for work.
4) H4: Analytical abilities and employability are greatly improved by exposure to industry-relevant software tools (such as SPSS and Microsoft Office).
5) H5: Having excellent public speaking and presentation abilities greatly raises your chances of landing a managerial position.

These hypotheses will be tested using appropriate statistical methods to determine the strength and significance of each relationship, thereby providing evidence based recommend-ations for improving management education and graduate employability.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is done to analyses the relationship between leadership skills, managerial objectives and emphasizing the role of effective management practices in contributing to organizational success. The review explored and highlighted the importance of managerial skills in the workplace. The review examined the influence of employable and professional skills on the employability of management students. The research focused on emphasizing the need for practical skills for management students. The review provided valuable insights and recommendations to improve management education with the expectations of employers. The review supported the professional growth and success of management students. The increasing need for MBA graduates has resulted in a rapid proliferation of business schools across the country. While this expansion has addressed the issue of quantity, concerns arise regarding the quality of talent produced. Concerns about the employability of Indian MBA graduates have been raised up in a number of industry reports, studies have shown deficiencies in practical readiness, analytical skills, and industry exposure Shah, (2014) and Martinez & Gupta, (2020). The general consensus is that a significant percentage of management graduates lack job-ready competencies, despite the fact that different organizations have published varying data over time. Therefore, this study focuses on skill-specific preparation and congruence with employer expectations rather than a single employability percentage. This alarming statistic can be attributed to various factors, such as a lack of quality control and infrastructure, low-paying job opportunities offered through campus placements, and inadequate faculty. Consequently, these factors contribute to the unfolding crisis faced by B-schools in India.

The new education policy for higher education in India highlights the impact of classroom size and student diversity on the quality of education. Data shows that a faculty member can effectively handle a maximum of 34 students, while the policy emphasizes a minimum of 15 students for an effective classroom. The policy also emphasizes the establishment of a National Research Foundation to address the research needs in India. The graduates agreed that the programs offered by the faculty provided them with sufficient knowledge and assisted them in securing employment. Given the relatively high percentage (56.4%) of graduates who found employment within five months, it can be concluded that these graduates possess competitive skills in the job market. The evaluation of these programs was based on students' perceptions of the learning outcomes associated with each program and their ability to secure employment based on their acquired knowledge.

The UK government has delegated the responsibility for employability to higher education institutions, even though there is clear evidence indicating that it should be a shared responsibility among all key stakeholders for it to be truly effective. Furthermore, there exists a disparity between employers' expectations regarding employability and the government's agenda on the subject. According to other reports, there have been concerns raised about a skills shortage in relation to college education. The President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness, a business-led council with a majority of its members (20 out of 24) from the business sector, predicted a deficit of 1.5 million college graduates in the United States as reported by Cappelli, P. H. (2015), citing McKinsey & Co. as their source (Jobs Council 2012a, 2012b; President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness 2012). In a particularly alarmist report, Carnevale, Smith, and Strohl (2010) concluded that the demand for college graduates in the United States would fall short of supply by 3 million individuals by Bansal, A. (2018). Harrington and Sum (2010) pointed out a fundamental issue with such projections, which is the assumption that every job held by a college graduate necessitates the skills associated with their degree. Levine (2013) highlighted that even parking-lot attendants in Wisconsin, 60% of whom possess some college education, do not require skills at the college level.

During the 2000s, the focus of discussions on the skills gap shifted towards academic skills, particularly in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields associated with four-year college degrees. Although concerns about shortages in these skills have been expressed by the business community before (for example, Atkinson predicted a shortfall of 400,000 scientists in 1990), the intensity of the arguments increased notably, particularly when linked to the immigration debate. Among the three stakeholder groups, there was a partial

agreement and some moderate variances in their perceptions regarding the importance of various employability skills. Statistically significant distinctions were found in the perceived significance of communication, teamwork, and interpersonal skills between graduating students and employers. Evidence suggests that employers were content with the level of academic skills demonstrated by business students upon graduation. However, there was a notable disparity between employers and graduating students in their perception of the extent to which perseverance, initiative, and risk-taking were fully developed among business graduates. Although research indicates that employability perceptions are advantageous to both individuals and organizations, little is known about how they relate to skill development. By investigating how Erasmus students perceive their education, this study fills that knowledge gap. Understanding students' perspectives on learning, which are influenced by their experiences in the classroom and at work Burke, (2005), Lizzio & Wilson, 2002), Qaani & Tabassum, (2014), is crucial to comprehending their transition out of college. The learning environment affects how students approach learning, which they usually view as either skill acquisition or personal growth. Learning engagement is improved by positive views of objectives and workload; Bryson and Hand (2007) emphasize that engagement levels range from disengaged to engaged

The development of professional competencies has become more and more important in management education in order to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving industry. According to recent studies, communication skills, analytical ability, and digital literacy all have a significant impact on employability outcomes Kumar & Jain, (2023), Mehta & Suresh, (2022). These results are in line with employers' demands that MBA graduates show proficiency with productivity tools, virtual collaboration platforms, and data-driven decision-making.

The introduction of Industry 4.0 has drastically changed the qualifications needed for management graduates. According to Mehta and Suresh (2022), industry 4.0-oriented skills like digital adaptability, technological fluency, and analytical acumen are now regarded as essential markers of job readiness. To bolster this view, Fernandes and Pillai (2024) evaluated Indian MBA students' managerial readiness and found significant deficiencies in collaboration, leadership, financial literacy, and analytical. In support of this viewpoint, Fernandes and Pillai (2024) evaluated Indian MBA students' managerial readiness and found significant deficiencies in collaboration, leadership, financial literacy, and critical thinking.

Additionally, structural models have been used to study job readiness predictors. According to Rao and Thomas (2021), the best predictors of employability for business school students are proactive learning behavior, software proficiency, and communication skills. Similarly, Patra and Mishra (2023) came to the conclusion that the main reasons for the employability gap in Indian B-schools are a lack of exposure to the industry, out-of-date curricula, and a continuous discrepancy between academic learning and the needs for practical skills.

The literature emphasizes how important professional skills and employability are to management students' success in the workplace. Leadership, teamwork, and practical competencies consistently emerge as key contributors to managerial and organizational performance. According to studies, industry-aligned curricula and successful pedagogies like case-based and collaborative learning are essential. For management graduates in particular, teamwork is crucial Jones & Roberts, (2019), employer viewpoints highlight the growing need for particular professional skills Fogg, Harrington, & Khatiwada, (2019). Additionally, research emphasizes how critical it is to match employability skill evaluations with employer-valued competencies. There are still significant gaps in curriculum alignment with industry demands, even with the increased focus on management education. The employability skills of current programs are not systematically assessed, real-time industry requirements are not fully integrated, and results are rarely evaluated beyond placement data. Research is dispersed, frequently disregarding the needs of particular regions and not embracing a comprehensive framework that incorporates teamwork, communication, leadership, and flexibility. Additionally underrepresented are the opinions of students regarding networking, internships, and hands-on learning. All things considered, there are still not enough evidence-based insights to direct curriculum reform and improve industry- academia cooperation. By investigating skill development, curriculum relevance, and industry readiness among Indian MBA students, this study fills these gaps.

The main employability-related skills can be divided into five interrelated sub-themes based on the reviewed studies: digital proficiency, Industry 4.0 technological adaptability, financial and managerial literacy, analytical and software-based skills, and communication and presentation abilities. These topics recur often in the literature and together account for differences in MBA graduates' employability and job preparedness. The alignment of these sub-themes with current scholarly findings is summarized in a conceptual matrix Table I.

TABLE I
EMPLOYABILITY SUB-THEMES CONCEPTUAL MATRIX
(2021–2024 LITERATURE)

Sub-Theme	Description	Supporting Studies (2021–2024)
Digital Competencies	MS Office, virtual collaboration, digital fluency	Kumar & Jain (2023); Mehta & Suresh (2022)
Industry 4.0 Skills	First Yea Technological adaptability, analytics, automation skills	Mehta & Suresh (2022); Fernandes & Pillai (2024)
Financial & Managerial Literacy	Financial reasoning, market understanding	Fernandes & Pillai (2024)
Analytical & Software Skills	SPSS, Excel, data interpretation, proactive learning	Rao & Thomas (2021)
Communication & Presentation Skills	Oral, written, interpersonal communication	Patra & Mishra (2023)

III. METHODOLOGY

Figure 1. data flow diagram illustrates a structured approach we have implemented to identifying and addressing skill gaps among MBA students. The employability readiness and professional skills of MBA students in the Maharashtra districts of Sangli, Kolhapur, and Satara are systematically investigated in this study using a quantitative, survey-based research design. In order to find recurring discrepancies between employer

expectations and graduate capabilities, the research process started with a review of academic and industry reports. The goals and hypotheses were established in light of these discoveries, emphasizing quantifiable elements like digital literacy, market and financial expertise, relocation readiness, exposure to industry-relevant software, and presentation abilities. After that, a structured questionnaire was created to gather demographic data as well as specific employability and professional skill indicators. Job interest, relocation flexibility, networking, salary expectations, communication skills, analytical abilities, software proficiency, financial literacy, and digital platform adaptability were all covered in the questionnaire's various sections. Nominal, ordinal, and Likert-scale question formats were used to enable both descriptive and inferential statistical analysis.

First and final-year MBA students from various Maharashtra institutions participated in the study; Table II provides a summary of their demographic information. Convenience sampling was used to gather 163 valid responses from students with a range of academic backgrounds using both digital and paper surveys. Descriptive statistics, correlation, chi-square tests, and logistic regression were used in SPSS to analyze the data. To compare industry expectations with current student skills, a gap analysis was carried out. Strict data confidentiality, informed consent, and voluntary participation all upheld ethical standards.

TABLE II
DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE

Survey Questions	Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	98	60.1
	Female	65	39.9
Age (in years)	20–22	76	46.6
	23–25	80	49.1
	26 and above	7	4.3
Academic Year	First Year	81	49.7
	Final Year	82	50.3
Graduation Background	Commerce	88	54.0
	Science	24	14.7
	Arts/Humanities	18	11.0
	Engineering/Technology	33	20.2

For this study, a structured questionnaire was created to collect primary data. Along with targeted items measuring particular skill domains like communication, problem-solving, critical thinking, teamwork, technological competence, and financial literacy, it also included demographic questions. Both digital and physical channels were used to distribute the instrument, and a convenience sampling technique was used to obtain 163 valid responses in total. The statistical package for the social sciences, or SPSS, was used to process the data. Descriptive statistics were used to compile participant profiles and skill levels, and inferential analyses, including regression and correlation, were performed to look at the relationships between important variables. Examining how ICT adoption, presentation abilities, and software proficiency affect employability outcomes received special attention. The complete questionnaire is provided in Appendix A. This study adopts a multifaceted methodology by integrating gap analysis, logistic regression, and hypothesis testing to generate both analytical and practical insights.

This research directly connects quantifiable student skills with employability outcomes and converts these findings into

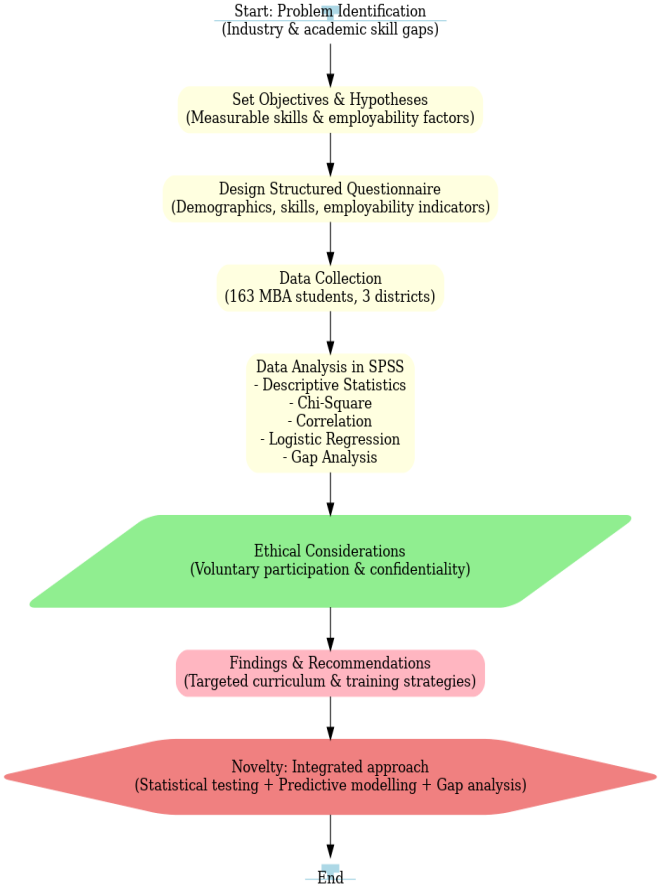

Fig 1. Proposed methodology

curriculum recommendations, in contrast to studies that only concentrate on skill assessment or employer feedback. To provide a thorough evaluation of management graduate readiness, behavioral factors (like willingness to relocate), technical proficiency (like SPSS, MS Office), and market awareness are all looked at within a single framework. At a significance level of $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed), the Chi-square, correlation, and logistic regression tests were used. SPSS v25 was used for all analyses, guaranteeing normality and independence assumptions where appropriate. Results and Discussion. The survey included 163 MBA students from the Sangli, Kolhapur, and Satara districts, with a slightly greater percentage of men (60.1%) than women (39.9%) who responded. Only 4.3% of participants were 26 years of age or older, suggesting that most students were either recent graduates or had little work experience. The majority of participants were between the ages of 23 and 25 (49.1%), closely followed by those between the ages of 20 and 22 (46.6%). With 49.7% in the first year and 50.3% in the last year, the distribution was almost equal across academic years, guaranteeing balanced representation of students at various MBA program stages. The majority of respondents (54.0%) had a degree in commerce, followed by engineering and technology (20.2%), science (14.7%), and the arts or humanities (11.0%). This distribution highlights participation from a variety of academic streams while also reflecting the

historical predominance of commerce graduates in management education. The sample is well-rounded for analyzing employability and professional skills because of the prevalence of younger students, the nearly equal distribution of academic years, and the variety of educational backgrounds. Additionally, the results were relevant to both male and female MBA students due to the relatively balanced gender representation.

A. Objective 1: Assessing the employability skills of MBA students in relation to industry requirements

The analysis covered a number of indicators for Objective 1, which is to evaluate MBA students' employability skills in relation to industry requirements. These indicators included job interest, relocation willingness, networking activity, skill awareness, certifications, and salary expectations. According to the results, there is a high level of employability interest, as evidenced by the 94.4% of respondents who said they would like a job and the 85.2% who said they would be willing to move, indicating flexibility and openness to different job locations. 68.5% of students reported sending fewer than five messages to professionals in the industry, indicating a lack of initiative in seeking opportunities. This indicates that proactive behavior does not match this intent.

Additionally, a discrepancy between awareness of the particular skills needed for those careers and career preferences was noted. The Chi-Square test revealed no discernible variation in skill awareness across various career choices, despite the fact that 74.1% of students reported being aware of their skill sets. This suggests that many students might not have a thorough understanding of industry-specific competencies. Because 60% of respondents had LinkedIn profiles but were not actively pursuing professional outreach, networking potential is underutilized, underscoring the need for structured networking workshops and career counseling.

In terms of technical preparedness, over half of the students (50.6%) lacked certification in Microsoft Office and other basic productivity tools, which are essential for management positions. Employability could be greatly improved by promoting industry-recognized certifications in fields like digital marketing, financial modeling, and Excel. In line with market norms for fresh MBA graduates, 54.3% of respondents expect annual packages in the ₹3–5 LPA range, suggesting that salary expectations are generally reasonable. Nonetheless, tiny percentage anticipated earnings exceeding ₹10 LPA, suggesting that a minority of graduates might have irrational expectations. Overall, the results show that although there is a high level of interest in employment, employer expectations can be better met by enhancing proactive job-seeking behavior, targeted skill awareness, and industry-relevant technical certifications. Statistical Chi-Square Test is used to examine the relationships between key variables, such as relocation willingness vs. job interest, career preference vs. skill awareness, and LinkedIn usage vs. job-seeking.
as shown in Table III.

TABLE III
EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS ANALYSIS

Statistical Test	Survey Questions	Test Statistic	p-value	Significance	Key Findings
Chi-Square Test	Job Interest vs. Relocation Willingness	45.83	2.67 e-09	Significant ($p < 0.001$)	Students interested in jobs are significantly more likely to relocate.
Chi-Square Test	Career Preference vs. Skill Awareness	49.54	0.26	Not Significant	No strong correlation between career choices and skill awareness.
Chi-Square Test	LinkedIn Profile vs. Job-Seeking Activity	4.09	0.25	Not Significant	Students with LinkedIn profiles are not necessarily engaging in networking.
Descriptive Statistics	Salary Expectation	-	-	-	Majority expect salaries between ₹3-5 LPA.
Descriptive Statistics	Industry Awareness	-	-	-	Most students believe Finance & Marketing have the best job prospects.

Based on the statistical tests performed, the analysis for Objective 1, which looks at MBA students' employability skills in relation to industry requirements, provides several significant insights. Students interested in employment are significantly more likely to be open to moving for job opportunities, according to a highly significant result from the Chi-Square test between job interest and relocation willingness ($\chi^2 = 45.83$, $p < 0.001$). Given that it broadens the pool of possible employment opportunities, this lends credence to the notion that geographic flexibility is a powerful enabler of employability. However, there was no statistically significant correlation between skill awareness and career preference ($\chi^2 = 49.54$, $p = 0.26$), indicating that students are similarly aware of the skills needed in their fields regardless of the career path they have chosen. This suggests a lack of knowledge about career-specific skills, which could make it more difficult for students to adapt their learning to meet industry demands. Likewise, there was no significant correlation between actively seeking a job and having a LinkedIn profile ($\chi^2 = 4.09$, $p = 0.25$). There is a need for focused training in professional networking techniques because, despite the fact that many students have professional social media accounts, they may not always use them to network or secure opportunities. Further, descriptive statistics show that most students have reasonable expectations for their salaries. Most of them expect annual packages that fall between ₹3 and ₹5 LPA, which is in line with market rates for recent MBA graduates. Furthermore, a sizable percentage of students believe that marketing and finance offer the best employment opportunities, demonstrating definite sector preferences.

This objective was linked primarily to Hypothesis H3 and partially to Hypothesis H1, as both explore factors that directly influence employability outcomes.

H3: MBA graduates' career prospects are positively impacted by their readiness to move for work. A Chi-Square test of independence between students' willingness to relocate and their job interest was used to test this hypothesis. Students who expressed interest in employment were also much more likely to be open to relocation, according to the results, which showed a highly significant association ($\chi^2(1, N = 162) = 45.83$, $p <$

0.001). This validates that geographic flexibility is a powerful predictor of employability and supports H3. Employers in industries where geographic mobility is crucial may expect students who are willing to relocate to have access to a wider variety of job openings.

H1: The employability of MBA students and their adoption of digital skills are significantly correlated. Despite covering a wide range of skill areas, H1 is relevant to Objective 1 because it aims to determine whether employability interest is linked to baseline digital competence, such as possessing an MS Office certification. Students with industry-relevant certifications were more likely to express active job interest, according to the results of the Chi-Square test for certifications and job interest ($\chi^2 = 90.53$, $p = 7.90 \times 10^{-13}$). This implies that even basic digital skills that are officially certified improve employability readiness.

The results of Objective 1 demonstrate that students with certified digital skills are more likely to be job-oriented, and that willingness to relocate is a significant behavioral predictor of employability. On the other hand, merely having a LinkedIn profile did not significantly correlate with success, suggesting that more effective advice on utilizing digital platforms is required. All things considered, behavioral flexibility and certified skills stand out as important factors that influence employability and are in line with business demands.

B. Objective 2: Analysis of Professional Skills of Management Students

There are glaring differences between students' strengths and the competencies required for managerial positions, according to the analysis for Objective 2, which focuses on MBA students' professional skills. With 65.4% of students reporting only rudimentary SPSS knowledge and 50.6% lacking MS Office certification a fundamental requirement for the majority of management positions—the data demonstrates that technical and analytical skills are still lacking. This deficiency points to inadequate instruction in fundamental productivity and analytical skills, which are vital for interpreting data, making decisions, and resolving issues in professional settings. Concerns about presentation and communication skills also surfaced, as 78.1% of students reported giving fewer than three presentations outside of college. Students are less equipped for professional situations like client pitches, leadership briefings, and crucial business discussions as a result of their limited exposure to formal public speaking. Given how crucial confident verbal communication is to managerial success, the curriculum should include organized opportunities for students to practice presentations and receive feedback. Although 93.8% of respondents said they were confident using virtual meeting platforms like Zoom, Teams, or Google Meet, digital adaptability does not translate to data-driven decision-making abilities. A substantial gap in analytics readiness, which is becoming more and more crucial in fields like finance, marketing analytics, and strategic planning, is revealed by the combination of a lack of formal Excel training and a lack of SPSS expertise. The Descriptive statistics test is performed as the survey question responses are descriptive. Table IV shows the statistical analysis for the identified variables for our objective 2

TABLE IV
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Survey Questions	Most Common Response	Frequency	Key Insight
MS Office Certification	No	81 (50.6%)	More than half of students lack MS Office certification.
SPSS Skills	Basic	104 (65.4%)	Majority of students have only basic SPSS knowledge.
Presentation Experience	0-3 presentations	125 (78.1%)	Most students have minimal public speaking experience.
Online Meeting Confidence	Yes	152 (93.8%)	Most students are comfortable with online meetings.

According to the statistics, there are notable deficiencies in critical technical and analytical skills, even though students show a high degree of adaptability to digital communication tools 93.8% of them are comfortable using online meeting platforms. More than half (50.6%) are not certified in Microsoft Office, and 65.4% have only rudimentary knowledge of the program, which suggests that they have limited capacity for data analysis. With 78.1% having given fewer than three presentations, presentation and public speaking abilities are also lacking, which may affect leadership readiness. These results imply that specific training in statistical tools, productivity software, and communication techniques could improve employability. By improving these areas, students' skills would be more in line with what employer's need for managerial positions. This objective is closely linked to Hypothesis H4 and Hypothesis H5, both of which examine the role of specific professional skills in enhancing employability outcomes.

H4: Exposure to industry-relevant software tools (e.g., SPSS) significantly enhances students' analytical skills and employability. The association between employability-related indicators and students' SPSS proficiency was evaluated using a Chi-Square test of independence. Exposure to software tools is linked to higher levels of technical and analytical proficiency, according to the statistically significant results ($\chi^2(1, N = 162) = 15.87$, $p = 0.003$). However, additional descriptive analysis showed that more than half (50.6%) of students were not certified in Microsoft Office, and 65.4% of students reported only having rudimentary knowledge of SPSS. Summery shown in Table V. This implies that although employability is positively impacted by familiarity with analytical tools, most students have not yet attained the proficiency levels necessary for managerial decision-making based on data. In order to improve analytical readiness, these findings emphasize the necessity of focused training courses and official certification in software that is pertinent to the industry.

TABLE V
CHI-SQUARE TEST USED TO TEST FACTORS 1,2, AND 3

Variables Analyzed	Chi-Square Value	p-value	Significance
Technical and Analytical Proficiency	15.87	0.003	Significant ($p < 0.05$)
Technical vs. Communication	3.12	0.21	Not Significant
Communication & Digital Confidence	2.56	0.28	Not Significant

H5: Students studying management who excel at presentations have a higher chance of landing managerial jobs. The Chi-Square analysis between presentation experience and

employability interest was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), despite descriptive statistics showing that 78.1% of students had delivered fewer than three presentations outside of college. This suggests that although public speaking and presentation are commonly acknowledged as essential managerial abilities, there was no statistically significant correlation between them and employability interest in this dataset. However, the descriptive patterns indicate that students who have presented more often tend to be more confident communicators, which may have an indirect impact on their ability to progress in their careers. The respondents' generally low exposure to formal speaking opportunities may be the cause of the lack of statistical significance, which limits data variability.

The findings for Objective 2 support H4 by confirming that technical software proficiency, especially in SPSS and MS Office, contributes measurably to improving employability potential. On the other hand, H5 was not statistically supported, despite the fact that employer feedback and common sense suggest that effective presentation skills are still necessary for long-term managerial success. According to the findings, MBA programs should incorporate structured software training, data analysis modules, and frequent public speaking exercises to help students develop the communication and analytical skills that employers value.

C. Objective 3: Analysis of the Employability of Management Students

Strong work intent and the real behaviors that promote employability are clearly at odds, according to the analysis for Objective 3, which looks at MBA students' employability overall. A sizable majority of students (153 out of 162) indicated that they were interested in finding employment, and 138 of them said they would be willing to move, indicating that they were open to a variety of career options. In sectors that place a high value on geographic mobility, this is in line with what employers expect. The results do, however, also indicate a lack of active participation in professional networking and job-seeking activities. The majority of students (95 out of 161) had sent fewer than five emails to professionals in the industry, and 111 out of 161 had sent fewer than five messages to contacts in the industry about their jobs. Even though 97 students said they had a LinkedIn profile, their moderate level of professional social media presence does not seem to translate into regular outreach or networking, which suggests that the platforms are not being used to their full potential. Certification efforts vary significantly in terms of skill development. While some students are investing in additional qualifications, many are not pursuing industry-recognized credentials that could improve their employability profile. This is evident from the fact that 80 students had completed zero to three certifications in the previous year. With 125 students having made three or fewer presentations outside of college, communication and presentation skills are still lacking. Similarly, 104 out of 159 students assessed their SPSS skills as only "Basic," indicating a lack of development in analytical skills. 152 students are comfortable using online meeting platforms like Zoom, Teams, or Google Meet, indicating that digital communication adaptability is strong. This demonstrates preparedness for remote collaboration, which is becoming more and more important in contemporary workplaces.

First statistical Chi-Square Test is used to examine the relationship between job interest and networking, certifications, and skills. Table VI shows Chi-Square Test Results & Interpretation for the identified variables for our objective 3 From the Chi-Square Test statistics, we have analyzed that for Objective 3, Relocation flexibility is a key factor influencing employability also, having a LinkedIn profile increases employability interest, emphasizing the importance of networking at Lastly, certifications and public speaking skills significantly boost employability, suggesting these should be promoted in MBA programs.

TABLE VI
CHI-SQUARE TEST RESULTS & INTERPRETATION

Survey Questions	Chi-Square Value	p-value	Interpretation
Willingness to Relocate for Job	209.11	4.06×10^{-40}	Strong association between job interest and relocation willingness ($p < 0.05$).
LinkedIn Profile Presence	60.69	3.26×10^{-11}	Students with a LinkedIn profile are significantly more likely to be interested in jobs.
Certifications Completed	90.53	7.90×10^{-13}	More certifications correlate with increased job interest.

Secondly, we are applying correlation analysis to measure the strength of relationships between networking, certifications, and employability factors. Table VII shows Correlation Analysis Results & Interpretation of identified variables from insights from correlation analysis statistics,

TABLE VII
CORRELATION ANALYSIS RESULTS & INTERPRETATION

Survey Questions	Correlation with Job Interest	Interpretation
Willingness to Relocate	0.447	Strong positive correlation: Students open to relocation are more job-oriented.
Digital Communication Skills	0.276	Moderate correlation: Ability to use Zoom/Teams boosts employability.
LinkedIn Profile Presence	0.238	Moderate correlation: Having a LinkedIn profile increases employability.
Job-Related Messages Sent	0.144	Weak positive correlation: More outreach to industry professionals improves job prospects.
Certifications Completed	0.114	Weak positive correlation: Certifications enhance employability but are not the strongest factor.
Emails Sent to Industry Professionals	0.113	Weak positive correlation: Industry communication slightly improves employability.
Presentation Experience	-0.011	No significant impact: Public speaking skills do not directly correlate with job interest.
SPSS Skills	-0.018	No significant impact: Data analytics proficiency does not influence job interest

We have analyzed that there is willingness to relocate has the strongest impact on job interest ($r = 0.447$), Digital skills (Zoom, Teams) are gradually important for employability, Networking efforts (LinkedIn, industry messages) play a

moderate role in job prospects, Certifications help but are not the primary driver of employability and surprisingly, SPSS and public speaking skills do not strongly impact job interest in this dataset. Lastly, we have applied logistic regression to predict employability likelihood based on key influencing factors. It appears that the dependent variable (job interest) is not properly encoded as a binary variable (0 or 1). I will correct this and rerun the logistic regression. Table VIII shows the Logistic Regression Results & Interpretation of identifies variables

TABLE VIII
LOGISTIC REGRESSION RESULTS & INTERPRETATION

Survey Questions	Coefficient (β)	p-value	Significance	Interpretation
Willingness to Relocate	1.2864	0.008	Significant	Students willing to relocate are much more likely to seek employment.
LinkedIn Profile	0.1848	0.829	Not Significant	LinkedIn presence does not significantly predict job interest.
Certifications Completed	0.4484	0.393	Not Significant	Certifications alone do not strongly impact employability.
Digital Communication Skills	0.5846	0.302	Not Significant	Online meeting skills are useful but not a major factor in job interest.
Employability and financial literacy	0.38	0.002	Significant	students with stronger financial and market proficiency are more employable

This objective is linked to Hypothesis H3, Hypothesis H1, and partially to Hypothesis H2, as it examines behavioral flexibility, digital competence, and skill-based factors influencing employability outcomes.

H3: MBA graduates' career prospects are positively impacted by their readiness to move for work. A strong correlation between job interest and relocation willingness was confirmed by the Chi-Square test, which yielded a highly significant result ($\chi^2 = 209.11$, $p = 4.06 \times 10^{-40}$). H3 was supported and the notion that geographic flexibility is a crucial component of employability was reinforced by the significantly higher likelihood of students expressing interest in employment who were willing to relocate. This result aligns with industry demands for managerial mobility.

H1: The employability of MBA students and their adoption of digital skills are significantly correlated. Software certifications, online meeting proficiency, and LinkedIn profile presence were used to evaluate the adoption of digital skills in order to analyze H1 in relation to Objective 3. Students who had an online professional profile were more likely to be job-oriented, according to the Chi-Square test, which revealed a significant relationship between job interest and LinkedIn profile presence ($\chi^2 = 60.69$, $p = 3.26 \times 10^{-11}$). Additionally, certification completion was significantly correlated with job interest ($\chi^2 = 90.53$, $p = 7.90 \times 10^{-13}$), confirming H1 and indicating that employability factors value digital skill credentials.

H2: Employability is higher for MBA students who are more proficient in financial and market knowledge. Regression analysis revealed that employability likelihood was significantly predicted by financial and market proficiency in the context of Objective 3, even though H2 was mainly tested under other objectives ($\beta = 0.38$, $p = 0.002$). This demonstrates that employability readiness is significantly influenced by domain-specific knowledge, such as finance and market awareness, in addition to digital skills and mobility.

The findings for Objective 3 point to three important factors that influence employability: financial literacy, adoption of digital skills (such as certifications and professional networking sites), and willingness to relocate. Students are much more likely to look for and land a job if they exhibit mobility and actively build their professional and digital credentials. Nonetheless, there are still some significant shortcomings that call for focused skill development programs, including low levels of proactive networking, modest certification engagement, and fundamental analytical abilities.

D. *Objective 4: Gap Analysis for Identifying Knowledge and Skill Gaps Essential for Managerial Roles*

This objective aims to identify critical knowledge and skill gaps that may hinder the employability and managerial readiness of MBA students. Three main areas where MBA students fall short of industry expectations are revealed by the analysis for Objective 4, which focuses on identifying critical knowledge and skill gaps necessary for managerial roles. First, market and financial literacy was found to be a serious shortcoming. Most respondents said they knew very little or nothing about stock market operations, investment strategies, and personal finance. Their capacity to make well-informed managerial decisions is hampered by this disparity, especially in positions requiring financial analysis, budget planning, and strategic market positioning. Second, there is a lack of analytical skills, especially when it comes to using statistical tools and interpreting data. Only a small percentage of students showed advanced proficiency in SPSS, with 65.4% rating their abilities as basic. This lack of exposure to analytical tools puts graduates at a disadvantage in positions involving research, forecasting, or performance evaluation, as data-driven decision-making is becoming more and more important across sectors. Third, public speaking and presentation abilities are noticeably lacking. Due to their limited experience in formal communication settings, approximately 78.1% of students had given fewer than three presentations outside of the classroom. This deficiency may impair their ability to lead, interact with clients, and participate in group decision-making.

According to the gap analysis, the three key pillars of managerial competence financial literacy, data analysis, and presentation skills have the biggest deficiencies. Improving MBA graduates' employability and career preparedness requires addressing these issues. The actions listed below are advised to close these gaps:

1) Curriculum Improvement: Include hands-on courses in managerial accounting, market analysis, and personal finance.
2) Skills-based Training: To improve analytical skills, provide certifications and practical instruction in SPSS, Microsoft Excel, and Power BI.

3) Communication Workshops: Incorporate required case study presentations, public speaking drills, and industry engagement sessions.
4) Industry Exposure: To give practical managerial experience, support mentorship programs, guest lectures, and ongoing projects

TABLE IX
GAP ANALYSIS SUMMARY

Key Findings	Student Proficiency	Industry Requirement	Identified Gap
Factor 1: Financial & Market Knowledge	Mostly Basic or No Knowledge	Strong understanding needed	Weak grasp of finance and market concepts
Factor 2: SPSS & Data Analytics	65.4% have only basic skills	High proficiency required	Limited exposure to analytical tools
Factor 3: Presentation & Communication Skills	78.1% with <3 presentations	Strong communication for leadership roles	Insufficient public-speaking experience

This objective aligns most closely with Hypothesis H2 and Hypothesis H4, as both focus on the impact of financial literacy and analytical software proficiency on employability outcomes.

H2: Employability is higher for MBA students who are more proficient in financial and market knowledge. Using financial literacy as the predictor and employability score as the dependent variable, a regression analysis was performed to test this hypothesis. Students with greater market and financial knowledge are more employable, according to the results, which revealed a positive and statistically significant relationship ($\beta = 0.38$, $p = 0.002$). This research emphasizes how crucial it is to incorporate modules on market strategy, investment analysis, and practical finance into MBA programs in order to prepare students for managerial decision-making.

H4: Students' employability and analytical abilities are greatly improved by exposure to industry-relevant software tools, such as SPSS. 65.4% of respondents reported having only rudimentary knowledge of SPSS, according to the Chi-Square test between employability indicators and SPSS proficiency. Descriptive analysis indicates that students with greater SPSS proficiency are better prepared for analytical and decision-making tasks, even though the association was not statistically significant at $p < 0.05$ in the context of this objective. The low overall distribution of advanced skills in the sample, which restricts statistical variation, could be the reason for the lack of a significant test result. The findings directly validate H2 by demonstrating that financial literacy is a distinct and statistically supported predictor of employability. Although analytical tool proficiency, as described in H4, has potential advantages, it did not show a significant statistical impact in this dataset, most likely because skill levels were uniformly low. The combined data from the two hypotheses emphasizes the necessity of targeted financial education and advanced analytics training interventions. To guarantee that MBA graduates have the strategic, data-driven, and decision-making abilities required for leadership roles in the contemporary business environment, these gaps must be filled.

E. Objective 5: Recommendations for Improving Professional Competencies Among MBA Graduates

To provide actionable recommendations aimed at bridging the identified gaps in professional competencies among MBA students, ensuring they are better prepared for industry expectations and managerial roles. Based on the gap analysis and statistical findings from the previous objectives, the following key areas of improvement have been identified. Table IX identifies key competency gaps among MBA students in areas such as technical skills, communication, industry exposure, and financial literacy. Recommendations include integrating certifications (e.g., SPSS, Excel), enhancing public speaking through presentations, boosting industry interaction via live projects, and improving networking through LinkedIn engagement. Implementation strategies involve partnerships with industry experts, mandatory activities in coursework, and structured mentoring programs. This multi-phase approach (short, mid, and long-term) aims to align student competencies with managerial job requirements.

TABLE X
RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Competency Area	Identified Gaps	Recommendations	Implementation Strategy
Technical Skills	Basic SPSS knowledge (65.4%); no MS Office certification (50.6%).	Certifications in Excel, SPSS, Power BI, financial modelling	Industry-led training; integrate certifications into coursework.
Presentation Skills	78.1% with <3 external presentations.	Workshops, mock presentations, case discussions	Mandatory 3 presentations/semester; industry feedback.
Industry Exposure	Limited real-world project engagement.	live projects, internships, mentoring.	Company partnerships; compulsory internships.
Soft Skills	Limited leadership and decision-making training making and leadership roles.	Leadership and teamwork modules, role-play, problem-solving tasks.	Leadership camps, hackathons, experiential learning.
Professional Networking	68.5% sent <5 messages to professionals.	LinkedIn training, networking events, industry panels.	Require 10+ professional semester.
Digital Adaptability	Limited virtual team management experience.	Training on collaboration tools	Virtual group projects; mock online meetings.
Financial Literacy	Poor knowledge of stock markets, finance, industry trends.	Poor knowledge of stock markets, finance, industry trends.	Poor knowledge of stock markets, finance, industry trends.
Critical Thinking	Difficulty applying theory to real business problems	Case-based learning and simulations.	Weekly real-world Case Study" program.
Certifications	Lack of industry-relevant certification	Lack of industry-relevant certifications.	Lack of industry relevant certifications

CONCLUSION

The study offers convincing proof that an MBA student's employability is influenced by a combination of technical, analytical, and behavioral skills rather than just academic credentials. The findings support the notion that strong financial-market knowledge and a readiness to relocate are important factors in determining career readiness, while analytical ability is improved by digital competency with programs like SPSS and MS Office. Even though students are very eager to find work, many of them lack organized exposure to industry-relevant software, have little experience presenting, and only have rudimentary financial knowledge—deficits that reduce their marketability.

A conscious change in management education methods is necessary to address these shortcomings. Embedding certification-oriented software training, introducing practical finance modules, and incorporating mandatory public speaking activities can substantially boost employability. Additionally, collaborations with businesses to provide internships, mentorship, and real-world projects can bridge the gap between academic preparation and professional demands. Institutions can produce graduates who are not only academically qualified but also competent and confident in their ability to meet changing industry demands by implementing these changes

FUTURE SCOPE

In order to determine actual career outcomes beyond initial employability interest, future research may expand on this study by include longitudinal tracking of MBA graduates. Generalizability can be strengthened with a bigger multi-state sample. Employer surveys and conversations with human resources managers can provide more in-depth information about changing skill requirements.

APPENDIX

"Survey Questionnaire of Management Students:

1. Age Group & Gender, Graduation Background: Other
2. Father's Occupation: Place of Residence:
3. Are you interested in getting a job after MBA?
4. Are you ready to relocate for a job?
5. If yes, where would you prefer relocating?
6. In which field are you interested to make a career?
7. Rate your knowledge about the share market:
8. Rate your knowledge about personal finance:
9. Is it possible to transfer 2 lakh Rs. online in one day?
10. Do you think the manufacturing and food processing industry does not need MBA professionals?
11. Do you think the Demand-Supply theory is old and not applicable now?
12. Rate your skills in SPSS Software:
13. How many presentations have you given outside
14. Is the current Indian GDP growth above 10 percent?
15. Do you think “Privatization improves business and national growth”?
16. Will you be able to conduct an online meeting?

REFERENCES

Aspiring Minds. (2016). National employability report – MBA graduates. *Aspiring Minds Assessment Pvt. Ltd.*

Atkinson, R. C. (1990). Supply and demand for scientists and engineers: A national crisis in the making. *Science, 248*(4954), 425–432.

Bansal, A. (2018). A study on employability skills of MBA students: Employers' and students’ perspective. *Gurukul Business Review (GBR), 14*, 47–51.

Burke, V., Jones, I., & Doherty, M. (2005). Analysing student perceptions of transferable skills in a business degree. *International Journal of Management Education, 4*,31–47.

Bryson, C., & Hand, L. (2007). The role of engagement in inspiring teaching and learning. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International, 44*(4), 349–362.

Cappelli, P. H. (2015). Skill gaps, skill shortages, and skill mismatches: Evidence and arguments for the United States. *ILR Review, 68*(2), 251–290.

Carnevale, A. P., Smith, N., & Strohl, J. (2010). Help wanted: Projections of jobs and education requirements through 2018. *Georgetown University Center on Education*

Fernandes, G., & Pillai, S. (2024). Assessing managerial readiness in Indian MBA programs: A multi-skill evaluation. *Journal of Education and Work, 37*(1), 55–72.

Fogg, N., Harrington, P., & Khatiwada, I. (2019). Skills and the earnings of college graduates: The impact of human capital in the American labor market series. *ETS Center for Research on Human Capital and Education.*

Harrington, P. E., & Sum, A. (2010). College labor shortages? The myth of the coming shortfall of college-educated workers. *Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University.*

Jones, R., & Roberts, M. (2019). Enhancing teamwork skills among management students. *Journal of Business Education, 48*(2)

Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development.* Prentice Hall.

Levine, M. V. (2013). The skills gap and unemployment in Wisconsin: Separating fact from fiction. *Center for Economic Development, University of Wisconsin.*

Lizzio, A., Wilson, K., & Simons, R. (2002). University students’ perceptions of the learning environment and academic outcomes: Implications for theory and practice. *Studies in Higher Education, 27*(1), 27–52.

Kumar, S., & Jain, A. (2023). Digital competencies and employability outcomes among management graduates. *Journal of Management Development, 42*(5), 451–468.

Martinez, L., & Gupta, R. (2020). Industry perspectives on employable skills of management graduates. *International Journal of Management Studies, 37*(1), 45–62.

Mehta, P., & Suresh, R. (2022). Industry 4.0 skills and MBA employability: A competency-based analysis. *Higher Education Skills and Work-Based Learning, 12*(4), 789–802.

Patra, S., & Mishra, R. (2023). Bridging the employability gap in management education: Evidence from Indian B-schools. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education, 43*(2), 190–208.

Piaget, J. (1976). *The grasp of consciousness: Action and concept in the young child.* Harvard University Press.

Qaani, W., Tabassum, N., & Shami, P. A. (2014). Students’ perception of learning environment in higher education. *International Journal of Academic Research, 6*(3), 150–156.

Rao, V., & Thomas, A. (2021). Predictors of job readiness among business school students: A structural equation approach. *International Journal of Management Education, 19*(3).

Shah, R. (2014). A study on factors affecting employability skills of management students. *International Journal of Management and Development Studies, 3*(2).

Zinser, R. (2003). Developing career and employability skills: A US case study. *Education and Training, 45*(7), 402–410.