# EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS OF RURAL AND URBAN GRADUATE STUDENTS IN VELLORE DISTRICT

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## Abstract

*The study examined the Employability skills of Rural and Urban Graduate Students in Vellore District. The questionnaire was used for data collection from 739 graduate students by using multi-stage sampling method with three different colleges namely Government, Aided and Self–finance colleges affiliated Thiruvalluvar University in Vellore District. The research adopted descriptive design. The data were analyzed using the descriptive analysis with support of (SPSS) Statistical Package for Social Science -20 version. The study attempted to find out the difference in the mean value of employability skills and the rural and urban graduate students. Employability skills refer to ability of individuals to show evidence of their skills to the prospective employers and the ability to carry out the tasks, thereby achieving organizational goals and objectives. There are eight dimension of employability skills such as; communication skill, team work skill, problem solving skill, initiative and enterprise skill, planning and organizing skill, self management skill, lifelong learning skill and technology skill (DEST: 2002a). According to the Wheebox India Skill Reports (2014) says that out of top ten states in India, Tamil Nadu has got 9$^{th}$ rank in the employability pool. The same report highlights that Tamil nadu gains 3$^{rd}$ Rank with regard to English, logical, numerical and computer skills. This indicates the intensity and magnitude of the problem that would affect the state's productivity in the near future and in the long run. These reviews have greatly emphasized the need for strategizing the efforts to increasing the employability skills among the graduate students of Tamil Nadu. There is immediate necessity to capacitate the college students to face the challenges towards their better career goals. The study used various statistical methods such as; chi-square test, t-test. The various suggestions given here would certainly help the students, parents, teachers, state and central governments and educational institutions to benefit and join hands to ensure a strong nation through developing employability skills of rural and urban graduate students.*

**Key Words:** *Employability skills, Rural and Urban Graduate Students*

## INTRODUCTION

There is a saying, "Today's Youth are Leaders of Tomorrow". The development of a country depends on its availability of skilled human resources. The changes in the occupation due to the globalization, liberalization and industrialization demand specialized skills to perform various tasks. Unfortunately the current Indian system of education does not focus on the required employability skills; rather it trains' students to scoring high in examinations. Application of learning is not much emphasized in the academic life, due to the limited educational institutions in the country. This chapter tries to explain the concept of employability skills in the changing scenario of job market. Employment refers to contract between two parties, one being the

employer and the other being the employee. It is an agreement between an employer and an employee that the employee will provide certain services on the job and in return he is paid for his service. Young people are a major human resource for the economic growth of India. There are challenges, which curtail the opportunities for the youth to excel in various fields. Though there is a drastic increase in the number of educational institutions, the getting jobs is a huge challenge in front of youth. There is a gap in the education received and the application of them in the field. It causes lack of skills related to jobs available in the job market for today's youth.

**THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

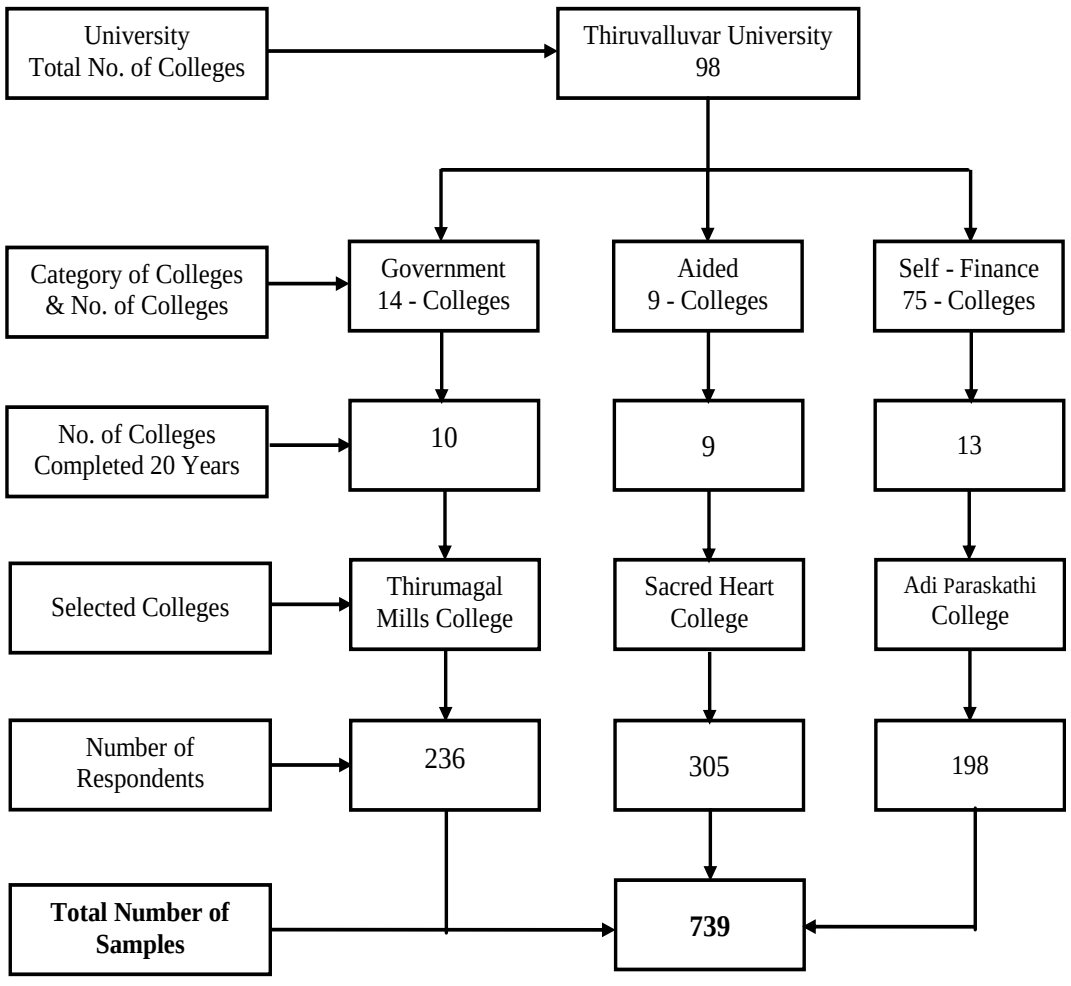
Today's work environment is changing rapidly and the speed of this change continuously challenges the advancement of educational programs. This challenge demands to determine the appropriate balance of technical, employability and academic skills of the graduate students. Employability skills refer to ability of individuals to show evidence of their skills to the prospective employers and the ability to carry out the tasks, thereby achieving organizational goals and objectives. There are eight dimension of employability skills such as; communication skill, team work skill, problem solving skill, initiative and enterprise skill, planning and organizing skill, self management skill, lifelong learning skill and technology skill (DEST: 2002a). Unemployment is the major cause of poverty. Unemployment leads to loss of income, self-reliance, skills and self-confidence, psychological and physical health, worker motivation and increases in sickness, morbidity and mortality among the present young generation. According to the Wheebox India Skill Reports (2014) says that out of top ten stats in India, Tamil Nadu take the 9$^{th}$ rank in the employability pool. The same report highltihg that Tamil nadu gains 3$^{rd}$ Rand with regard to English, logical, numercal and computer skills. According to Labour Bureau's Third Annual Employment & Unemployment Survey 2013-2014 released the unemployment rate amongst literate youth is lower than educated graduate students. Kerala has an alarming rate of graduate students unemployment in the rural (42.1%) and urban (41.8%) and other states having a high rate of rural and urban unemployment especially Tripura, Goa, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, punjab, Assam and Bihar (Prakash, 2012). Fernando Cartwright and Mary K. Allen (2002), study found that rural students were more likely than urban students to come from families with lower socio-economic backgrounds. The parents of rural students tend to be less education and less likely to be employed in professional occupations, such as doctors, lawyers and bankers. These differences influence the employability skills and academic performance of rural and urban students.

**METHODOLOGY**

The primary data were collected from the final year students of undergraduates from the selected colleges. The colleges were stratified into three namely Government, Aided and Self-

financed. Since, the number of colleges in each category is not equal, an inclusion criteria was used to narrow down the eligibility. The colleges irrespective of their category which have completed 20 years of its existence were included for the study purpose.

**SAMPLING DESIGN**




From each category, one college was selected by using lottery method. All the final year undergraduate students of the selected colleges are included as study participants. Hence, the sampling design used for this was **Multistage Sampling**. The total number of samples of the study was 739 undergraduate students.

**ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS**

**Rural and Urban Students (Domicile) and their Academic Performance**

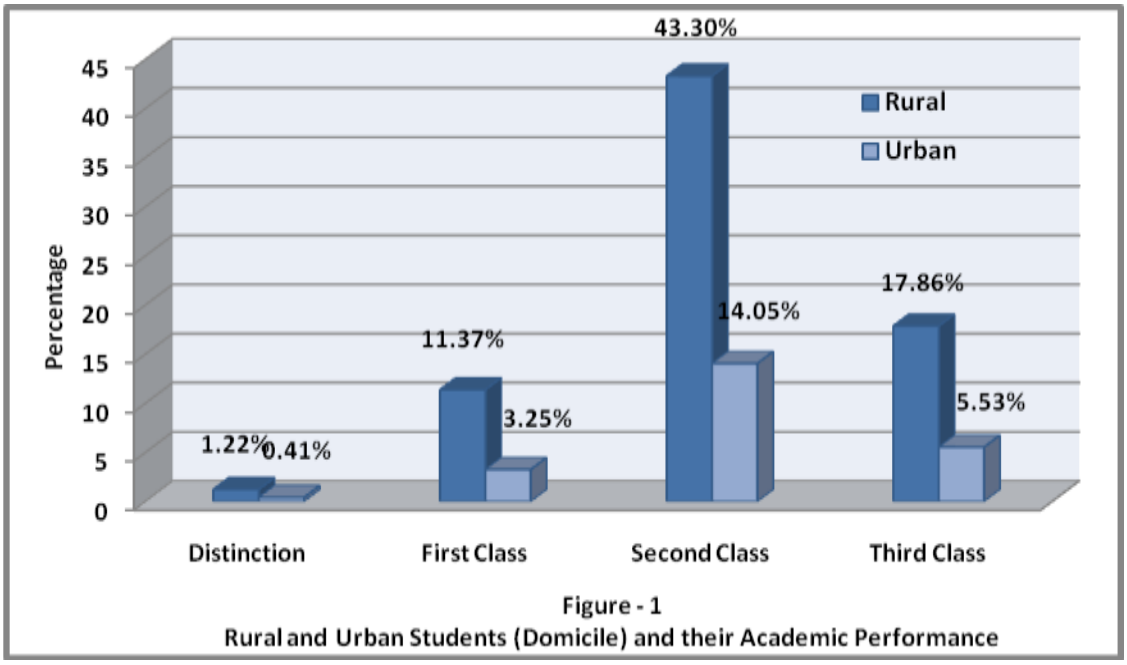



Figure - 1
Rural and Urban Students (Domicile) and their Academic Performance

The above figure reveals that nearly half (43.30%) of the rural students scored 2nd class. The rural students have less exposure to involve other activities apart from their studies. Chi-square test has been applied there is no association between the rural and urban students by their Academic Performance. The rural students are academically far better than the urban students.

**Table -**

**Rural and urban Students (Domicile) and their Socio-Economic Status**

| **Domicile** | **Socio Economic Status** | | | **Total** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Low** | **Moderate** | **High** | |
| Rural | ***219 (40.2)*** ***(80.8)*** | ***305 (56.0)*** ***(72.6)*** | 21 (3.9) (43.8) | 545 (100.0) (73.7) |
| Urban | 52 (26.8) (19.2) | 115 59.3 () (27.4) | 27 13.9 () (56.2) | 194 (100.0) (26.3) |
| Total | 271 (36.7) (100.0) | 420 (56.8) (100.0) | 48 (6.5) (100.0) | 739 (100.0) (100.0) |

Socio-economic status determines the wellbeing of a family. Good economic condition gratifies the needs of the family in terms of education, health and family development. Vast majority (96.2%) of the rural students socio-economically week compare to the urban students. It is evident that there is relationship between rural and urban students by the socio-economic status. Since the level of significance is less than 0.05, H0 is rejected and it could be stated that rural and urban students and associated with their socio-economic status.

**Table –**

**Employability Skills by their Native Place (Domicile) – Independent Sample t-test**

| | Native Place | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | t-test Equality of Means | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | t | df | Sig. |
| Communication Skill | Rural | 545 | 30.79 | 4.67 | -2.050 | 737 | **.041** |
| | Urban | 194 | **31.57** | 4.21 | | | |
| Problem solving Skill | Rural | 545 | 31.28 | 4.98 | -1.886 | 737 | **.010** |
| | Urban | 194 | 32.04 | 4.41 | | | |
| Team work skill | Rural | 545 | 31.05 | 5.94 | -1.511 | 737 | .131 |
| | Urban | 194 | 31.78 | 5.52 | | | |
| Technology Skill | Rural | 545 | 25.04 | 6.33 | -3.902 | 737 | **.000** |
| | Urban | 194 | **27.08** | 5.98 | | | |
| Self Management Skill | Rural | 545 | 29.35 | 5.47 | -.548 | 737 | .584 |
| | Urban | 194 | 29.60 | 5.14 | | | |
| Planning & Organizing Skill | Rural | 545 | 30.11 | 6.48 | 1.029 | 737 | .304 |
| | Urban | 194 | 29.56 | 6.36 | | | |
| Initiative & Enterprises Skill | Rural | 545 | 29.96 | 6.01 | -1.777 | 737 | .076 |
| | Urban | 194 | 30.82 | 5.24 | | | |
| Life Long Learning Skill | Rural | 545 | 33.05 | 5.25 | -1.174 | 737 | .241 |
| | Urban | 194 | 33.55 | 4.74 | | | |
| Employability Skills-overall | Rural | 545 | 240.66 | 33.03 | -2.005 | 737 | **.045** |
| | Urban | 194 | **246.04** | 29.27 | | | |

**N=739**

The above tables shows that the mean difference in employability skills between rural and urban *(mean=246.04)* the urban students have higher employability skills than rural *(mean=240.66)* but independent sample t-test proved that there is significant difference *(t= -2.005, df = 737, p<0.05)* in the mean value of employability skills by the native places. There are other findings that communication skills, problem solving skills and technology skill significantly differ according to the native place of the students. Domicile does not make any difference in the

other employability skills. When it is assessed with the overall score there is a significant difference in the mean value of employability skills according to the native place.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Main Findings**

1. Nearly half (43.30%) of the rural students scored 2nd class.
2. Vast majority (96.2%) of the rural students socio-economically week compare to the urban students.
3. The urban students have higher employability skills than rural.
4. Communication skills, problem solving skills and technology skill significantly differ according to the domicile (rural and urban) of the students.

**Discussion**

Since the employability skills significantly differ by socio economic status of the students, it is suggested to add special attention to these students by providing scholarships and career placements. Institutions, government and voluntary agencies could be encouraged to provide free skill training. EDP (Entrepreneurship Development Programme) can be given with stipend to acquire employability skill to the economically weaker students. The government needs to scrutinize the policies of the educational institution to ensure the facilities and structures related to help students to have better employability skills for rural and urban students. Special training programes need to be sponsored to the educational institutions towards enhancing the employability skills and career aspiration. Tamilnadu government should consider ways of reflecting and promoting the employability skills and attribute in funding system such as the Research Excellence Framework (REF). Employability skills must be enhanced through appropriate technical and vocational training. Research on youth employment will give stakeholders an indication of the challenges and opportunities as they relate to youth development.

**Conclusion**

This chapter contains the essence of the study by providing the main findings and recommendations, which will be a treasure for the stakeholders to carve the students to excel in their employment and contribute towards for nation building.

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