METHODS AND APPROACHES FOR EMPLOYABILITY SKILL GENERATION IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Dr. P. S. Aithal*.

P. M. Suresh Kumar **.

Pavithra Kumari***.

*Srinivas Institute of Management Studies, Pandeshwar, Mangalore - 575 001, INDIA, psaithal@srinivasgroup.com

**Srinivas Institute of Management Studies, Pandeshwar, Mangalore – 575 001, INDIAE-mail: sureshpmsk@rediffmail.com

***Srinivas Institute of Management Studies, Pandeshwar, Mangalore – 575 001, INDIA, pavithrahmp@yahoo.co.in

ABSTRACT

The vision of any higher education institution is extension of opportunity to all aspirants of education, and expansion across all realms of knowledge. Keeping in line with this vision, institutions of higher education should ideally offer opportunity to take any course to eligible aspirant in any stream of study that it offers. The vision also encompasses a self reliant society where all people are educated and productively engaged, with the objective of creating academically empowered and ready-for-the-job professionals in diverse fields. To realize this curriculum should provide for building employability skills among students. It is widely agreed that curriculum per se and real job performance do not match and there is need to incorporate skill supplements to boost employability. This paper attempts to outline the measures undertaken to create employment preparedness among students at Srinivas Institute of Management Studies (SIMS), Mangalore.

Keywords: Employability skill,Innovations in higher education,

Introduction:

The prima face intent of a higher education institution is extension of opportunity to all aspirants for education, and expansion across all realms of knowledge. This affords unlimited opportunity for all aspirants to join any course of study and unlimited opportunity for the institution to expand to all courses. Consequently it envisions a self-reliant society where all people are educated, healthy and productively engaged, living in perfect harmony with each other and their surroundings, upholding values of freedom, equality and service to mankind. It points to a grooming a new generation of young people through providing quality education and skills matching the requirement of a harmonious, self-reliant and developed society and values inclined to serve with selfless devotion in whatever capacity they assume and wherever they work. This also aims to inculcate values of human dignity and mutual respect, generate the spirit of enquiry, induce healthy competitions, encourage sustainable accomplishments and ensure enriching rewards. It is accomplished through endeavoring to make available world class education, create centre of excellence imparting quality education (Douglas C. Bennett, 2001), offer to the society /industry, academically empowered and ready for the job professionals in diverse fields, foster research and dissipate research findings for the all round development of the nation and community at large, contribute to nation building by generating a pool of human resources trained in science, technology, humanities, management, education and research, maintain dynamic equilibrium between the various educational institutions and the economic, socio-cultural and ecological environment.

The following are the core values namely, Team work, Respect, Responsibility, Ethics, Etiquette, Social Service, Communication, Character & Competency, Techno-savvy & Scientific Thinking, Quest for Excellence, Courage to Innovate. This is translated into action and communicated to the stake holders such that the following purpose is served.

- The students receive quality education in a disciplined environment.

- The teachers are busy, motivated and academically oriented.

- The staff feels proud to work in a harmonious work place and lead a satisfied living.

- The parents of students are confident that their children are in safe hands and they build a career.

- The neighbouring community is happy with an institution for higher studies in their locality. They are also beneficiaries of the social service activities of the institute.

- The university is satisfied with a well functioning institution affiliated to it.

- The management is happy with the impact it creates in the society towards higher education and the opportunity provided to youngsters to groom their career of choice and providing jobs to many qualified youngsters in their institution.

- Other colleges find their staff and students in healthy competition.

- The Government is satisfied that the institute is sharing its goal of developing the youth to contribute to the nation.

Implementing Curriculum:

For effective implementation of the curriculum, the institution develop and deploys action plans (Manual for self-study report of Affiliated colleges, 2013) which integrates time, quality, quantity and accountability. Academic calendar is prepared every semester. The calendar reflects major events, programmes and activities to be taken up at the appropriate time. The detailed plan of the syllabus is divided session-wise to ensure that time is evenly distributed for implementing the curriculum and used as a teaching plan. The advantage is that it is a ready reference for the student to keep track of the progress of the classes and forecast further classes. A work book called a teachers dairy is maintained by each faculty wherein the particulars of each session conducted is entered with time, date, session number, topic and accessories used to ensure accountability. A compilation of relevant readings simplified and provided in thematic sequence which ensures that the entire quantity of the information prescribed for the course is conveyed as a study material to build the base on the subject to be supplemented by advanced reading. Performance Appraisal- Periodic appraisal of the faculty make sure that they deliver the curriculum qualitatively and adequately well. For effective operationalization of the curriculum, the institution networks with different universities, industries, research bodies, and other agencies through short term projects, industry visits, summer placement, micro projects, curriculum related field practicum and lectures by industry experts (P. S. Aithal et. al., 2015). Curriculum implementation, operationalization and enrichment are carried out with thrust on employability.

Empowering Students for Employability:

(1) Certificate Programmes :

The curriculum is supplemented through a variety of certificate programmes of varying duration. These courses are intended to enrich employability skills among students (A. SrinivasRao et. al., 2015) and reduce the gap between curriculum learning and practical requirements. Students in any course can choose to take any of the two certificate programmes offered for the year and put in additional hours of classroom and on the hand learning and undergo a proficiency test to

qualify for pass.   The following is the list of the certificate programmes offered by Srinivas Institute of Management Studies (SIMS) to the students in the various course of study.

Table 1 : Certificate courses forM.B.A. programme

S. No.	Name of the Course	Goals	Objectives	Duration
1	Certificate Course in Online investment	Mastering in Share market investment	To identify the investment potentials & Methods	05 days
2	Certificate Course on Quantitative Analysis using MATLAB/OCTAVE	Familiarizing modern analysis techniques	Simplifying research analysis & interpretation	05 days
3	Certificate Course on Investment Banking	Mastering in Banking investment	To know various banking services for investors	05 days
4	Certificate Course in Cloud Computing	Developing expertise in modern IT applications	To learn and adopt latest IT Application models	05 days
5	Certificate Course in Android Mobile Applications	Involvement in software development through innovativeness	Developing customized applications for open source Android operating system	05 days
6	Certificate Course in Retail Marketing & Brand Management	Develop competency in retail marketing	To know various strategies of retail marketing	05 days
7	Certificate Course in SPSS/PSPP Statistical Software	Usage of statistical software in Research	To simplify enormous data and generate reports	05 days
8	Certificate Course in Computer Applications (Tally, Excel & Access)	Usage of basic Accounting & Business application	To create, tables, graphs, and business reports	05 days

A Monthly Double-Blind Peer Reviewed Refereed Open Access International e-Journal - Included in the International Serial Directories
Indexed & Listed at: Ulrich's Periodicals Directory ©, U.S.A., Open J-Gage as well as in Cabell's Directories of Publishing Opportunities, U.S.A.
International Journal of Management, IT and Engineering
http://www.ijmra.us

393

		software		
9	Certificate Course in R-Statistical Computing for Business Analytics	To understand and expertise in business analytics	Decision making through manipulation of enormous data generated in business environment	05 days
10	Certificate Course in Animation & Visual Effects	Use of creative thinking in business presentations	Learn animation techniques	05 days
11	Certificate Course on Mobile Business & Mobile banking	Use of mobile devices in Business transactions	To learn various mobile technology, models and security aspects in mobile transactions	05 days
12	Certificate Course in Blue Ocean Strategy & Green Business	Specialize in monopoly business	Develop strategies in competition free business	05 days

Table 2 : Certificate courses forMCA programme

S. No.	Name of the Course	Goals	Objectives	Duration
1	Certificate Course in Animation & Visual Effects	Use of Creative thinking in Business Presentations	Learn Animation Techniques	5-6 Days
2	Strategic Management in IT Sector	Build successful business strategies	Develop Capability in Strategic Management	5-6 Days
3	Certificate Course in Enterprises Resource Planning	To develop successful resource planners	Resource Mobilization for Enterprises	05 days

4	Certificate Course in Entrepreneurship Development	Build talented enterprisers	Developing entrepreneurial leadership	05 days
5	Certificate Course on R-Statistical Computing & Graphics for Business Analysis	Use of Specialized techniques for business analysis	Familiarity with R-Statistical Computing and graphics	05 days
6	Certificate Course on Cyber Law & IT Security	Ensuring improved cyber security expertise	Understanding of cyber laws and IT security	05 days

Table 3 : Certificate courses forMSW programme

S. No.	Name of the Course	Goals	Objectives	Duration
1	Certificate Course in HRD	To become effective managers	To understand the mechanisms & processes in developing Human Resources	05 days
2	Certificate Course in Counseling	Preparing individuals as effective Counselors	Emotional support & Problem solving	05 days
3	Certificate Course in Human Rights	Awareness of freedom of individuals	Identify obstacles in exercising freedom	05 days
4	Certificate Course in NGO Management	To improve the functional efficacy of NGOs	To provide better professionals to work in NGO's	05 days
5	Certificate Course in Industrial &Labour Laws	To maintain peace & Harmony in industry	To operate within legal framework	05 days

Table 4 : Certificate courses forBBM programme

S. No.	Name of the Course	Goals	Objectives	Duration
1	Certificate Course in Spreadsheet Techniques	Use of various spreadsheet applications	Knowing various techniques in spreadsheet applications	05 days
2	Certificate Course in E-Business Website Development	To design business websites	To know various software used in dynamic business website & add new features	05 days
3	Certificate Course in Business Communication & Soft skills	To improve functional effectiveness in Management	Enhancement of better use of skills	05 days
4	Certificate Course in Linux & Open Source Software	Comprehensive idea of all open source software	Learning Linux based software applications	05 days
5	Certificate Course in Animation & Visual Effect	Develop competency in business presentations	To learn and use creativity in Animation & Visual effects	05 days

Table 5 : Certificate courses forBCA programme

S. No.	Name of the Course	Goals	Objectives	Duration
1	Certificate Course in Animation & Visual Effect	Develop competency in business presentations	To learn and use creativity in Animation & Visual effects	05 days

2	Certificate Course in Hardware & Networking	Assembling the computers & other devices	Knowledge in proper alignment of computer hardware	05 days
3	Certificate Course in E-Business Website development	To design business websites	To know various software used in dynamic business website & add new features	05 days
4	Certificate Course in Tally Accounting Software	To know use of computer software in Accounting	Elementary computer based accounting practices	05 days
5	Certificate Course in Linux & Open Source Software	Comprehensive idea of all open source software	Learning Linux based software applications	05 days
6	Certificate Course on Spoken English & Interview Techniques	To improve functional effectiveness in Management	Enhancement of better use of skills	05 days

Table 6 : Certificate courses forB.Com.

S. No.	Name of the Course	Goals	Objectives	Duration
1	Certificate Course in Computer Applications	Use of various spreadsheet applications	Knowing various techniques in spreadsheet applications	05 days
2	Certificate Course in Tally Accounting Software	To know use of computer software in Accounting	Elementary computer based accounting practices	05 days
3	Certificate Course on Spoken English & Soft	To improve functional effectiveness in	Enhancement of better use of skills	05 days

	skills	Management		
4	Certificate Course in Linux & Open Source Software	Comprehensive idea of all open source software	Learning Linux based software applications	05 days

(2) Skill Development Programme :

The following are the skill development courses deviced and offered by the institution for the various programmes of study such as MBA, MCA, MSW, BBM, BCA, B.Com. :

Table 7 : Skill development programmesforMBA

S. No.	Name of the Course	Goals	Objectives	Duration
1	Fund rising	Successful program implementation	Financial resource mobilization	2 - 3 Days
2	Innovative Ideas in marketing	Capturing market	Device competitive strategies	2 - 3 Days
3	Business Communication	Winning business	Overtaking competitors	2 - 3 Days
4	Effective Presentation	Selling the Idea	Improved competitiveness	2 - 3 Days
5	Problem solving	Appropriate solutions	Better Judgment	2 - 3 Days
6	Team Building	Synergy	Better Collaboration	2 - 3 Days
7	Entrepreneurship & Small business planning	To be once own master	Alternate employment avenues	2 - 3 Days

Table 8 : Skill development programmesforMCA

S. No.	Name of the Course	Goals	Objectives	Duration
1	Application Software Development	Expertise in Application software	Fast develop application software	2 - 3 Days
2	Website Development and Design Skill	Developing an attractive website	Applying new techniques in Website development	2 - 3 Days
3	Fund Raising Skill	Successful program implementation	Financial resource mobilization	2 - 3 Days
4	Team Presentation Skill	Effective Interaction in teams	Better communication	2 - 3 Days
5	Trouble shooting skills	Identifying Fault	Quick response	2 - 3 Days
6	Android Application Development	Developing new Mobile Phone applications	Catering to the varied users group	2 - 3 Days

Table 9 : Skill development programmesfor MSW

S. No.	Name of the Course	Goals	Objectives	Duration
1	Business Correspondence	Managerial Efficiency	Improved communication	2 - 3 Days
2	Spoken English	Power of convincing	Improved expression	5 Days
3	Public speaking	Developing Command	Gaining attention	5 Days
4	Programme organizing	Successful program implementation	Organizational skills	2 - 3 Days
5	Personality Building	Key to success	Organizing oneself	2 - 3 Days

Table 10 : Skill development programmesfor BBM

S. No.	Name of the Course	Goals	Objectives	Duration
1	Time Management	Best use of available time	Time Conscious	2 - 3 Days
2	Communication skills	Improved teamwork	Best understood	2 - 3 Days
3	Leadership Skills	Self Starter	Developing Initiative	2 - 3 Days
4	Human Relationship skills	Working with People	Placing importance on human resource	2 - 3 Days
5	Soft Skills	Successful leader	Winning support	2 - 3 Days

Table 11 : Skill development programmesBCA

S. No.	Name of the Course	Goals	Objectives	Duration
1	Time Management	Best use of available time	Time Conscious	2 - 3 Days
2	Communication skills	Improved teamwork	Best understood	2 - 3 Days
3	Leadership Skills	Self Starter	Developing Initiative	2 - 3 Days
4	Human Relationship skills	Working with People	Placing importance on human resource	2 - 3 Days
5	Soft Skills	Successful leader	Winning support	2 - 3 Days

Table 12 : Skill development programmesfor B.Com

S. No.	Name of the Course	Goals	Objectives	Duration

1	Time Management	Best use of available time	Time Conscious	2 - 3 Days
2	Communication skills	Improved teamwork	Best understood	2 - 3 Days
3	Leadership Skills	Self Starter	Developing Initiative	2 - 3 Days
4	Human Relationship skills	Working with People	Placing importance on human resource	2 - 3 Days
5	Soft Skills	Successful leader	Winning support	2 - 3 Days

(3) Courses offered in modular form

Modular courses are arranged at department level by academic committees. The following training programs are offered in modular form under all the three P.G. Courses.

Table 13 : Modular courses for MBA

S. No.	Name of Training Program	Objectives	Duration
1	Programming in Linux & Open Source Software	Reducing dependency on paid software	2-3 Days
2	Business Law & Corporate Law	To learn legal framework of Business	2-3 Days
3	KASH Enrichment Programs	Upgrading Performance through enhanced perception	2-3 Days
4	Hands on training in E-Commerce website design & Maintenance	Firsthand experience in website design	2-3 Days
5	Training on Soft skills & Business Communication	Acquiring mastering in interpersonal relationship	One Hour per week

Table 14 : Modular courses for MCA

S. No.	Name of Training Program	Objectives	Duration
1	Training on International certification in SUN Certified JAVA professional	To know better on a new Programming Language	2-3 Days
2	Training on International certification in ORACLE Certified professional	To enhance the skills of using ORACLE as database program	2-3 Days
3	Training on Nanotechnology & Quantum Computing	To catch up with fast changing technology	2-3 Days
4	Intensive Training on Linux & Open Source Software	Reducing dependency on paid software	2-3 Days
5	Intensive training on Business communication & Soft skills	Acquiring mastering in interpersonal relationship	One Hour per week
6	KASH Enrichment Training	Upgrading Performance through enhanced perception	One Hour per week

Table 15 : Modular courses for MSW

S. No.	Name of Training/ Workshop Program	Objectives	Duration
1	Book Review Techniques	Mastering techniques for better book review	2-3 Days
2	Essay writing Practice	Summarization & Presentation of Topic based text	2-3 Days
3	Gender Sensitization	Develop Pro-active attitude & gender equity	2-3 Days
4	Integration of News Clippings	Learning ideas through collage	2-3 Days
5	Character & Spiritual	Healthy Character formation	2-3 Days

	Development		

(4) Lateral and vertical mobility within and across programmes and courses

Lateral entry provision exists in some programs of University such as MCA, B.Com. etc. and the institute is extending that facility to its students.

(5) Enrichment courses :

Several short term enrichment programmes are offered to the students by the college which include, courses on Linux and Open Source software usage, courses on Derivatives, Excel applications, Digital marketing, Personality development, Interview skills, KASH (**K**nowledge, **A**ttitude, **S**kill and **H**abit) enrichment training course etc.

(6) Value Added Chapters in all Subjects :

Apart from the University syllabus for each subject, the college has added a value added chapter of 3-5 sessions in all subjects in the Teaching Plan. This is intended to be taught as value enrichers to the curriculum. Unlike University syllabus, the topics under the value added chapter can be modified/changed every year depending on latest developments in the subject.

(7) Additional Skill Development Programmes :

Details of additional skill oriented programmes, relevant to regional and global employment markets and the beneficiaries :

Table 16 : Additional skill oriented programmes other than University syllabus

S. No.	Course/ Beneficiaries	Skill Oriented Programmes
1	MBA	1. Fund Raising 2. Innovative ideas in Marketing 3. Business Communication 4. Effective Presentation 5. Problem solving

		6. Team Building
		7. Entrepreneurship & Small business Planning
2	MCA	1. Application software development Skill
		2. Website development & Design Skill
		3. Fund Rising Skill
		4. Team Presentation Skill
		5. Troubleshooting Skills
		6. Android Application Development Skills
3	MSW	1. Business Correspondence
		2. Spoken English
		3. Public speaking
		4. Program organizing
		5. Personality Building
4	BBM	1. Time Management
		2. Communication Skills
		3. Leadership Skills
		4. Human Relationship Skills
		5. Soft Skills
5	BCA	1. Time Management
		2. Communication Skills
		3. Leadership Skills
		4. Human Relationship Skills
		5. Soft Skills

6	B.Com	1. Time Management
		2. Communication Skills
		3. Leadership Skills
		4. Human Relationship Skills
		5. Soft Skills

(8) Exposure visits :

The college provides opportunity for exposure visit to gain first-hand knowledge. Some of them are :

- Orientation programmes

- Industry visits

- Study tours

- International educational visits

- Student exchange programmes

(9) Workshops

The institution organizes workshops of varying duration for all the courses of study. This will supplement the University curriculum gap with the institutions goals and objectives. A list of such workshops is listed below :

(A) MBA Program :

- Workshop for preparing ICWA Aspirants

- Workshop on Corporate Yoga & Mind Control

- Workshop on Business Etiquettes

- Workshop on Nanotechnology Commercialization & Business Opportunities

- Workshop on Disaster Management

- Workshop on ERP Modules Applications & Vendors

- Workshop on Mobile Business & Mobile Banking

(B) MCA Program :

- Workshop in Android Operating System & Application Development

- Workshop on PHP and MySQL

- Workshop on Stress Management

- Workshop on Cloud Computing

- Workshop on E-Business website development

- Workshop on Quantitative Analysis using MATLAB/OCTAVE

(C) MSW Program :

- Workshop on Book Review Techniques

- Workshop on Essay Writing Practice

- Workshop on Gender sensitization

- Workshop on News Clippings Analysis & Integration

- Workshop for Character & Spiritual Development

(10) Trainings

- Competitive exam training

- Interview preparedness

- Effective Decision making

- SWOT Analysis

- Oral & Written Communication

- Problem Solving

- Work Ethics

(11) Industry-Institution Interface Programmes :

Various programmes are planned, implemented and promoted for Industry-Institution Interface.

- Industry Projects

- Guest lectures by Industry Experts

- Campus Recruitment

- Summer Placement

- Block Placement

- Mentorship Programs by Industry Managers

- Round Table Interaction with Entrepreneurs & Industry Experts

- Stories of Successful Entrepreneurs

- Development of Industry related Business cases

- Consultancy services

(12) Field Visits :

- Orientation Visits

- Community Surveys

- Regular Field Practicum

- Social service activities

(13) Other Efforts :

The following are the additional efforts made by the institution to modify, enrich and organize the curriculum to enhance the experience of the students with needs of the dynamic employment market :

- **Case Study Development :** Students are given opportunity to extract real life context from organizations where they visit either for field practicum of research project work or summer placement and these are worked out into case studies through group exercises

under the guidance of the faculty supervisors. This enables to enrich and organize the curriculum beyond routine classroom learning through lecture, and improve the dynamism and competitiveness of the students in the employment market.

- **Group Discussions :** Topics of monotonous nature are divided to be discussed among students in groups and generate ideas in line with their experience and viewpoints. These discussions are guided by the faculty to retain the curriculum relevance. Ultimately, group presentations lead to encouragement of students initiatives and leadership qualities which are the focus in the employment markets.

- **Simulation :** Efforts are made to utilize simulation techniques to reproduce real life situations in classroom. Students develop ability for positive responses in problem solving and decision making.

- **Laboratory based learning :** Students are encouraged to utilize various Application software in computer laboratory. They are also trained to develop reports using various statistical analysis and data management & interpretation packages through network based learning.

- **Field work based learning :** Fieldwork has the potential to enrich the curriculum combining the experiences of the students with concept based theoretical learning. This takes place through Discussion with industry expert and in the process of research project preparation.

- **Exposure based learning :** Through study tour, industry visits and interaction with resource persons. exposure based learning will provide the techniques of resource mobilization, quality production, marketing strategies, customer satisfaction and Human resource management in business.

- **Research based Learning :** Undertaking research projects as part of course requirement enables students with adequate know-how on application of alternative solutions to social context.

- **Experiential Learning :** Students of both UG and PG programmes conduct programs such as marketing exhibition, Online virtual investment, Business model competitions, and group discussion. Programs such as Manegma – National Level Conference on selected Themes of Business Management, MAGMA-Management Feast, MATRIX-International Business Case Presentation, MEGA-INDIA – Indian Industry Study, Manthana – An Intellectual churning of Social work Fraternity, ESPERANZA – An IT Fest, etc.

- **Student Forum Based Activities :** Various student forums like HR Forum, Marketing Forum, Finance Forum, IT Forum are also providing opportunity for students to creatively reflect their experiences and integrating with it curriculum.

- **Entrepreneurship Development Cell :** A separate cell for entrepreneurship development is incorporated in the college. This cell creates awareness of need and relevance of entrepreneurship as career option among the students thereby strengthening their Entrepreneurship skills.

- **Idea Creation through Marketing Exhibition :** MBA, BBM and B.Com students involve in creating new business models/Ideas in Teams of 4-5 students and present their model in Marketing Exhibition conducted by the respective Departments. This kind of practical learning through Idea creation leads to innovation in business models/marketing Ideas.

Conclusion:

Industry needs a ready-for-the-job professionals so that they can minimize on training and skill acquisition. It can devote its much valuable time for other activities. Unemployment and under employment can be reduced if higher educational institutions focus on imparting employability skills to the students. The example of Srinivas Institute of Management Studies demonstrates a holistic model towards employability skill building (Srikanthan, G. and Dalrymple, J., 2002) worth emulating in other institutions of higher learning.

References:

1. Aithal P. S., SrinivasRao A., Suresh Kumar P. M., (2015[a]), Quality Enhancement in Higher Education Institutions: A case study of SIMS, International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development, Vol. 2, Issue 5, pp. 18-31.
2. Aithal P. S., SrinivasRao A., & Suresh Kumar P. M., (2015[b]), "How Innovations and Best Practices can Transform Higher Education Institutions : A case study of SIMS", International Journal of Management (IJM), Volume 6, Issue 2, pp.83 - 98, ISSN 0976-6502.
3. Douglas C. Bennett, 2001, "Assessing Quality in Higher Education," *Liberal Education,* pp. 40–46.
4. Manual for self-study report of Affiliated colleges (2013). National Assessment and Accreditation Council.Downloaded from www.naac.gov.in, referred on 12/04/2015.
5. Srikanthan, G., Dalrymple, J., (2002), Developing a holistic model for quality in higher education. *Quality in Higher Education*, Vol. 8, Issue 3, pp. 215-224.

6. SrinivasRao A., Suresh Kumar P. M., &Aithal P. S., (2015), Strategic planning in higher education institutions - A case study of SIMS - VISION 2025, International Journal of Educational Science and Research; Vol.5 Issue 2, April 30, pp. 29-42. ISSN 2249-6947.