Employability- An Essential Concern

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Abstract

Employability refers to a person's capability for gaining and maintaining employment (Hillage and Pollard, 1998). For individuals, employability depends on the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) they possess, the way they present those assets to employers. As such employability is affected by both supply-side and demand-side factors which are often outside of an individual's control.

Employability is not the same as gaining a graduate job, rather it implies something about the capacity of the graduate to function in a job and be able to move between jobs, thus remaining employable throughout their life.

Introduction

The concept of employability has been in the literature for many years. Current interest has been driven by:

1) The changing nature in public employment policy, with increasing emphasis being given to skills-based solutions to economic competition and work-based solutions to social deprivation.

2) The supposed end of 'careers' and lifetime job security, which have, of course, only ever applied to a minority of the workforce, the greater uncertainty among employers as to the levels and types of jobs they may have in the future, and the need to build new relationships with employees.

While there is no singular definition of employability, a review of the literature suggests that employability is about work and the ability to be employed, such as:

a) The ability to gain initial employment; hence the interest in ensuring that 'key skills', careers advice and an understanding about the world of work are embedded in the education system

b) The ability to maintain employment and make 'transitions' between jobs and roles within the same to obtain new employment if required, i.e. to be independent in the labour market by being willing and able to manage their own employment transitions between and within organizations.

It is also, ideally, about:

1) The quality of such work or employment. People may be able to obtain work but it may be below their level of skill, or in low paid, undesirable or unsustainable jobs, and so forth.

2) The capacity and capability of gaining and maintaining productive work over the period of one's working life. (Muhammad Nawaz Qaisar, MSBA, NUML, Islamabad, Pakistan)

3) Harvey (2001) Employability is the ability of graduate to get a satisfying job. Employability is a process of learning. Hillage and Pollard (1998) Employability is the capability to move self-sufficiently within the labor market to realize potential through sustainable employment.

Desirable outcomes for the Employability Initiative:

- define a set of generic graduate attributes for the Edinburgh context and actively promote these and the whole range of ways in which they may be developed
- ensure that explicit connection is made between specific academic activity and employability, building on the employability profiles produced by the Higher Education Academy;
Establish career development learning, at an appropriate stage, and in subject focused groups, as part of the academic experience for all students.

Encourage students to gain a range of work and other experience, to participate fully in the university community and to understand the value of all such activity in enhancing their employability.

This suggests that we can separate out four main elements in respect of individuals’ employability: the first three are analogous to the concepts of production, marketing and sales, and the fourth is the marketplace in which they operate.

Four basic component of employability

1) Assets
An individual’s ‘employability assets’ comprise their knowledge (i.e. what they know), skills (what they do with what they know) and attitudes (how they do it). There are a number of detailed categorisations in the literature which, for instance, distinguish between:

i.) ‘baseline assets’ such as basic skills and essential personal attributes (such as reliability and integrity).
ii.) ‘intermediate assets’ such as occupational specific skills (at all levels), generic or key skills (such as communication and problem solving) and key personal attributes (such as motivation and initiative), and
iii.) ‘high level assets’ involving skills which help contribute to organizational performance (such as team working, self-management, commercial awareness etc.)

Further key points from the literature include the importance of the transferability of these skills from one occupational or business context to another for employability and the increased attention employers are paying to the softer attitudinal skills in selecting employees.

Merely being in possession of employer-relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes is not enough for an individual to either ‘move self-sufficiently’ in the modern labour market or ‘realise their potential’. People also need the capability to exploit their assets, to market them and sell them.

2) Deployment
These are a linked set of abilities which include:

a) Career management skills and life skills — commonly identified as self-awareness (i.e. diagnosing occupational interests and abilities), opportunity awareness (knowing what work opportunities exist and their entry requirements i.e. labour market knowledge), decision-making skills (to develop a strategy of getting from where you are to where you want to be) and transition skills. The latter generally includes:

b) Job search skills — i.e. finding suitable jobs. Access to formal and informal networks is an important component of job search and employability.

c) Strategic approach — being adaptable to labour market developments and realistic about labour market opportunities, be occupationally and locationally mobile.

There is obviously an important inter-relationship between assets and deployment. The extent to which an individual is aware of what they possess in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes and its relevance to the employment opportunities available may affect their willingness to undertake training and other activities designed to upgrade their skills etc.

3) Presentation
Another key aspect of employability is being able to get a particular job, once identified — sometimes included under career management skills, but is given prominence as a separate element here due to its crucial importance to securing employment. It centers around the ability to demonstrate ‘employability’ assets and present them to the market in an accessible way. This includes:
a) The presentation of CVs etc., (including Records of Achievement)
b) The qualifications individuals possess (both academic and vocational), perhaps accredited through prior learning
c) References and testimonies
d) Interview technique, and, of particular importance,
e) Work experience/track record.

In the context of personal circumstances and the labour market

Finally and crucially, the ability to realize or actualize ‘employability’ assets depends on the individual’s personal and external circumstances and the inter-relationship between the two. This includes:

1) Personal circumstances — e.g. caring responsibilities, disabilities, and household status can all affect their ability to seek different opportunities and will vary during an individual’s life cycle; while
2) External factors such as macro-economic demand and the pattern and level of job openings in their labor market, be it local or national; labour market regulation and benefit rules; and employer recruitment and selection behavior.

After I want to explain what is duality of employability

Duality of Employability

An alternative account of employability takes a more relative approach. Brown and Hesketh define employability as ‘the relative chances of getting and maintaining different kinds of employment’ (2004).

While most people view employability in absolute terms, focusing on the need for individuals to obtain credentials, knowledge and social status, the concept of employability can also be seen as subjective and dependent on contextual factors. ‘Employability not only depends on whether one is able to fulfill the requirements of specific jobs, but also on how one stands relative to others within a hierarchy of job seekers’

Brown and Hesketh, 2004). Taking the supply and demand of labour into account challenges the idea that credentials, knowledge and social status alone will guarantee a good position in the labour market.

With the move to a more knowledge based economy, it is widely thought that there is an increasing demand for high-calibre managerial talent. However, a focus on obtaining skills in order to gain good employment has led to an over-supply of graduates and a larger number of contenders chasing the same top jobs. Brown and Hesketh argue that there is a clear mismatch between individuals’ expectations of employability and the realities posed by the labour market.

Under these conditions, students will use a number of tactics in the labour market to maintain competitive advantage. Brown and Hesketh identify two ideal types of individuals entering the labour market. Those who will do anything to get a top job are classed as ‘players’. Players are not afraid to take on a different identity if they feel that is what the employer is looking for. The second type, ‘purists’, are those who believe that job market outcomes should reflect meritocratic achievement. For purists it is important to maintain an authentic sense of self as this will ensure a good fit between individual capabilities and occupational demands. Purists may be as competitive as Players but feel that Players are cheating in order to get ahead.

This view of employability incorporates the dual aspects of supply and demand of labour to show that advancing one’s position in the labour market by gaining credentials is partially dependent on structural factors outside the individual’s control. The recent financial crisis demonstrates that global
economic factors can and do have a significant impact on the likelihood of an individual securing a job regardless of their skills, credentials and social status.

**Parameter of employability**

There are several parameters of employability. There are following:-

- Education
- Skill Development
- Knowledge development
- Leadership Development
- Self-decision Making
- Economic Development
- Health development
- Status of women

1) **Education**: -

   Employability is on the analysis presented here, considerably more complex than some proponts of ‘core’, ‘key’ & transferable skills have suggested and is strongly aligned with the academic valuing of good learning. Only valuable education make good employee because it give capacity how to do work not only do but make best.it gives knowledge how theory can be translated into practice, how students and staff can be engaged, current practice, and how to monitor progress. The framework supports them in doing this. Education process means translation into practice. which consists of four stages: discussion and reflection; reviewing and mapping; action, and evaluation. As well as providing a summary of recent models and definitions relating to employability, the framework uses questions to promote discussion and arrive at shared decisions to develop a strategy. Employability is not merely an attribute of the new graduate .It need to be continuously refreshed throughout a person’s working life only by valuable education which helps working of job.

2) **Skill Development**:-

   The world of work is in a state of continual change: employee career today may involve moving between a number of different job functions and employers, and those jobs and employers are themselves likely to change and develop during the time you are employed in them. **Employers are therefore seeking graduates who are enterprising, resourceful and adaptable and who, as well as their degree, possess a range of skills** which can be used in a wide variety of settings as well as in their careers. These are known as employability skills.

   This does not mean that your degree is irrelevant to employers - the subject and standard of your degree may be essential or useful in helping you enter your chosen career - but it does mean that, **in parallel with your studies, you should aim to develop skills that will be of help to you in your future careers** such skills are sought by all kinds of employers. The skills you should be developing are the skills that reflect your own personality, interests and abilities - as these are the qualities that will influence your eventual choice of career.

   Employer wants employee should develop their skills regarding job. Employers look for a range of skills in graduate applicants, many of which are common to a number of different career areas. Those most frequently mentioned are communication, teamwork, leadership, initiative, problem-solving, flexibility and enthusiasm.
Many skill overlap with one another. Leadership, for example, encompasses a number of other skills including cooperating with others, planning & organizing, and verbal communication. Verbal communication itself involves various means of communication, some of which you may find easier than others taking over the phone, making presentation to a group or explaining something to a person with a more limited understanding of the topic.

Self-development involves setting goals what is to be achieved what action are to taken to achieve that taking these action to precede in right direction. in self-development process, there conditions must be met.

1) the individual must be the proactive agent of change that is he should anticipate the likely change & prepare himself to face the impact of the changes.
2) External stimuli, cognitive process & response consequences must be brought under control by the individual.
3) The individual must measure the progression towards developing in the light of the development goal set.

Self-development works better if it is undertaken in planned way .model planned self-development involves three stages

a) Development of self – awareness. Best example is ‘johari window’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information known</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Blind</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To others</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>self</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not to others</td>
<td>Hidden</td>
<td>unknown</td>
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<td></td>
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Johari window concept given by Joseph left & Harrington (names by coming the first few letters of their names). This model is made up four quadrants that together a total person in relating to others on the basis of awareness of behaviors, feeling & motivation for self-development a person is required to increase his open-self.

b) Awareness of skills required

After going through the self-awareness exercise should identify the skill required for the success in his carrier skills may broadly be classified into two categories job related which relevant to a particular field & behavioral skills which can be used in a variety of fields.

c) Adopting methods of self-development

He can adopt various method for skill development like skill-behavior management continuous practice & time management by elimination of time wasters & rational use of time

3) Knowledge Development:

Another parameter which is too essential for employ. This how to develop knowledge manger it for betterment their carrier knowledge development is prime concern of system because it has been recognized that fundamental sources of wealth creation are as longer natural resources
& physical labour but it is the knowledge that has become the pre-mint resources & has become to play dominate role in any type of organization. Therefore of organization there is increasing emphasis on practicing. Knowledge development in all types of organization whether operating in information technology such as manufacturing health care & so on. Before move to actual term we should know what knowledge is. Knowledge is that which is known information, practical skill enlightens acquaintance etc. it also define as actionable wisdom that results facts information & techniques in particular field. now I can say knowledge development is creation, sharing & use of knowledge organization wide. In simple term it is creation distribution & utilization of knowledge at individual, group, organization & community level through harnessing of people, process & technology for the befits of those involves & affected by it.

Knowledge Development has three basic elements:-

1) Knowledge creation involves generating facts

2) Knowledge sharing involves communication & distribution of Knowledge organization wide.

3) Knowledge utilization using Knowledge to solve problem for which it has been acquired.

   If employee able to develop Knowledge than organization get number of benefits. As follows.

   I) Prevention of reinvesting the wheels at different place that is doing a work that has already completed by someone else. This saves time, money and effort of organization.

   II) It helps improved way of working resulting into better quality products/service with lower cost.

   III) Organization wide unit of thinking together with higher employee motivation this results better work coordination and better employee commitment and productivity.

4) Leadership Development:

Today Era Company wants not only good employee but want best of best human resources the organization those not only perform their worker in better manner but also guide their subordinates best manner. They should have capability to influence the people or individual. There two types of leadership which are transformational & transactional leadership. Today emphasis on transactional leadership. Transactional determine what subordinates need to do to achieve objectives classifies those requirement & helps subordinates become confident they reach their objectives. A transformational leader inspires his subordinates through vision & energy. He manifests a set of moral, emotional & cognitive truths which inspire vision integrity & courage trust motivation & responsibility on the part of followers who in turn will become leader than selves.

   Leadership Development is a mean to an end the being successful change & competitive advantages it has to have a contest of payoff. Alastair Robertson a consulting partner on global leadership development should be considered on three levels:-

1) The leadership of the business by the top team (including the explict operation of the process of leadership by this group)

2) The leadership of the top team by the CEOL fully including the dynamics of the top team effectiveness.

3) The personal development of individual executives as leader.

   If such development in the employee than sure they will achieve not only organization objective but also their objectives.
5) Self-Decision Making: -

Self-decision making play important role in Human development and enhancement of the employability. But before move an actual term we should know what is decision or decision making. a decision represents a judgments a find resolution of conflict of needs, means or goals & a commitment to action made in face often certainty complexity even irrationally or artly. “Decision making is a conscious human process involving both individual & social phenomenon based upon factual value premises which concludes with a choice if one behavioral activity from among or more alternatives with the intention of moving towards some desired state affairs”. Now I should say what self-decision making is that process where we are capable to take appropriate decision for our life.

Self-decision making is an act of projecting one’s own mind upon an opinion or course of action for their life. In self-decision making process three aspects are involved:

2. Conation—the action of the mid implied by such words as willing desire & aversion
3. Affectation the aspect of mind associated with emotion, feeling mood & temperament.

According this aspects we can develop self-decision making like it implies that there are various alternatives & most desirable alternatives is chosen to solve the problem or to arrive at expected results of their life. Human being have number of problem but they don’t know how to deal with it but if they have good self-decision making power than they can solve or handle any type of problem.

Self-decision making may not be completely rational but may be judgments & emotional. We should make it totally rational than it will give advantages it gives idea how to cope with difficulty situation which is exist in the organization.

In self-decision making we select best alternative for our life because we want increase our capability regarding work. Means we should have power to compared alternatives that is which option is suitable for our life like job or task. We should match OUR capability & JOB and check what we can do or what we cannot do it will clear with this example like if we have capability to attract or convince the people for purchasing for certain goods/service than I should go for marketing field not for other sector.

Self-decision making is rational process so you should develop it.

6) Economic Development: -

In general term economic development means to increase per capita income, increase national income, demand & supply treads & various phase of cycles. But if it related in employability that time we focus on per capita income or how to increase income level of employ. Every people doing work for their livelihood if they have knowledge how to increase economic level of their. I definitely say they will achieve their objective whatever they setup.

According to me employee can develop their economic condition through their skill, knowledge & good decision making power they select best option for their life according to their capability than they will able to increase their earning. Which improve their financial condition & they can utilized extra resource for other option & earn better return.

7) Health Development: -

Employability toolkit to assist health sector employers to find sustainable solutions to one of their most challenging areas of recruitment. Initial entry level posts have historically been not only hard to fill but also subject to high turnover rates.

A healthy workforce, both physically and mentally, is important in terms of benefits to the business and to the individual. For those unable to work, whether they are sick, have poor mental health, are on incapacity benefits or have been injured at work, there is an emotional and actual cost.
At a recent conference, Judith Hackitt, chair of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), indicated that while good progress is being made in reducing deaths and injuries at work, "we are not moving as quickly as I would like to see. We need another step-change in tackling this issue. We still have 200 people killed through work-related incidents every year and between 5,000 and 6,000 people who die as a result of exposure to materials at work."

There is, therefore, an even greater need to support existing employers to invest more effectively in the health and well-being of their workforce to reduce these costs.

It is clear that good health is good business. Employers can be assisted when employing people who have mental health conditions and helped in considering available initiatives to enable those who are not working, to return to work. By helping businesses, particularly small and medium sized enterprises, access occupational health advice and support on issues of health and safety, their response to their workforce's needs can be strengthened and as a result the number of sick days reduced.

At its most fundamental, Peer Support is about people who share similar experiences supporting each other. When people who experience mental health problems talk about what has been helpful in their recovery, peer support is a major factor.

For many people who experience mental health problems, employment can be a big issue. This is for many reasons, including:

- Stigma and discrimination
- Loss of self-esteem and confidence
- Loss of employment
- Difficulties in gaining employment
- Explaining gaps in employment history
- Education disrupted

By health development capability we're (employees) here to help employers create a safer, healthier and more motivated workforce. We work with all kinds of businesses, completely free of charge, offering practical information and advice to help improve health and safety and the wellbeing of everyone at work.

A healthier workforce really does make for a healthier business

7. Status of woman:

The structure of employment of men and women is always a detectable issue in social science. Women are supposed to be less benefitted by their educational attainments in terms of employability because of their choices and constraints to work (outcome of certain exogenous determinants). Marriage is regarded as one of the strongest determinants. The effect of marriage is conspicuous, tough to ascertain whether related to women’s conscious choices in entering the labour market to accrue benefits at the pre-marital stage or act as selective choices or constraints at the post marital stage. Sociologists explain that marriage act as a structural constraint on women’s employment opportunities. It has recently been claimed that women’s disadvantaged position in the labour market is not only a consequence of the institutional and/or structural disadvantages but of their varying choices (Hakim, 1995). Another scholar (Harris, 1998) suggests that occupational segregation in the labor market by sex due to marriage is largely determined by some post marital constraints like childbearing and childrearing. Both of these theoretical explanations have been subjected to critical replies and changing empirical considerations. However, the representation can be more complex (Figure 1).
A number of studies have briefed the structure of female workforce participation in India regarding the way it is differently mobilized than men (Banerjee, 1998, Ghosh, 2009, Jain, 1985, Mazumdar, 2007 and 2008). These studies critically examine the growth in female workforce participation and the issues of domestic and unpaid laborers. However, very few attempts have seen to link these issues to marriage, which is historically regarded as one of the main explanatory factors to construct the work-life biographies of women. The basic objective of this paper is to analyze the role of marriage to explain the structure of female workforce participation. It also attempts to enquire the interplay of both choices and constraints in shaping work life of woman.

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