

## **INFLUENCE OF ONLINE SKILL TRAINING ON EMPLOYABILITY ENHANCEMENT IN MADURAI DISTRICT**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Online skill training has become an important component of modern education and workforce development, as it enables individuals to acquire job-oriented competencies through flexible and accessible digital platforms. In the present era of rapid technological advancement and changing labour market demands, there is an increasing need for continuous skill upgradation to enhance employability and remain competitive. The need for the study arises from the widening gap between academic qualifications and industry expectations, where many job seekers lack practical and technical skills required by employers. Online skill training programmes help bridge this gap by providing affordable, time-flexible, and industry-relevant learning opportunities to learners in both urban and rural areas. Therefore, it is essential to examine the effectiveness of online skill training in enhancing employability, particularly in regions like Madurai District, where access to quality training and employment opportunities is crucial for socio-economic development. The study is based on both primary and secondary data. A total of 80 respondents from Madurai District were selected using the Convenience Sampling Technique. The findings reveal that respondents prefer platforms such as NPTEL and SWAYAM for online skill training and face challenges such as technical issues, lack of motivation, and poor internet connectivity. The study concludes that online skill training plays a significant role in improving employability and suggests strengthening digital infrastructure and improving training quality to enhance learning outcomes.

**Keywords:** Online Skill Training, Employability Enhancement and Digital Learning.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In today's rapidly evolving digital economy, continuous learning and skill development have become essential for improving employability and meeting the changing demands of the labour market. Technological advancements, digital transformation, and the increasing adoption of online learning platforms have created new opportunities for individuals to acquire industry-relevant skills. Online skill training programmes have emerged as an effective and flexible mode of learning, enabling participants to develop technical, professional, and soft skills without the limitations of time and location.

Online skill training programmes are designed to provide learners with practical knowledge and job-oriented competencies through digital platforms such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), virtual classrooms, webinars, and e-learning applications. These programmes cover a wide range of disciplines, including information technology, digital marketing, data analytics, communication skills, entrepreneurship, and vocational education. The accessibility, affordability, and flexibility of online training have encouraged students, job seekers, and working professionals to upgrade their skills and remain competitive in the employment market. The need for online skill training has become increasingly significant due to the widening gap between academic qualifications and industry expectations. Employers today seek candidates who possess practical knowledge, digital literacy, problem-solving abilities, communication skills, and adaptability in addition to formal education. Online skill training programmes help bridge this gap by offering industry-aligned curricula, practical assignments, certifications, and opportunities for continuous learning. They also support lifelong learning by enabling individuals to update their competencies in response to technological and economic changes. Employability enhancement refers to the process of improving an individual's ability to obtain, retain, and progress in employment through the acquisition of relevant knowledge, skills, attitudes, and competencies. Effective online skill training contributes to employability by enhancing technical expertise, improving confidence, strengthening communication and interpersonal skills, and increasing career readiness. Well-structured training programmes also promote entrepreneurship, innovation, and self-employment opportunities, thereby contributing to economic development and workforce productivity. Despite the growing popularity of online learning, several challenges continue to influence its effectiveness, including limited digital access, inadequate internet connectivity, lack of learner motivation, insufficient practical exposure, and varying levels of digital literacy. Therefore, it is essential to evaluate whether online skill training programmes effectively improve employability and identify the factors that contribute to their success. Such an assessment can provide valuable insights for policymakers, educational institutions, training providers, and employers in designing more effective and inclusive skill development initiatives.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The major objective of the study is to analyse the influence of online skill training on employability enhancement in Madurai District.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Sources of data**

The present study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected directly from the respondents using a well-structured interview schedule designed to gather information on their socio-economic profile, participation in online skill training programmes, training experience, and employability enhancement. Secondary data were collected from books, research journals, magazines, government reports, published articles,

official websites, and other relevant online sources related to online skill training and employability.

### **SAMPLING DESIGN**

A total of 80 respondents from Madurai District were selected for the study using the Convenience Sampling Technique, a non-probability sampling method. The respondents were chosen based on their accessibility, willingness to participate, and completion of at least one online skill training programme. This sampling technique was considered appropriate due to the availability of respondents, time constraints, and the exploratory nature of the study.

### **STATISTICAL TOOLS USED**

The collected data were analyzed with the help of various statistical measures such as *Percentage, weighted average technique and Chi-square test.*

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

The Analysis and Interpretation section presents the data collected from the respondents in a systematic and organized manner. It examines the socio-economic profile of the respondents and the various aspects of online skill training programmes. The section also analyzes the influence of online skill training on employability enhancement using appropriate statistical tools. The findings help identify the relationships among the study variables and provide meaningful insights into the effectiveness of online skill training. The interpretation of the results enables the researcher to draw valid conclusions in line with the objectives of the study.

#### **Age of the Respondents**

Individuals belonging to different age groups may have varying levels of digital literacy, motivation, and career aspirations, which can affect the outcomes of online skill training. Hence the respondents are classified according to their age, and the distribution is presented in the following table.

**Table 1 Age of the Respondents**

| <b>Sl. No</b> | <b>Age</b>     | <b>No. of Respondents</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1             | Up to 30 years | 28                        | 35.0              |
| 2             | 31 – 45 years  | 42                        | 52.5              |
| 3             | Above 45 years | 10                        | 12.5              |
|               | <b>Total</b>   | <b>80</b>                 | <b>100.0</b>      |

#### **Source: Primary Data**

The above table shows that 28 (35.0 percent) of the respondents belong to the age group of up to 30 years age group, 42 (52.5 percent) of them belongs to the age group of 31 – 45 years and the remaining 10(12.5 percent) of them comes under the age group of above 45 years.

#### **Gender of the Respondents**

Gender is an important demographic variable that influences participation in online skill training programmes and employability enhancement. It helps to understand the representation of male and female respondents and their access to online learning opportunities. Therefore, the respondents are classified based on their gender, and the distribution is presented in the following table.

**Table 2 Gender of the Respondents**

| SI. No | Gender       | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|--------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1      | Male         | 34                 | 42.5       |
| 2      | Female       | 46                 | 57.5       |
|        | <b>Total</b> | <b>80</b>          | <b>100</b> |

**Source: Primary Data**

It is inferred from the above table that 34(42.5 percent) of the respondents are male, while the remaining 46(57.5 percent) of the respondents are female.

**Marital Status of the Respondents**

Marital status of an individual may influence an individual's participation in online skill training programmes and career development. It can affect the availability of time, personal responsibilities, and motivation to enhance employability through online learning. Hence the respondents are classified based on their marital status, and the distribution is presented in the following table.

**Table 3 Marital Status of the Respondents**

| SI. No | Marital Status | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|----------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1      | Married        | 59                 | 73.75      |
| 2      | Unmarried      | 21                 | 26.25      |
|        | <b>Total</b>   | <b>80</b>          | <b>100</b> |

**Source: Primary Data**

It is clear from the above table that 59(73.75 percent) of the respondents are married, while the remaining 21(26.25 percent) of the respondents are unmarried.

**Type of Family**

The type of family is an important socio-economic characteristic that may influence an individual's access to online learning, family support, and career development. Family structure can affect the availability of time, financial resources, and encouragement to participate in online skill training programmes. The following table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of type of family.

**Table 4 Type of family**

| SI. No | Type of Family | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|----------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1      | Nuclear Family | 57                 | 71.25      |
| 2      | Joint Family   | 23                 | 28.75      |
|        | <b>Total</b>   | <b>80</b>          | <b>100</b> |

**Source: Primary Data**

It is revealed from the above table that 57 (71.25 percent) of the respondents belong to nuclear families, while 23(28.75 percent) belong to joint families.

**Educational Qualification**

Educational qualification influences an individual's ability to acquire knowledge, adapt to online learning, and develop employability skills. It also affects the effectiveness of online skill training programmes, as participants with different educational backgrounds may have varying learning outcomes and career opportunities.

**Table 4 Educational Qualification**

| SI. No | Educational Qualification | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1      | Under Graduate            | 43                 | 53.75      |
| 2      | Post Graduate             | 20                 | 25         |
| 3      | Others                    | 17                 | 21.25      |
|        | <b>Total</b>              | <b>80</b>          | <b>100</b> |

**Source: Primary Data**

It is inferred from the above table that 43 (53.75 percent) of the respondents are under graduates, 20 (25 percent) of them are post graduates, and the remaining 17 (21.25 percent) of them are having other qualifications.

**Online skill training platforms preferred by the respondents**

The choice of an online skill training platform plays an important role in determining the quality of learning and skill acquisition. Different platforms offer varied courses, learning resources, certifications, and industry-oriented training that may influence the employability of learners. The rank assigned by the respondents are converted into weighted average score and presented in the following table.

**Table 5 Online skill training platforms preferred by the respondents**

| SI. No | Platforms                      | Weighted average score | Rank |
|--------|--------------------------------|------------------------|------|
| 1      | SWAYAM                         | 4.40                   | II   |
| 2      | NPTEL                          | 4.60                   | I    |
| 3      | Coursera                       | 4.25                   | III  |
| 4      | Google Career Certificates     | 3.50                   | VIII |
| 5      | Udemy                          | 3.95                   | V    |
| 6      | Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH) | 3.35                   | IX   |
| 7      | LinkedIn Learning              | 4.10                   | IV   |
| 8      | edX                            | 3.65                   | VII  |
| 9      | FutureLearn                    | 3.80                   | VI   |

**Source: Primary Data**

It is revealed from the above table that NPTEL secured the first rank with a score of 4.60, indicating that it is the most preferred online skill training platform among the respondents. SWAYAM ranked second with a score of 4.40, followed by Coursera, which

secured the third rank with a score of 4.25. LinkedIn Learning obtained the fourth rank with a score of 4.10, while U demy ranked fifth with a score of 3.95. Future Learn, edX, and Google Career Certificates secured the sixth, seventh, and eighth ranks, respectively. Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH) received the lowest score of 3.35 and was ranked ninth. The findings indicate that respondents have a greater preference for NPTEL and SWAYAM, as these platforms are widely recognized for offering quality, affordable, and industry-relevant online courses that contribute to employability enhancement.

### **Challenges Faced During Online Skill Training**

The challenges faced during online skill training programmes play a significant role in determining the effectiveness of learning and employability enhancement. Various factors such as technological barriers, limited practical exposure, and inadequate support may affect the participants' learning experience and skill acquisition. The respondents were asked to rank the major challenges they faced during online skill training programmes, and the results are presented in the following table.

**Table 6 Challenges Faced During Online Skill Training**

| <b>Sl. No</b> | <b>Challenges</b>                          | <b>Weighted average score</b> | <b>Rank</b> |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| 1             | Poor internet connectivity                 | 4.18                          | III         |
| 2             | Lack of practical training                 | 3.76                          | VI          |
| 3             | Technical issues with the online platform  | 4.52                          | I           |
| 4             | Lack of interaction with trainers          | 3.26                          | IX          |
| 5             | Difficulty in understanding online content | 3.89                          | V           |
| 6             | Lack of motivation and self-discipline     | 4.34                          | II          |
| 7             | Inadequate placement support               | 3.26                          | IX          |
| 8             | Limited access to digital devices          | 4.02                          | IV          |
| 9             | Language barriers                          | 3.42                          | VIII        |
| 10            | Time management difficulties               | 3.58                          | VII         |

### **Source: Primary Data**

The above table presents the weighted average score and ranking of the challenges faced by the respondents during online skill training programmes. Among the various challenges, technical issues with the online platform secured the first rank with a weighted average score of 4.52, indicating that it is the most significant challenge experienced by the respondents. Lack of motivation and self-discipline ranked second with a weighted average score of 4.34, followed by poor internet connectivity, which secured the third rank with a score of 4.18. Limited access to digital devices and difficulty in understanding online content obtained the fourth and fifth ranks with weighted average scores of 4.02 and 3.89, respectively.

### **Association between Personal Factors and Employability Enhancement**

The researcher made an analysis to identify the association between the personal factors of the respondents and their level of employability enhancement by adopting the Chi-square test.

### **Age and Employability Enhancement**

The association between the age of the respondents and their level of employability enhancement is analysed using the Chi-square test and the results are presented in the following table.

**Table 7 Age and Employability Enhancement**

| <b>Chi-square Value</b> | <b>Degrees of Freedom</b> | <b>Table Value</b> | <b>Inference</b> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| 10.84                   | 4                         | 9.488              | Significant      |

#### **Source: Computed Data**

From the above analysis, it is observed that the calculated Chi-square value (**10.84**) is greater than the table value (9.488). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is inferred that there is a significant association between the age of the respondents and their employability enhancement.

### **Gender and Employability Enhancement**

The association between the gender of the respondents and their level of employability enhancement is analysed using the Chi-square test and the results are presented in the following table.

**Table 8 Gender and Employability Enhancement**

| <b>Chi-square Value</b> | <b>Degrees of Freedom</b> | <b>Table Value</b> | <b>Inference</b> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| 4.27                    | 2                         | 5.991              | Insignificant    |

#### **Source: Computed Data**

From the above analysis, it is evident that the calculated Chi-square value (4.27) is less than the table value (5.991). Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that there is no significant association between the gender of the respondents and their employability enhancement.

### **Type of family and Employability Enhancement**

The association between the type of family of the respondents and their level of employability enhancement is analysed using the Chi-square test and the results are presented in the following table.

**Table 9 Type of family and Employability Enhancement**

| <b>Chi-square Value</b> | <b>Degrees of Freedom</b> | <b>Table Value</b> | <b>Inference</b> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| 3.08                    | 2                         | 5.991              | Insignificant    |

#### **Source: Computed Data**

From the above analysis, it is evident that the calculated Chi-square value (3.08) is less than the table value (5.991). Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that

there is no significant association between the type of family of the respondents and their employability enhancement.

### **Educational Qualification and Employability Enhancement**

The researcher further analysed the association between the educational qualification of the respondents and their level of employability enhancement using the Chi-square test. The results are presented in the following table.

**Table 10 Educational Qualification and Employability Enhancement**

| <b>Chi-square Value</b> | <b>Degrees of Freedom</b> | <b>Table Value</b> | <b>Inference</b> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| 11.62                   | 4                         | 9.488              | Significant      |

#### **Source: Computed Data**

From the above analysis, it is observed that the calculated Chi-square value (11.62) is greater than the table value (9.488). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that there is a significant association between the educational qualification of the respondents and their employability enhancement.

### **FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

The major findings of the study are:

- The researcher found that 42 (52.5 percent) of the sample respondents belongs to the age group of 31 – 45 years
- The majority of the respondents (57.5 percent) are female, while 42.5 percent are male.
- It is found that 73.75 percent of the respondents are married, constituting the largest proportion of the sample.
- A significant majority (71.25 percent) of the respondents belong to nuclear families, whereas 28.75 percent belong to joint families.
- More than half of the respondents (53.75 percent) are undergraduates, followed by 25 percent postgraduates and 21.25 percent with other educational qualifications.
- Based on the weighted average score, NPTEL is the most preferred online skill training platform with a score of 4.60, followed by SWAYAM (4.40) and Coursera (4.25). Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH) received the lowest preference among the online skill training platforms, with a weighted average score of 3.35.
- Among the challenges faced during online skill training, technical issues with the online platform ranked first with a weighted average score of 4.52. Lack of motivation and self-discipline secured the second rank with a weighted average score of 4.34, while poor internet connectivity ranked third with a score of 4.18.
- The Chi-square test revealed a significant association between the factors such as age and educational qualification of the respondents and their employability enhancement.

- The Chi-square analysis indicated no significant association between the gender and type of family of the respondents and their employability enhancement.

## CONCLUSION

The present study examined the influence of online skill training on employability enhancement among respondents in Madurai District. The findings reveal that online skill training programmes play a significant role in improving the employability of individuals by enhancing their knowledge, technical competencies, and career readiness. The growing adoption of digital learning platforms has provided learners with flexible opportunities to acquire industry-relevant skills and improve their employment prospects. Based on the findings, it is suggested that government and training institutions should strengthen digital infrastructure, particularly internet connectivity, to ensure uninterrupted access to online learning platforms. Online skill training programmes should also include more practical and industry-oriented sessions to improve job readiness among learners. Motivation and mentoring support should be provided to reduce learner dropout and improve engagement in online courses. Further, stronger collaboration between training providers and industries is required to enhance placement opportunities for skilled candidates. Awareness campaigns should be conducted to promote the importance of online skill training, especially in rural and semi-urban areas. Additionally, online platforms should improve their technical support and user-friendly features to reduce learning difficulties and improve the overall training experience. These initiatives will significantly enhance the effectiveness of online skill training and improve employability outcomes in Madurai District.

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