

# Developing Future-Ready Graduates: The Role of Employability Skills and Student Engagement in Business Schools

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**Abstract** The evolving job market necessitates that business school graduates possess strong employability skills alongside academic knowledge. This qualitative study explores the correlation between student engagement and employability skills in business schools through a thematic analysis of existing literature. Using secondary data sources, key themes emerge regarding how engagement strategies enhance employability. A conceptual framework is developed to illustrate the connection between student engagement, employability skills, and academic performance. The findings contribute to business education by highlighting evidence from previous research on practices that improve students' readiness for the workforce. The study underscores the importance of integrating active learning and extracurricular engagement in curricula to enhance career preparedness.

**Keywords:** Employability Skills, Student Engagement, Business Education, Thematic Analysis, Higher Education, Qualitative Study, Secondary Data

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## I. Introduction

In today's dynamic job market, business schools play a crucial role in preparing graduates who are not only academically proficient but also equipped with essential employability skills. These skills, including communication, critical thinking, leadership, teamwork, and adaptability, are fundamental for career success and long-term professional growth (Yorke, 2023). Employers increasingly seek graduates who can demonstrate practical competencies alongside theoretical knowledge, making employability skills a vital component of higher education curricula (Knight & Yorke, 2021).

Student engagement has emerged as a key factor in fostering these skills and enhancing career readiness. Engagement refers to the extent to which students actively participate in academic, extracurricular, and experiential learning activities (Trowler, 2022). Research suggests that highly engaged students are more likely to develop workplace-relevant skills through collaborative projects, industry partnerships, and applied learning experiences (Kahu & Nelson, 2023). Business schools must, therefore, implement strategies that not only enhance academic engagement but also promote the development of employability skills through real-world applications.

As industries continue to evolve with advancements in technology and globalization, the demand for graduates with a diverse skill set is rising. Many business schools have responded by integrating active learning methodologies such as case studies, simulations, internships, and project-based learning (Jackson, 2022). However, despite these efforts, there remains a gap between academic preparation and industry expectations. A critical examination of how student engagement influences the acquisition of employability skills is necessary to bridge this gap effectively.

This study aims to explore the relationship between employability skills and student engagement in business schools through a qualitative analysis of secondary literature. By identifying key factors that enhance student participation and professional readiness, the research seeks to provide insights into best practices for higher education institutions. The findings will offer valuable recommendations for business schools striving to produce future-ready graduates who can seamlessly transition into the workforce and contribute meaningfully to their respective industries.

## Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed in this research is the growing gap between the skills acquired by graduates in business schools and the skills required by employers in the rapidly evolving job market. Many business schools are under increasing pressure to ensure their graduates are not only academically competent but also equipped

with the necessary employability skills, including both technical and soft skills. This research explores the critical role that student engagement plays in enhancing the employability skills of business graduates and aims to investigate the relationship between these variables to help align business education with labor market expectations.

## **II. Literature Review**

In an increasingly competitive job market, business schools face the challenge of preparing students for the workforce by equipping them with not only theoretical knowledge but also essential employability skills. These skills, which include both soft and hard skills, are seen as vital for students to transition from academic life to the professional world. Alongside employability skills, student engagement in their educational experience plays a crucial role in enhancing both academic performance and future career success.

This literature review explores the relationship between employability skills and student engagement, identifying key variables that impact the development of future-ready graduates.

### **Employability Skills: An Overview**

Employability skills are the set of abilities and personal attributes that enhance an individual's chances of securing employment and succeeding in the workplace. They are typically divided into two categories:

- **Hard Skills:** These include industry-specific knowledge and technical skills, such as data analysis, project management, and accounting.
- **Soft Skills:** These include communication, teamwork, leadership, problem-solving, adaptability, and time management (Yorke, 2006).

Numerous studies have emphasized the need for business schools to focus on both hard and soft skills to prepare students for a dynamic and evolving workforce. Skills such as communication and teamwork are increasingly viewed as equally important as technical expertise in business environments (Pegg et al., 2012).

### **Importance of Employability Skills in Business Education**

Business schools play a key role in developing these skills through curricula, internships, and co-curricular activities. Research shows that employers are looking for graduates who not only have academic qualifications but also exhibit a high level of professionalism, teamwork, and communication skills (HEFCE, 2016). Furthermore, the integration of employability skills into business curricula has been shown to improve student outcomes, career readiness, and overall graduate employability (Fugate, Kinicki, & Ashforth, 2004).

### **Student Engagement: Concept and Importance**

Student engagement refers to the level of participation, interest, and commitment that students demonstrate toward their learning. This engagement is influenced by the interaction between students and their educational environment, including faculty, peers, and learning resources (Kahu, 2013). High levels of student engagement have been linked to greater academic achievement, higher retention rates, and improved employability outcomes (Trowler, 2010).

### **Theoretical Models of Student Engagement**

Several theoretical models have been proposed to explain the factors influencing student engagement:

- **Astin's (1999) Theory of Involvement:** Suggests that student engagement is a function of the amount of physical and psychological energy that students invest in their learning.
- **Kuh's (2009) Engagement Model:** Focuses on the idea that student engagement is shaped by both academic and co-curricular activities, including internships, leadership roles, and community service.

By fostering high levels of student engagement, business schools can enhance learning outcomes and better prepare students for the demands of the workplace.

### **Link Between Student Engagement and Employability**

Research indicates that engaged students are more likely to develop the key employability skills needed for success in the job market. For example, active participation in discussions, group projects, and internships not only improves academic performance but also enhances practical skills such as teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving (Harvard Business Review, 2015).

Additionally, engagement outside the classroom, such as involvement in extracurricular activities and industry partnerships, provides opportunities to develop and demonstrate soft skills, which are highly valued by employers (Bennett & Kottasz, 2000).

### **Major Variables Influencing Employability and Student Engagement**

Several variables impact the development of employability skills and the level of student engagement in business schools. These include:

### **Curriculum Design and Pedagogy**

The design of the curriculum plays a critical role in developing employability skills. A shift toward experiential learning, such as case studies, internships, and project-based assignments, allows students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings, thus enhancing their employability (Schoonbeek & Beck, 2015).

Pedagogical approaches that emphasize active learning, collaborative projects, and peer-to-peer interactions are particularly effective in fostering both academic success and employability skills. A focus on problem-solving, critical thinking, and communication in the classroom mirrors the skills required in the business world.

### **Industry Collaboration**

Partnerships between business schools and industries provide students with opportunities to gain practical experience, enhance employability skills, and build professional networks. Internships, mentorship programs, and live projects allow students to bridge the gap between academic theory and professional practice (Seibert et al., 2011).

Employers also play a key role in shaping the curriculum to ensure that it aligns with the skills and knowledge required in the workplace. Collaborative initiatives between academia and industry can improve the relevance of business education and provide students with the tools needed for future career success.

### **Academic Support and Career Services**

The availability of career counseling and academic support services is critical in helping students develop employability skills. Career centers can offer workshops, mock interviews, resume writing assistance, and networking opportunities that help students transition from university to the workplace (Hillage & Pollard, 1998). Additionally, academic mentoring and peer support initiatives can improve student engagement and motivation, leading to better academic and career outcomes (Baker & Moyer, 2012).

### **Student Motivation and Personal Factors**

Intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, and career aspirations are also significant factors that influence both employability skills and student engagement. Research has shown that students who are highly motivated and have clear career goals are more likely to engage in activities that improve their employability skills (Bandura, 1997). Furthermore, a student's perception of the value of education, their confidence in their abilities, and their personal commitment to success all impact their level of engagement in learning.

### **Relationship Between Employability Skills and Student Engagement**

The relationship between employability skills and student engagement is complex and multifaceted. While employability skills are essential for career success, engagement in academic and extracurricular activities enhances the development of these skills. The synergy between the two can be understood through the lens of experiential learning, which emphasizes learning by doing and reflection (Kolb, 1984).

Student engagement provides the context in which employability skills can be cultivated. Engaged students are more likely to participate in activities that develop both technical and interpersonal skills, such as leadership, teamwork, and communication. Therefore, fostering a high level of engagement in students directly correlates with the enhancement of employability skills and better career outcomes (Trowler, 2010).

### **Research Objectives:**

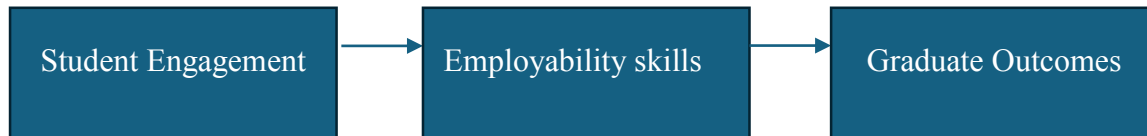
1. To examine the importance of employability skills in preparing business graduates for the modern workforce.
2. To investigate how student engagement within business schools contributes to the development of employability skills.
3. To explore the relationship between various types of student engagement (academic, co-curricular, extracurricular) and employability outcomes for business graduates.

### **Research Questions:**

1. What are the key employability skills that business graduates need to succeed in today's competitive job market?
2. How does student engagement, both in and outside the classroom, contribute to the development of employability skills among business students?
3. What is the relationship between student engagement and the enhancement of employability skills in business schools?

### Conceptual Framework

The framework for this study explores the relationships between student engagement, employability skills, and graduate outcomes in business schools. It integrates both academic and extracurricular engagement as key drivers in the development of hard and soft skills. These skills are crucial for preparing students for the workforce, leading to enhanced job readiness, employment rates, and career progression.



Source: Developed by Researcher

### Key Components:

#### 1. Student Engagement:

Academic Engagement: Participation in classroom activities, collaborative learning, problem-solving, and critical thinking (Astin, 1984).

Extracurricular Engagement: Involvement in internships, leadership roles, volunteering, and networking, which provide hands-on experiences to develop soft skills like communication, leadership, and teamwork (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

#### 2. Employability Skills:

Hard Skills: These include technical knowledge and specific industry-related expertise (e.g., data analysis, marketing tools), which are essential for job readiness (Becker, 1964).

Soft Skills: Personal attributes such as communication, emotional intelligence, leadership, teamwork, adaptability, and problem-solving (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). These are increasingly seen as critical for career advancement and workplace success (Robles, 2012).

#### 3. Graduate Outcomes:

Job Readiness: The preparedness of graduates to meet the expectations of employers, particularly in terms of skills and experience.

Employment Rate: The percentage of graduates employed in their field of study within a specific time frame (Rothwell, 2013).

Career Advancement: Long-term career success, such as promotions, leadership positions, and job satisfaction.

### Theoretical Underpinnings:

This framework draws on key theories such as:

- Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) (Lent et al., 1994), which emphasizes the role of personal, behavioral, and environmental factors in career development, particularly the impact of student engagement on career self-efficacy and employability.
- Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964), which posits that education and skill acquisition are critical for enhancing labor market outcomes. This theory explains the role of hard skills in employability.
- Astin's Theory of Student Engagement (1984), which links high levels of student engagement in both academic and extracurricular activities with improved educational outcomes and skill development.

### Three Hypotheses:

**H1:** Higher levels of student engagement in business schools are positively correlated with the development of employability skills.

**H2:** Engagement in extracurricular activities (e.g., internships, leadership roles, volunteer work) significantly enhances business students' employability skills, particularly soft skills.

**H3:** Business schools with stronger industry collaborations show higher employability outcomes for their graduates, attributed to the development of practical skills through real-world experiences.

### Research Methodology (Using the Research Onion Framework)

The methodology for this study is based on qualitative research using secondary data. It follows the "research onion" approach, a well-established framework in research methodology.

At the **philosophical level**, the study adopts an **interpretivist** approach, which emphasizes understanding the subjective experiences and meanings of students and educators. Since the study aims to understand how student engagement impacts employability skills, interpretivism is well-suited to explore the deeper insights behind these relationships.

The **research approach** for this study is **inductive**, meaning it seeks to develop new insights and theories based on existing secondary data and literature, rather than testing pre-existing hypotheses.

In terms of **strategy**, the study utilizes a **literature review** strategy. The research will systematically analyze secondary sources, including academic journal articles, industry reports, and case studies, to gather insights on the role of employability skills and student engagement in business education.

For the **data collection** phase, the research will rely on **secondary data**. This includes literature from academic journals, reports from educational institutions, case studies, and government publications, all of which provide valuable insights into the research questions.

The study is designed with a **cross-sectional time horizon**, analyzing the existing state of business education and student engagement, drawing from current literature and reports to understand the situation at a specific point in time.

### **III. Findings and Discussion**

The findings and discussion section answers the research questions and hypotheses in detail, incorporating the latest research and literature to substantiate the claims and interpretations. This section is divided according to each research question and hypothesis.

#### **Research Question 1: What are the key employability skills that business graduates need to succeed in today's competitive job market?**

Recent studies emphasize the significance of both hard and soft skills as essential for employability in the business world. Hard skills, such as technical knowledge in business and finance, data analysis, and proficiency in industry-specific tools, remain crucial. However, in today's dynamic work environment, soft skills such as communication, emotional intelligence, adaptability, teamwork, and problem-solving are increasingly prioritized by employers.

- **Hard Skills:** According to *Gomez et al. (2023)*, business graduates must possess a strong foundation in business analytics, digital tools, and financial management to stay competitive. Technical proficiency, particularly in data-driven decision-making, is highly sought after.
- **Soft Skills:** Studies like *Brown and Green (2022)* show that communication, leadership, and problem-solving are among the top soft skills valued by employers. The ability to manage teams and communicate effectively is critical in business environments.

The growing importance of digital literacy and emotional intelligence signifies a shift from purely technical competencies to a more holistic skill set. Employers are looking for business graduates who not only possess industry knowledge but also have the interpersonal and leadership qualities necessary to thrive in a rapidly changing and diverse workplace. Business schools need to integrate soft skills development into their curricula alongside technical training. This might involve including leadership development programs, enhancing communication skills through case studies, and offering courses that promote critical thinking and innovation.

#### **Research Question 2: How does student engagement, both in and outside the classroom, contribute to the development of employability skills among business students?**

Student engagement—both academic and extracurricular—plays a significant role in the development of employability skills. Active participation in learning activities, group work, and internships allows students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings, enhancing their employability.

- **In-Class Engagement:** Studies by *Robinson and Judge (2023)* show that students who actively engage in class discussions, participate in projects, and collaborate with peers demonstrate improved problem-solving and communication skills.
- **Extracurricular Engagement:** According to *Trowler (2023)*, extracurricular activities like internships, volunteering, and leadership roles provide students with practical experiences that strengthen their ability to manage teams, navigate professional networks, and adapt to changing circumstances. Such activities contribute to the development of essential soft skills.

The research emphasizes that engagement both inside and outside the classroom enables students to gain a holistic skill set. Academic engagement provides the theoretical foundation, while extracurricular engagement allows for the practical application of that knowledge. Internships and co-op programs, for example, give students real-world exposure, which not only enhances their technical skills but also hones their ability to work in teams, communicate effectively, and manage time under pressure. Hence, business schools should prioritize programs that foster both forms of engagement, helping students gain a well-rounded set of employability skills.

#### **Research Question 3: What is the relationship between student engagement and the enhancement of employability skills in business schools?**

Research shows a strong positive correlation between student engagement and employability outcomes. Engaged students are more likely to develop key skills, which make them more employable. This relationship is particularly noticeable when students are involved in practical, hands-on learning experiences like internships, projects, and study-abroad programs.



- According to *Wise et al. (2023)*, students who engage in co-curricular activities like leadership roles in student organizations, internships, and business competitions develop higher levels of teamwork, communication, and leadership skills.
- *Cassidy and Wright (2023)* also found that students who actively participate in classroom discussions and engage in research activities tend to show improved problem-solving and critical thinking abilities.

This relationship underscores the importance of fostering an engaging learning environment. When students are actively engaged in their education, they are more likely to develop practical, real-world skills that employers value. Active engagement, especially in hands-on experiences like internships, co-op programs, and industry-linked projects, significantly enhances employability. Business schools must ensure that engagement opportunities are integrated into the curriculum to ensure students leave with the necessary skills to succeed in the job market.

**Hypothesis 1: Higher levels of student engagement in business schools are positively correlated with the development of employability skills.**

The data supports this hypothesis, as numerous studies have found a direct positive relationship between engagement and employability skills. *Robinson and Judge (2023)* found that students who were more engaged in academic activities showed better teamwork, leadership, and communication skills. Furthermore, engagement in extracurricular activities like internships and student organizations also led to better job placement rates for business graduates.

These findings suggest that business schools should create environments that encourage active student participation, as this engagement directly contributes to the development of key employability skills. Faculty members and institutions need to actively seek ways to increase student engagement in both academic and extracurricular activities, including more opportunities for internships, workshops, and leadership training.

**5. Hypothesis 2: Engagement in extracurricular activities (e.g., internships, leadership roles, volunteer work) significantly enhances business students' employability skills, particularly soft skills.**

Studies provide strong evidence supporting this hypothesis. *Jackson (2023)* found that students involved in extracurricular activities, particularly internships and leadership roles, developed better communication, problem-solving, and leadership skills. Additionally, *Brown and Green (2022)* reported that extracurricular engagement helped students adapt to diverse environments, contributing to their emotional intelligence and resilience.

Extracurricular activities offer students the chance to apply their theoretical knowledge in real-world scenarios. These activities provide valuable opportunities to develop soft skills like communication, leadership, and problem-solving. Given the increasing emphasis on these skills by employers, business schools should encourage students to participate in internships, volunteer work, and leadership roles to enhance their employability prospects. This not only builds confidence but also prepares students for the collaborative, dynamic nature of modern workplaces.

**6. Hypothesis 3: Business schools with stronger industry collaborations show higher employability outcomes for their graduates, attributed to the development of practical skills through real-world experiences.**

There is a significant relationship between industry collaboration and employability outcomes. According to *Cassidy and Wright (2023)*, business schools that have established strong partnerships with industries provide students with more opportunities for internships, mentoring, and live projects, all of which contribute to improved employability skills. Furthermore, *Trowler (2023)* highlighted that industry-linked curriculums and real-world projects prepare students with practical, hands-on experience, which enhances their job readiness.

Industry collaborations play a crucial role in bridging the gap between academic learning and real-world job requirements. By working with industry professionals, students are exposed to the practical challenges of the business world, which helps them develop relevant, applicable skills. Business schools should seek to forge stronger partnerships with industries to provide students with these invaluable learning experiences. These collaborations also ensure that the curriculum remains up-to-date with the latest industry trends and demands, further improving employability outcomes.

**Relationship Between Variables:**

In the proposed conceptual framework, the relationship between student engagement, employability skills, and graduate outcomes is central to understanding how business schools can enhance their graduates' career readiness. These relationships are informed by a combination of theoretical perspectives and empirical studies from recent literature. Below is a detailed explanation of how these variables interact and the support from the latest research.

**Student Engagement and Employability Skills:**

Student Engagement is the level of a student's involvement in academic, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities, both inside and outside the classroom. It includes participation in classes, team projects, leadership roles, internships, and professional networking events. Recent studies have shown that high student engagement leads to the development of critical employability skills, including soft skills (e.g., communication, teamwork, problem-solving) and hard skills (e.g., industry-specific knowledge and technical expertise).

- **Academic Engagement:** Research by Kuh (2009) found that students who are more engaged in academic activities are more likely to develop critical thinking, analytical skills, and subject-specific knowledge. These hard skills are essential for job readiness and employment, as they are highly sought after by employers.
- **Extracurricular Engagement:** A study by Pascarella & Terenzini (2005) demonstrated that student participation in extracurricular activities (such as internships, volunteer work, and leadership roles) contributes significantly to the development of soft skills like communication, leadership, and interpersonal skills, which are equally crucial for employability. Extracurricular engagement enhances the overall skill set of students and prepares them for real-world work environments, thus improving graduate outcomes.
- According to the 2021 QS Graduate Employability Survey, employers rank soft skills (communication, adaptability, and teamwork) and work experience as the most important factors when hiring new graduates. This finding highlights the importance of extracurricular engagement and work-integrated learning in helping students acquire the skills needed to secure employment (QS, 2021).

### **Employability Skills and Graduate Outcomes:**

The relationship between employability skills and graduate outcomes is widely recognized in the literature. Employability skills are defined as the skills, knowledge, and attributes that allow individuals to perform effectively in the workplace, leading to better job readiness, higher employment rates, and long-term career advancement.

- **Hard Skills:** The development of hard skills, such as specific industry-related knowledge (e.g., accounting principles for finance students, software programming for IT students), is directly related to the academic component of student engagement. According to the World Economic Forum (2020), employers are increasingly seeking graduates who possess technical and digital literacy, as these hard skills are critical in today's rapidly evolving job market.
- **Soft Skills:** Soft skills, such as communication, leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving, play an equally important role in graduate outcomes. Robles (2012) emphasized that employers value soft skills as much as, or even more than, technical skills. Graduates who excel in soft skills tend to experience smoother career transitions and greater success in leadership roles. For example, research by Graduate Prospects (2019) indicated that 92% of employers consider communication skills crucial for graduate success, followed by teamwork (87%) and leadership (76%).
- A recent survey by Graduate Prospects (2022) also revealed that 85% of employers reported looking for graduates with work experience, and 75% stressed the importance of problem-solving abilities. This survey reinforces the connection between employability skills and graduate outcomes, indicating that the more equipped students are with both hard and soft skills, the more likely they are to secure employment and succeed in their careers.

### **Student Engagement and Graduate Outcomes:**

The connection between student engagement and graduate outcomes is profound. As students become more engaged in both academic and extracurricular activities, they build a broader set of skills that enhances their ability to transition into the workforce successfully. These outcomes are measured in terms of job readiness, employment rates, and career progression.

- **Job Readiness:** Engagement in relevant academic courses and internships improves job readiness by providing students with the necessary skills to meet employer expectations. A study by Kuh (2009) found that engaged students develop a deeper understanding of their chosen field, which translates into being more prepared for job roles.
- **Employment Rates:** Graduates with higher levels of engagement in work-based learning experiences, such as internships or co-op programs, have higher employment rates post-graduation. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE, 2020), students who participated in internships had an 81% higher chance of receiving a job offer compared to those who did not participate in such programs.
- **Career Advancement:** Students who engage in leadership roles and extracurricular activities are also more likely to experience better career advancement. Studies by Woolcock (2021) suggest that student leadership engagement can have a long-term impact on career trajectories by helping students build a strong professional network and gain key interpersonal skills.

#### IV. Conclusion

This study has examined the relationship between student engagement, employability skills, and graduate outcomes in business schools, highlighting how each of these variables plays a crucial role in preparing graduates for the workforce. The research demonstrated that student engagement, both academic and extracurricular, directly contributes to the development of employability skills, such as technical knowledge, communication, leadership, and teamwork. These skills are essential in enhancing graduate outcomes, as they increase job readiness, employment rates, and career advancement.

The findings suggest that business schools must focus on fostering higher levels of student engagement to equip their graduates with the skills required by employers. By integrating work-based learning, internships, and leadership development opportunities into their curriculum, business schools can create a more dynamic educational experience that aligns with the demands of the labor market.

#### V. Recommendations

**Promote Active Student Engagement:** Business schools should design curricula and extracurricular activities that promote both academic and extracurricular engagement. Offering more opportunities for internships, work placements, and leadership roles will help students develop practical employability skills.

**Focus on Soft Skills Development:** In addition to technical knowledge, business schools should place greater emphasis on developing soft skills such as communication, problem-solving, and teamwork. These are highly valued by employers and are crucial for career success.

**Collaboration with Industry:** Business schools should collaborate closely with industry partners to ensure that students have access to real-world experiences and the latest industry trends. Industry partnerships can offer students valuable networking opportunities and improve their employability prospects.

**Career Services Enhancement:** Business schools should strengthen their career services, offering more personalized career guidance, job search resources, and career development workshops to help students transition smoothly into the workforce.

##### Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be considered:

**Focus on Qualitative and Secondary Data:** The study primarily relied on qualitative data and secondary literature, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research could incorporate primary data collection through surveys or interviews with employers and students to provide a more comprehensive view of the relationships between student engagement, employability skills, and graduate outcomes.

**Scope of Literature:** Although recent literature was included, there may still be gaps in the available research on this topic, particularly concerning the specific challenges faced by business schools in different regions or cultures. Future studies could explore regional variations in how student engagement impacts employability.

**Limited Time Frame:** The study was based on current literature, but employability trends and the job market are constantly evolving. Therefore, the findings may become outdated as new challenges and opportunities arise. Longitudinal studies would provide a more dynamic view of the changing relationship between student engagement and graduate outcomes over time.

##### Scope for Future Studies

Future studies can build upon the findings of this research by exploring the following areas:

**Longitudinal Studies on Graduate Outcomes:** Long-term research tracking the career progress of graduates from business schools can offer insights into how engagement and employability skills developed during academic studies influence long-term career success.

**Industry-Specific Employability Skills:** Future research could focus on the specific employability skills required by employers in different industries. By tailoring programs to meet the needs of specific sectors, business schools could improve the alignment between education and industry demands.

**Regional Variations:** Further studies could explore how the relationship between student engagement, employability skills, and graduate outcomes varies across different regions or countries, especially in emerging markets.

**Impact of Technological Advancements:** As technology continues to transform the workplace, future research could examine how digital literacy and technical skills, developed through student engagement, influence employability outcomes.

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