

A STUDY OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT & EMPLOYABILITY TRAINING AMONG YOUTH

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Abstract:

Skill development and employability skills are the core elements of modern education, as they prepare students to pursue subsequent academic and career opportunities. The current study looks at the employability and skill development of students in the seventh through tenth grades at Vidya Classes in the Thane district. The study was carried out as part of a community engagement initiative in which the researcher planned and led sessions on employability and skill development, with an emphasis on digital literacy, leadership, problem-solving, teamwork, and communication. Simple random sampling and a structured questionnaire were used to gather primary data. The impact of demographic characteristics was investigated using ANOVA analysis. The findings indicate that there is no significant difference between age groups in their fundamental comprehension of skill development ($p = 0.8565 > 0.05$). However, student problems are considerably influenced by their age and gender ($p < 0.001$). Although it shows a small motivational influence, the function of the school was not found to have a statistically significant impact on students' interest and involvement ($p = 0.056$). According to descriptive findings, students have a high level of awareness: 93% have heard of employability skills, and 100% strongly think they comprehend skill development. Even though students understand the value of digital, problem-solving, and leadership skills, many report feeling under pressure to perform well academically and participating in few skill-based activities. The study emphasizes how crucial structured skill development interventions are for raising student engagement and improving the use of practical skills.

Keywords: Skill development, employability skills.

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Introduction:

Skill development is essential for empowering people, protecting their future, and promoting personal growth. It is a crucial component that improves employability in the current globalized world. A person's skills are equally important as their academic standing. These days, skills and education should go hand in hand. They are the foundation of a nation's social and economic advancement.

In today's fast-moving world, getting decent grades is not enough to have a bright future in the fast-paced world of today. In order to overcome obstacles in the real world and advance in their careers, students also need to acquire critical life skills. For both professional and personal development, abilities like problem-solving, communication, teamwork, confidence, and digital knowledge are crucial. Through self-awareness and hands-on learning opportunities, this project aims to assist students in developing key employable skills. Students are encouraged to utilize technology responsibly and effectively, as well as to identify their strengths and

shortcomings. Students are guided to acquire practical skills that equip them for future chances rather than just learning from books. The project helps young people develop greater self-assurance, independence, and responsibility by fostering a positive learning environment.

Skill Development and Employability Skills :

Skill Development means Enhancing our abilities to perform our work more effectively and efficiently is known as skill development. The capacity to perform a task effectively is a skill that may be acquired and enhanced with practice. It entails enhancing communication, boosting self-esteem, learning teamwork, problem-solving, utilizing technology effectively, and forming positive habits.

- By mentally enhancing comprehension and reasoning
- Socially, via enhancing connections and behavior
- Emotionally, by developing self-assurance and restraint.

Employability skills are the fundamental abilities and traits that support an individual:

- Obtain employment
- Do a good job at work
- Adapt to the workplace
- Develop and achieve professional success

Regardless of one's career path teacher, physician, engineer, businessperson, or worker these abilities are beneficial. Life skills and workplace skills are other names for employability skills.

Significance of Skill Development and Employability Skills:

Skill Development:

- Improves abilities–Helps a person perform tasks better and more efficiently.
- Builds confidence–Increases self-belief by learning and practicing new skills.
- Enhances thinking skills–Develops problem-solving and decision-making ability.
- Encourages personal growth–Helps in mental, social, and emotional development.
- Increases productivity – Makes work faster, better, and more organized.

Employability Skills:

- Helps in getting a job – Makes a person job-ready and suitable for employment.
- Improves communication – Helps in speaking and interacting clearly with others.
- Develops teamwork – Teaches how to work cooperatively with others.
- Builds positive attitude – Encourages discipline, responsibility, and good behavior.
- Supports career success – Helps in career growth and long-term job stability.

Limitation of the study:

- The study was conducted for only one week.
- The sample size was limited to 71+ students.
- The study was restricted to the Diva Only.
- The research focused only on skill development and employability skills.

Objectives of the study:

- To study the impact of skill development programs on student motivation and participation.
- To evaluate students' views on program content and support.
- To explore experience in managing their regular studies.
- To suggest few ways for better program to make learning more helpful, supportive for students.

Hypothesis:

- (H₁): There is a significant difference in students basic understanding of skill development across different age groups.
- (H₀): There is no significant difference in students basic understanding of skill development across different age groups.
- (H₁): Age has a significant effect on students basic understanding of skill development.
- (H₀): Age has no significant effect on students basic understanding of skill development.
- (H₁): Age and Gender have a significant effect on the challenges faced by students
- (H₀): Age and Gender do not have a significant effect on the challenges faced by students.
- (H₁): The school's role as a motivational factor has a significant effect on students' interest and participation.
- (H₀): The school's role as a motivational factor does not have a significant effect on students' interest and participation.

Review of Literature:

Dr. Deepak T, Nilesh N (2021): The author studied the employability skills of Indian youth and the gap between industry expectations and graduates' abilities. The study found that many youth lack technical and soft skills due to poor curriculum and limited practical exposure. It was conducted to suggest reforms in the education system and improve job readiness.

K. Selvasundaram (2016): The author focused on employability skills of college students, meaning the skills needed to get and keep a job. The study found that communication and technical skills are most important, but many graduates have degrees without job-ready skills. The purpose was to show that colleges must teach practical skills along with theory to make students job-ready.

Dr. Pailla Surender (2025): The author focused on youth skill development and employability. He found that many educated youth lack practical skills, but government skill programmes improve job opportunities. He studied this to understand unemployment and suggest ways to support India's economic growth.

Dr. Sandeep K, B K, Sridevi Y (2024): The authors studied whether skill development programs improve employability of commerce students in Dakshina Kannada. They found no direct effect on jobs or salary, but effective training increased job satisfaction. The study aimed to check the real impact of skill programs in a competitive job market.

Dr. Abhilash S, Prachi T (2022): The authors studied the importance of soft skills for employability of college students in India. They found that many graduates lack soft skills, especially communication skills, which are

most demanded. The study suggests colleges should focus on skill-based education to reduce unemployment and meet industry needs.

Dr. Navita S. Kumar (2019): The author studied the link between skill development and employability in India, including initiatives like Skill India. She found a large skill gap causing unemployment, though government training programs are helping. The study highlights the need for skill development to improve jobs and economic growth.

Deeksha C & Punnam V (2023): The authors studied how skill development programs affect students' employability. They found that most students believe vocational skills improve job chances, but awareness is still low. The study aimed to reduce unemployment and bridge the gap between education and industry needs.

Dr. Ashok R, Dr. Bhavana L (2023): The study, published in the International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts, examined employers' views on employability skills of management graduates. It found that employers value communication and soft skills more than degrees, and there is a clear skill gap. The study aimed to understand industry expectations and suggest ways to reduce this gap.

Mr. S. Gopalakrishnan (2019): The author studied employability skills among management students and examined industry expectations. The study found a significant skill gap, as employers prefer practical knowledge and soft skills over academic marks. It was conducted to suggest improvements in education and reduce unemployment among graduates.

Nur Amalina H, Noor Seman (2023) : The authors studied employability skills from the perspective of employers and youth. They found a gap between what employers expect and what youth think is important. Employers value higher-level skills like thinking, communication, and technology skills. The study was conducted to reduce this skills gap and improve youth job readiness.

Author(s)	Focus of Study	Major Findings	Purpose of Study
Nilesh Nirgude & Deepak Tiwari	Employability skills of Indian youth	Youth lack technical & soft skills due to outdated curriculum and limited practical exposure	To suggest education reforms and improve job readiness
K. Selvasundaram	Employability skills of college students	Communication & technical skills are important; graduates lack job-ready skills	To emphasize practical training along with theory
Pailla Surender	Youth skill development & unemployment	Educated youth lack practical skills govt programs improve job opportunities	To understand unemployment and support economic growth
Sridevi Y & Sandeep Kumar B K	Skill development programs for commerce students	No direct effect on salary/jobs; effective training improves job satisfaction	To check real impact of skill programs

Prachi Tiwari & Abhilash Srivastava	Importance of soft skills	Graduates lack communication skills; high industry demand	To promote skill-based education
Navita S. Kumar	Skill development & employability in India	Large skill gap; govt initiatives like Skill India helping reduce unemployment	To improve employment and economic growth
Deeksha Chaurasia & Punnam Veeriah	Impact of vocational skills on students	Students believe skills improve job chances; low awareness exists	To bridge gap between education & industry
Ashok Kumar Rai & Bhavana Likhitkar	Employers' view on management graduates	Employers value soft skills over degrees; skill gap exists	To align education with industry expectations
S. Gopalakrishnan	Employability skills of management students	Employers prefer practical knowledge & soft skills over marks	To suggest curriculum improvements
Nur Amalina Holidi & Noor Aslinda Abu Seman;	Employer & youth perception of employability	Gap between employer expectations & youth perception; importance of thinking, communication & tech skills	To reduce skills gap and improve job readiness

Gap Analysis:

- The majority of studies concentrate on college students, recent graduates, and job seekers; relatively little study looks at schoolchildren (7th–10th standard).
- The literature that is now available primarily emphasizes how youth lack soft and practical skills as a result of out-of-date curricula and little exposure to real-world situations.
- Few studies examine students' awareness and comprehension of employability abilities at an early educational stage, despite the fact that many scholars discuss industry expectations and employer viewpoints.
- Instead of examining the effects of skill development sessions at the school level, a number of research concentrate on government policies and initiatives.
- Research on community participation strategies that directly instruct students and assess their awareness and difficulties is similarly scarce.
- Thus, the current study bridges this gap by examining the awareness, difficulties, and involvement in skill-based learning of children in grades 7 through 10 through a community engagement program that focuses on skill development and employability skills.

Research Methodology:

The study examines skill development and employability skills among students in grades 7 through 10 at Vidya Classes, Thane, using a descriptive research design and quantitative methodology. 71 Participants were chosen by simple random sampling. The researcher used a structured questionnaire to gather primary data and held skill development sessions as part of a community involvement project. Descriptive statistics and ANOVA were used to evaluate the data in order to investigate students' awareness, involvement, and difficulties.

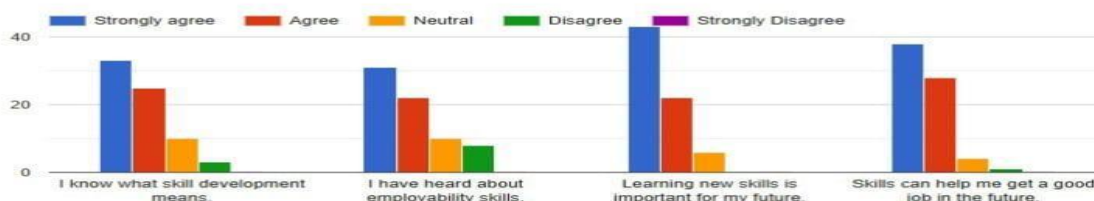
Data Analysis & Interpretation:

Demographic data:

		PERCENTAGE
Age Group	12-13	40%
	14-15	59%
	16	0%
	Total	100%
Gender	Male	47%
	Female	52%
	Total	100%

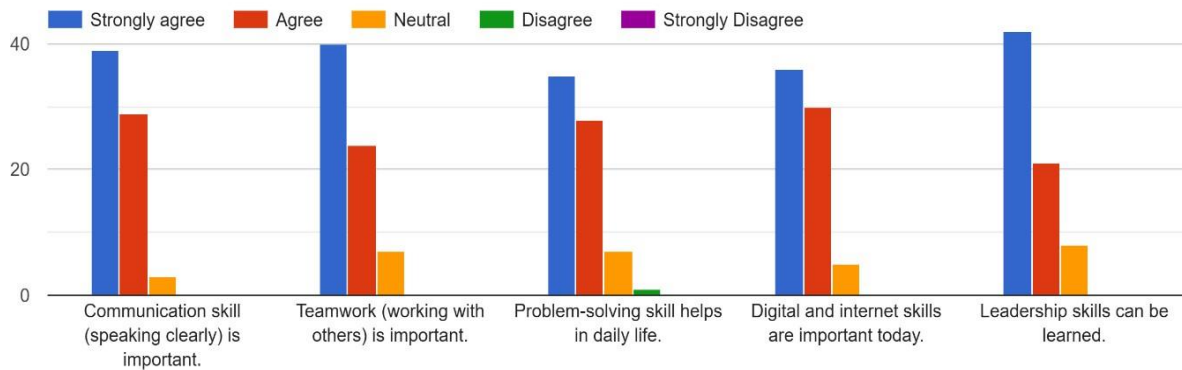
Interpretation: The data shows that the majority of respondents (59%) belong to the 14–15 age group, followed by 40% in the 12–13 age group, while there are no respondents aged 16. This indicates that the survey mainly represents mid-adolescent students. In terms of gender, 52% of respondents are female and 47% are male, showing a nearly balanced distribution with slightly higher female participation. Overall, the findings primarily reflect the views of 14–15-year-old students with fair representation of both genders.

1. Basic Understanding



Interpretation: The data indicates a high level of awareness and positive attitude towards skill development among respondents. All students (100%) understand the concept of skill development, while 84% strongly agree and 9% agree they are familiar with employability skills. Furthermore, 60% and 30% of respondents, respectively, emphasize the importance of learning new skills for their future, and 52% strongly agree and 40% agree that skills can lead to better job opportunities. Overall, the findings suggest a favorable perception of skill development's role in career advancement.

2. Knowledge About Skills



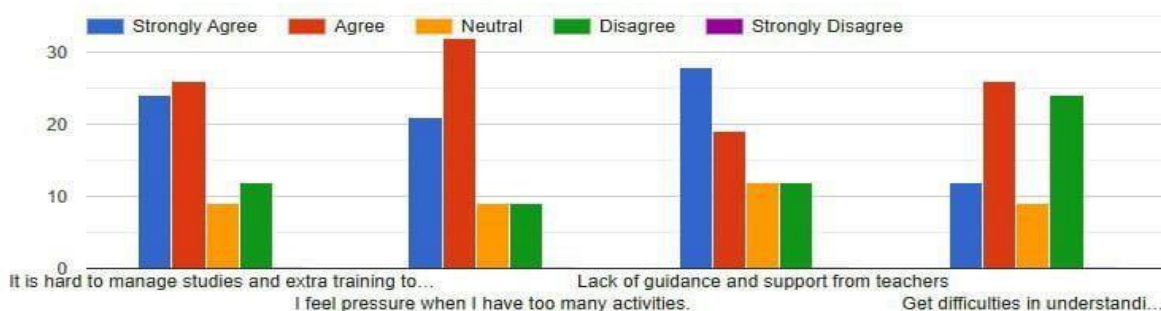
Interpretation: The data reveals a strong positive perception of essential skills among respondents, with majorities strongly agreeing on the importance of speaking skills (54%), teamwork (59%), problem-solving skills (52%), and digital skills (50%). Furthermore, 59% express confidence that leadership skills can be learned. Overall, students largely recognize the value of communication, teamwork, problem-solving, digital literacy, and leadership, with minimal neutral or negative responses.

3. Interest and Participation



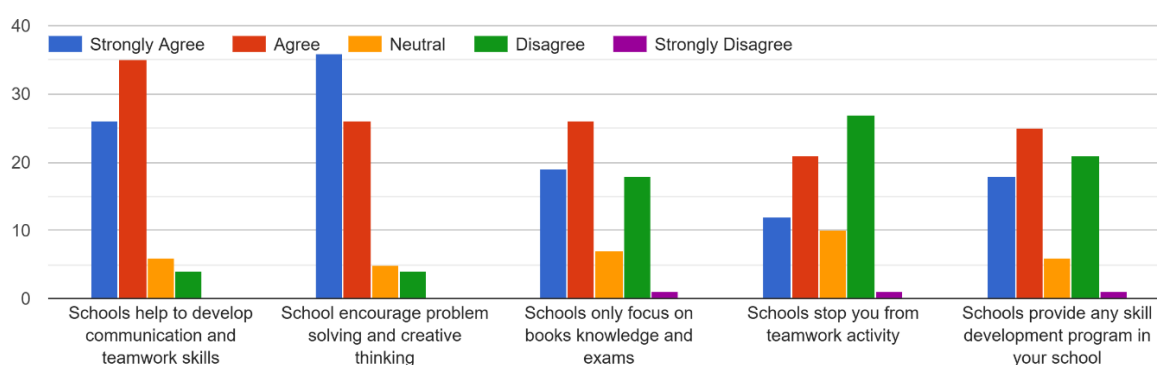
Interpretation: Data reveals that students have a low positive attitude towards skill-based activities, with only 11% strongly agreeing and 39% agreeing on enjoying skill learning, while 42% disagree. Additionally, 57% strongly disagree that skill training enhances learning interest, and participation in classroom activities is similarly limited, with 49% strongly disagreeing and only 1% strongly agreeing. Overall, many students show little enthusiasm and engagement in skill training and classroom activities.

4. Challenges in Balancing Academics and Extracurricular Activities



Interpretation: The data reveals that many students struggle to balance academics with additional skill training, with 68% indicating difficulty in managing their studies alongside extra training. Furthermore, 73% report feeling pressured by too many activities, reflecting significant academic stress. Regarding support, 62% feel there is a lack of teacher assistance. Responses on technical tools like Excel and ChatGPT are varied—54% report difficulties while 32% disagree about facing challenges. Overall, the findings highlight workload pressure and insufficient guidance as major issues, alongside moderate challenges in adapting to new technical tools.

5. Role of schools in skill development



Interpretation: The findings reveal that perceptions of the school's role in skill development are mixed. While 42% of students believe schools nurture communication and teamwork skills, and 43% view them as promoting problem-solving and creative thinking, a significant 44% feel that schools prioritize academic knowledge and exams. Despite this, all students agree that their school provides skill development programs, indicating a recognition of their existence, albeit overshadowed by a focus on academics.

6. Descriptive Statistics

<i>PG &PA</i>		<i>Column2</i>	
Mean	3	Mean	3.138888889
Standard Error	1.480044621	Standard Error	1.548423596
Median	2	Median	2
Mode	2	Mode	2
Standard Deviation	12.55859506	Standard Deviation	13.1388099
Sample Variance	157.7183099	Sample Variance	172.6283255
Kurtosis	71.76258092	Kurtosis	71.78997243
Skewness	8.464569854	Skewness	8.466944316
Range	107	Range	112
Minimum	1	Minimum	1
Maximum	108	Maximum	113
Sum	216	Sum	226
Count	72	Count	72
Confidence Level(95.0%)	2.951125157	Confidence Level(95.0%)	3.087468959

7. One-Way ANOVA was conducted to determine whether there is a significant difference in students' Basic Understanding of Skill Development across different age groups.

Anova: Single Factor						
SUMMARY						
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>		
Basic Understanding [I know what skill development means.	72	142	1.972222	68.05556		
Basic Understanding (I have heard about employability skills)	72	274	3.805556	254.4124		

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Basic Understanding [Learning new skills is important for my future.]	72	210	2.916667	149.2606		
Basic Understanding [Skills can help me get a good job in the future.]	72	220	3.055556	163.7997		
ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>

Between Groups	122.375	3	40.79167	0.256742	0.856501	2.636391
Within Groups	45122.5	284	158.882			
Total	45244.88	287				

one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of age on students’ basic understanding of skill development. The results showed that there was no statistically significant difference among age groups, $F(3, 284) = 0.2567, p = 0.8565$. Since the p-value was greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis was not rejected. Therefore, age does not significantly affect students’ basic understanding of skill development.

8. The multiple regression analysis

SUMMARY OUTPUT								
<i>Regression Statistics</i>								
Multiple R	0.99856772							
R Square	0.997137492							
Adjusted R Square	0.997096007							
Standard Error	0.681552569							
Observations	71							
ANOVA								
	<i>Df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>			
Regression	1	11164.93	11164.93	24035.73792	1.73503E-89			
Residual	69	32.05146	0.464514					
Total	70	11196.99						
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95.0%</i>	<i>Upper 95.0%</i>
Intercept	-0.011081861	0.083206	-0.13319	0.894433791	-0.17707283	0.154909	-0.17707	0.154909
1	0.954608054	0.006157	155.0346	1.74E-89	0.942324405	0.966892	0.942324	0.966892

Hypothesis testing: Age and Gender do not significantly affect the challenges faced by students.

Result: p

$p < 0.05$, we reject the null hypothesis. Age or Gender significantly influence the challenges faced by students. The multiple regression analysis revealed that Age and Gender significantly predict the challenges faced by students, $F(1,69) = 24035.74$, $p < 0.001$. The model explained 99.71% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.9971$). The predictor variable showed a strong positive effect ($\beta = 0.9546$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that demographic factors significantly influence the level of challenges experienced by student one-way ANOVA (impact of the school’s role as a motivational factor on students’ interest and participation)

Anova: Single Factor							
SUMMARY							
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance			
Column 1	71	230	3.239437	2.527565			
Column 2	71	272	3.830986	1.971026			
Column 3	71	257	3.619718	2.067606			
ANOVA							
Source	of	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between		12.76056	2	6.380282	2.915058	0.056398	3.038877
Within	Groups	459.6338	210	2.188732			
Total		472.3944	212				

The p-value (0.056) is very close to 0.05. This suggests a marginal or weak influence of the school’s role on students’ motivation, interest, and participation. one-way ANOVA was conducted to examine the impact of the school’s role as a motivational factor on students’ interest and participation. The results revealed that the difference among groups was not statistically significant at the 5% level, $F(2, 210) = 2.915$, $p = 0.056$. Since the p-value was greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis was not rejected. However, the result is marginally significant, indicating a possible motivational influence of schools on students’ interest and participation.

Research Finding:

- The results of the Anova show that different age groups do not differ significantly in their basic understanding of skill development, as the p-value is greater than 0.05. Therefore, age does not have a significant impact on students’ understanding.
- The results of the Anova show that age does not make a significant difference in students’ basic understanding of skill development, as the p-value (0.8565) is greater than 0.05.
- The results show that Age and Gender significantly affect the challenges faced by students, as the p-value is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.001$). This means demographic factors strongly influence the level of challenges experienced by students.

- The results show that the school’s role does not significantly affect students’ interest and participation, as the p-value (0.056) is slightly higher than 0.05.
- However, since the value is very close to 0.05, it suggests a weak or possible influence of schools on students’ motivation and participation.
- The school’s role was not found to have a statistically significant impact on students’ interest and participation ($p = 0.056$), though the result suggests a slight or possible motivational influence.
- Overall, while students have similar understanding of skill development across age groups, demographic factors play a key role in shaping the challenges they face, and schools may have a limited but potential impact on motivation and participation.
- All students (100%) strongly agree that they know what skill development means, indicating complete awareness. A large majority (84%) strongly agree and 9% agree that they have heard about employability skills, showing strong familiarity with the concept.
- Similarly, 52% strongly agree and 36% agree that problem-solving skills help in daily life, while 50% strongly agree and 42% agree that digital and internet skills are important today. Additionally, 59% strongly agree that leadership skills can be learned, showing confidence in skill development.
- Overall, the findings suggest that although some students show interest, a large proportion display low enthusiasm and limited engagement in skill training and classroom activities.
- Similarly, 30% strongly agree and 43% agree that they feel pressure when they have too many activities, showing high levels of academic stress.
- Importantly, 100% strongly agree that their school provides skill development programs, indicating full awareness of such initiatives.

Suggestion for improving skills and employability:

Stakeholder	Suggestions for Improving Skills and Employability
Schools	Organize regular skill development programs, workshops, and practical learning activities to help students develop employability skills.
Teachers	Encourage students to participate in group discussions, presentations, and projects to improve communication, leadership, and problem-solving skills.
Students	Actively participate in skill development activities and practice skills such as teamwork, digital literacy, and communication.
Schools & Teachers	Provide proper guidance, mentoring, and career-related support to help students develop important skills for future opportunities.
Students & Institutions	Maintain a balance between academic studies and skill development activities to reduce stress and improve learning outcomes.

Conclusion:

Employability and skill development are critical to students' overall growth. According to the study, the majority of students understand how crucial teamwork, communication, problem-solving, digital skills, and time management are to their success in the future. The results also show that skill-based activities support students' participation, motivation, and self-confidence. However, some students deal with issues like pressure to perform well academically, a lack of guidance, and trouble juggling several activities at once. Therefore, in order to promote skill development, schools, educators, and parents must provide appropriate support. Students can develop their skills and become self-assured, responsible, and prepared for the workforce with consistent practice and mentoring.

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