Original Article
ISSN (Online): 2582-7472

ShodhKosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts
July 2024 5(7), 1067–1071

IMPROVING PLACEMENT SUCCESS RATES FOR MCA GRADUATES: THE ROLE OF INDUSTRY-ORIENTED TRAINING AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Shubhangi Tushar Gadhwe [1], Dr. Anita V. Mahawadiwar [2]

[1] Research Scholar, RTM Nagpur University, Nagpur, India
[2] Research Supervisor, Department of Business Management, RTMNU, Nagpur, India

DOI
10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i7.2024.4892

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

ABSTRACT

The effect of industry-focused training and skill development programs on Master of Computer Applications (MCA) graduates' placement success rates is examined in this study. It is now crucial for educational institutions to match their curricula with industry standards due to the fierce rivalry in the IT employment market. Employability and placement results are greatly improved by training components including technical certificates, internships, and soft skills development, according to the study, which is based on a descriptive design and data gathered from 120 participants. In order to increase work preparedness, the study highlights the necessity of organised, hands-on learning activities in MCA programs. To close the gap between academic knowledge and industrial expectations, recommendations include curriculum improvement, industry engagement, and ongoing skill evaluation.

Keywords: Training, Skill Development, Placement Success, MCA Graduates, Employability, Etc

1. INTRODUCTION

The need for highly qualified experts in information technology (IT) and computer applications is only growing in today's quickly changing digital economy. In order to educate students for professions in software development, data science, system administration, and related sectors, Master of Computer Applications (MCA) programs have grown to be an essential component of Indian higher education. However, the discrepancy between industry expectations and academic curriculum has been a recurring worry for educators and policymakers, resulting in less than ideal employment prospects for MCA graduates (Rai & Mehrotra, 2021). Many MCA graduates find it difficult to find relevant jobs despite having a solid foundation in the field because they lack professional preparation, real-world industrial exposure, and practical skills.

Because of this gap, current educational models need to be strategically redesigned to incorporate industry-focused training and skill development programs into the academic environment. In this situation, it becomes crucial to close the employability gap through focused interventions such project-based learning, technical certification programs, internships, soft skills training, and exposure to modern tools and technology (Aithal & Kumar, 2019). In addition to

improving students' technical proficiency, these programs give them the problem-solving and interpersonal skills they need to succeed in a competitive labour market.

Academic institutions must make sure that graduates are not just academically sound but also prepared for the workforce as India's IT sector develops with new fields like cloud computing, blockchain, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity (Patel & Shah, 2022). As a result, industry-focused training programs have become a viable way to match academic results with business requirements, which will eventually increase placement success rates. The influence of such training programs on MCA students' placement success is examined in this study, which also outlines the best techniques that educational institutions might use.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A lot of study has been done in the past ten years on postgraduate students' employability, particularly in technological fields like computer applications. Numerous studies have repeatedly shown that one of the biggest obstacles to employment is the disconnect between industrial demands and academic learning. Sarkar et al. (2016) claim that the practical and multidisciplinary skills required in the modern workforce are frequently overlooked by Indian technical education's traditional pedagogy. In addition to fundamental technical expertise, employers are increasingly seeking applicants who can exhibit real-world problem-solving talents, flexibility, and teamwork.

Collaboration between business and academics is crucial for enhancing employment outcomes, according to Aithal and Kumar (2019). According to their study, placement rates are better at colleges that provide certification programs that are in line with industry requirements and incorporate hands-on training modules. Through internships, mentorship programs, and curriculum design, industry interaction enables students to gain skills relevant to the workplace and face real-world difficulties.

Soft skills, such as communication, collaboration, time management, and emotional intelligence, are just as crucial for placement success as technical abilities, according to a research by Sharma and Khanna (2020). The authors support a comprehensive strategy for student growth, incorporating instruction in soft skills into the curriculum as early as the first semester. Many businesses have expressed concern that graduates frequently perform poorly in professional settings and interviews because of their weak interpersonal and communication skills, even with technical qualifications.

Less than 40% of Indian technology and information technology graduates are employable in the IT services industry, according to the National Employability Report (Aspiring Minds, 2021), which lends more credence to these conclusions. According to the survey, the main barriers to effective employment are a lack of coding, logical thinking, and soft skills. It also implies that placement rates are noticeably higher at universities with targeted, industry-oriented curricula.

Patil and Desai (2021), who examined the effect of certification programs like Java, Python, AWS, and data analytics on employment, provide an alternative viewpoint. According to their findings, students who sought extra certifications in addition to their MCA program were more likely to receive employment offers from reputable companies. Certifications serve as markers of a student's dedication to education and flexibility in response to changing market trends.

Additionally, Deshpande and Kulkarni (2022) investigated how internships and project-based learning (PBL) affected placement results. In comparison to their classmates, students who took part in industry-led projects or internships throughout their MCA were more self-assured, prepared for the workforce, and successful in placement drives, according to their study, which was carried out across a number of technical institutes in Maharashtra. By giving students the chance to apply their theoretical knowledge in real-world situations, these experiential learning experiences help them become more employable.

Furthermore, employers' expectations have changed significantly as a result of digital transformation. A 2020 NASSCOM research states that competency with cloud platforms, knowledge of agile approaches, and digital fluency are increasingly essential for IT positions. As a result, educational institutions are urged to update their methods and concentrate on helping students develop their digital literacy.

Even though a lot of institutions have made progress in implementing these training programs, there are still differences in how they are implemented, standardised, and evaluated. It is necessary to assess which industry-based approaches are the most successful and adaptable in various academic settings. By identifying essential elements of

effective training programs and examining their impact on placement success rates, the current study seeks to close this gap.

2.1. OBJECTIVES

With a focus on how practical exposure, technical certifications, soft skills, and real-world learning experiences contribute to better job readiness and career success, this study attempts to assess the efficacy of industry-oriented training and skill development programs in improving the employability of MCA graduates by looking at their impact on placement outcomes.

2.2. RESEARCH DESIGN

In order to methodically examine how industry-oriented training and skill development programs contribute to higher placement success rates for MCA graduates, this study uses a descriptive research approach. In order to characterise existing trends, practices, and attitudes about employability development through such efforts, it seeks to gather and evaluate both quantitative and qualitative data.

2.3. SAMPLE SIZE AND TECHNIQUE:

Purposive sampling is used in the study to choose individuals who are either faculty members participating in training and placement activities, recent graduates, or final-year MCA students. To guarantee varied and pertinent insights and allow for a thorough examination of training efficacy and placement results, a sample size of 120 respondents has been selected.

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Descriptive statistical techniques including frequency distribution, percentages, and mean scores were used to analyse the data gathered from 120 respondents, which included faculty members, recent graduates, and MCA students. To learn more about the many elements of industry-oriented training and how they are thought to affect employability, a structured questionnaire was employed.

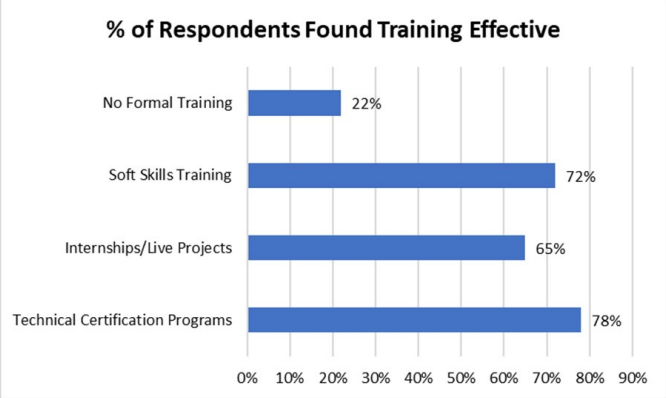

Figure 1 Effectiveness of Training

One of the important findings found that 78% of respondents believed that technical certification programs (such as Java, Python, and cloud computing) considerably boosted their chances of getting placed. Similarly, 65% of students indicated that engaging in internships and real projects helped them better grasp industry needs and enhanced their confidence during campus interviews. 72% of respondents said that soft skills training, which includes communication, collaboration, and presentation abilities, was useful for being ready for in-person interviews and group discussions.

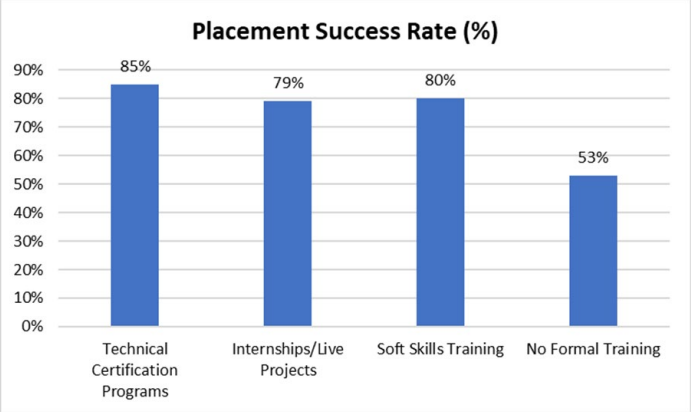

Figure 2 Placement Success Rate

Students who participated in industry-oriented training had an 82% placement success rate, while those who did not had a 53% placement success rate. This suggests that training exposure and placement results are positively correlated.

The data unequivocally shows that improving placement success rates for MCA graduates requires organised training programs that are adapted to industry demands. These results lend credence to the idea that in order to increase employability, educational institutions should incorporate these kinds of programs within their core curricula.

4. CONCLUSION

According to the study's findings, industry-focused training and skill development initiatives significantly improve MCA graduates' employability and placement success rates. The results unequivocally show that students who receive hands-on training such as technical certifications, internships, and the development of soft skills are better prepared to satisfy industry standards and perform well during placement procedures. The importance of bridging the gap between academic learning and industrial requirements is shown by the positive association found between these training components and successful job placements. All things considered, the study supports the necessity of experienced, organised learning in MCA programs to guarantee that graduates are prepared for the workforce in the cutthroat IT industry.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is advised that educational institutions make industry-focused training modules a required part of the MCA curriculum in light of the findings. In order to give real-time exposure through internships, live projects, and guest lectures, partnerships with industry partners should be enhanced. To boost self-esteem and enhance performance during placement drives, regular skill evaluations, coding boot camps, and practice interviews have to be planned. Additionally, to foster leadership, cooperation, and communication skills, soft skills training ought to be included as early as the first semester. Institutions may greatly improve MCA graduates' employment opportunities and professional development by using these strategies.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

REFERENCES

Aithal, P. S., & Kumar, P. M. (2019). Industry-academia collaboration strategies in Indian higher education institutions. International Journal of Applied Engineering and Management Letters (IJAEML), 3(2), 16□24.

Aspiring Minds. (2021). National employability report: Engineers annual report. Retrieved from https://www.aspiringminds.com/research-reports

Deshpande, R., & Kulkarni, A. (2022). Effectiveness of project-based learning and internships in improving employability of MCA students. Journal of Technical Education and Training, 14(1), 45□54.

NASSCOM. (2020). Future of skills in India□s tech industry. Retrieved from https://nasscom.in

Patel, H., & Shah, M. (2022). Emerging trends in IT and their implications for academic curriculum. Indian Journal of Computer Science and Engineering, 13(2), 112□119.

Patil, A., & Desai, R. (2021). The influence of professional certification on placement outcomes for postgraduate IT students. International Journal of Advanced Computer Science, 12(4), 39□47.

Rai, S., & Mehrotra, N. (2021). Bridging the skills gap in technical education through curriculum redesign. Journal of Higher Education Research & Development, 10(2), 55□64.

Sarkar, M., Overton, T., Thompson, C., & Rayner, G. (2016). Graduate employability: Views of recent graduates and employers. Education + Training, 58(2), 219□236.

Sharma, P., & Khanna, V. (2020). Importance of soft skills in the employability of engineering graduates. Journal of Engineering Education Transformations, 33(3), 122□127.