

Communication Skills and The Employability Crisis Among Indian Students

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Abstract- Communication skills have become one of the most important factors shaping student success in India's higher education system. Many students complete their degree with subject knowledge, but they still face serious difficulty in interviews, group discussions, presentations, and workplace communication because they lack confidence and practical communication ability. This paper examines how weak communication skills affect Indian students' academic performance, placement chances, interview readiness, and long-term career development. Written from the perspective of an Indian college teacher, the paper argues that communication training must be treated as a core part of higher education rather than an optional add-on.

Keywords- Communication Skills, Employability, Indian Students, Interview Performance, Higher Education, Soft Skills, Career Readiness

I. INTRODUCTION

In Indian colleges today, one of the most common and serious problems among students is poor communication skill. Many students are intelligent, hardworking, and technically strong, but they are unable to explain their ideas clearly in spoken English or even in a structured way in interviews and classroom discussions. As a result, they often perform below their actual capability.

From a teacher's point of view, this issue is visible every year during seminars, internal viva, mock interviews, and placement drives. Students frequently know the answer, but they cannot express it well. They may hesitate, speak too fast, become silent under pressure, or use unclear and incomplete sentences. This weak communication creates a direct barrier to employability, especially in competitive job markets where employers expect confidence, clarity, teamwork, and professional interaction.

Communication as a Career Skill

Communication is not limited to speaking English. It includes listening carefully, expressing ideas clearly, writing properly, understanding body language, asking questions, and responding appropriately in social and professional settings. In the Indian context, these skills are deeply connected to career success because employers often judge candidates by how they speak and present themselves in interviews.

A study on training needs of students for job placement found that communication skill is one of the strongest factors affecting interview performance and recruitment success. Another Indian study on engineering undergraduates showed that many students struggle with real-life communication despite studying in professional programs. This means that communication is not merely a language subject; it is a professional life skill that influences employability, leadership, and workplace adjustment.

Problems Faced by Indian Students

The most visible problem is interview failure. Students may have degrees, marks, and even technical knowledge, but they fail to answer questions confidently because they cannot organize their thoughts. Many interviewers report that candidates lack eye contact, give memorized answers, speak in a weak voice, or cannot explain their project work properly. In such cases, the student is often rejected not because of lack of intelligence, but because of weak communication presentation.

Another major problem is low classroom participation. Students who lack communication skills usually avoid speaking in front of others, which reduces their confidence over time. They may remain silent in discussions, hesitate to ask doubts, and struggle to take part in group tasks. This weak participation affects both learning and personality

development. Over time, such students may become academically passive and socially withdrawn.

A third problem is workplace adjustment. Even after getting a job, many graduates struggle to communicate with team members, supervisors, and clients. They may find it difficult to write formal emails, give presentations, attend meetings, or speak professionally in English. This affects productivity and career growth. Therefore, weak communication skill becomes a problem not only at the stage of getting employment, but also after employment.

Why the Problem Is Serious in India

The communication skill problem is especially serious in India because students come from different school systems, language environments, and socio-economic backgrounds. Some students have studied in English-medium schools, while others have studied in regional languages, and this creates large differences in confidence and exposure. However, this should not be viewed as a weakness of the student alone. It is also a structural issue in the educational system, where practical communication training is often given less importance than theory.

Indian job markets are now highly competitive. Employers want graduates who can work in teams, interact with customers, and represent organizations professionally. The problem is that many students are strong in theory but weak in expression. This gap leads to underemployment, rejection in campus recruitment, and frustration among educated youth. A communication skill gap therefore becomes a career gap.

Evidence from Indian Studies

Indian research strongly supports the view that communication skill is central to employability. Kaushal and Talwar's work on Indian engineering undergraduates highlights communication difficulties in higher education settings. Clement and Murugavel's research shows that English language training needs are closely connected to employability in India. Karaka et al. explain that the lack of communicative competence in English creates real disadvantages for job seekers in India. These studies show a clear pattern: students may have subject

expertise, but without communication competence they remain less competitive.

Research in Indian professional contexts has also shown that soft skills complement technical skills and improve employability rates. The training-needs study from Bihar gives practical evidence that students themselves require structured support in speaking, listening, and presentation skills before placement. Even self-assessment studies among management students show that learners recognize their own weaknesses in communication and public speaking. Together, these studies prove that the issue is real, widespread, and urgent in India.

Role of the College Teacher

A college teacher plays a very important role in solving this problem. Teachers should not assume that communication skill will develop automatically with age or degree completion. It must be developed through classroom practice, correction, and encouragement. In my opinion, students improve fastest when they are given regular speaking tasks, short presentations, mock interviews, reading assignments, and guided feedback in a supportive environment.

Teachers should also reduce fear. Many students remain silent because they are afraid of making grammatical mistakes or being laughed at by others. A friendly classroom climate can help them gain confidence gradually. The aim should be progress, not perfection. Even a shy student can improve if the teacher gives repeated opportunities to speak and listens patiently.

What Colleges Should Do

Colleges should include communication training across all semesters, not just in first-year English classes. Students need regular practice in group discussion, self-introduction, interview answers, stage speaking, email writing, and report writing. Placement cells should work closely with teachers to organize mock interviews and communication workshops.

A useful model is to combine language learning with professional tasks. For example, students can be

asked to explain a project, present a case study, or speak about a current issue in simple language. This improves both knowledge and expression. Colleges should also promote reading habits because reading improves vocabulary, sentence formation, and confidence. If colleges treat communication as a serious academic outcome, student development will improve significantly.

Practical Suggestions

Make communication skill a compulsory part of every program.

Conduct mock interviews before placement drives.

Use short classroom speaking tasks every week.

Encourage reading, listening, and summarizing activities.

Train students in professional email writing and presentation skills.

Give feedback in a positive and non-threatening way.

These steps are simple, low-cost, and suitable for Indian colleges with limited resources.

CONCLUSION

Communication skill is one of the strongest determinants of student success in India today. Many students face failure in interviews, discomfort in group discussions, and difficulty in workplace communication because they are not trained to express themselves clearly. This problem affects employment, confidence, academic participation, and long-term career progress.

As an Indian college teacher and researcher, I believe communication skills must be given the same importance as subject knowledge. Indian students are capable, but they need systematic guidance, repeated practice, and supportive teaching to become confident communicators. If colleges take this issue seriously, students will not only become better graduates but also more employable and more responsible professionals.

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