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**Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem  
Faculty of Foreign Language  
Department of English**

**Exploring the Employability Skills Gap of MA Students in Language and Communication  
Specialty in HRD and E- Learning Courses at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University**

Research Thesis Submitted to the Department of English as a Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master's Degree in English

Language and Communication

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**Dedication**

I dedicate this work to my parents, who have always supported me and encouraged me to give my best in my studies. Their love and belief in me have been a constant source of motivation throughout this journey.

I also would like to express my sincere gratitude to my brother, Mohamed, for his invaluable help and support. To my little sister, Alaa, and my cousin, Asma, who is like a sister to me, thank you for your encouragement and being a part of this experience. My deepest appreciation also goes to my dear friends, Chaimaa and Ahlem, who have been by my side since secondary school. And to my closest friends, Senia, Nada, and Yasmine, my second family - thank you for sharing this academic journey with me through its ups and downs.

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**Abstract**

In response to the demands of modern society and the competitive job market, which requires a unique set of skills beyond language proficiency, employers must recruit graduates possessing good communication and digital literacy skills and be aware of the collaborative teamwork and problem-solving skills to adapt to meet international standards. These graduates must be equipped with the necessary skills due to appropriate programs that respond to employer expectations. Accordingly, universities should guarantee suitable Master's programs that align with the ever-changing demands of the workplace. This study examines the employability skills gap faced by English as a foreign language (EFL) students enrolled in the language and communication Master at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University, Algeria. To achieve this, the present study opted for a mixed-methods approach using two research tools: a student questionnaire and a teacher interview to quantitatively and qualitatively investigate the job skills gap among Master (MA) students, spotting light on their communication skills, collaborative teamwork, digital literacy skills, and others. Our participants were First-Year MA students in language and communication during Human Resources Development (HRD) and online learning classes. The results revealed some disconnection between the current MA program and evolving industry needs at the level of practice. Both students and the instructor need to fulfill the program with the practical part to equip graduates with more useful, job-relevant skills in communication, digital literacy, collaborative teamwork, problem-solving, and learners' adaptability to the professional world. Based on what was obtained as results, this study recommends deepening the partnerships with the economic sector and the university, taking into consideration this Master as a professional to contribute to the quality of the current MA program and its integration into the job market to guarantee the real-world exposure and career guidance for MA students. By addressing these gaps, the program can better prepare graduates for long-term career success.

**Keywords:** Employability skills, EFL Students, HRD, online learning

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## **List of Abbreviations**

**HRD:** Human Resources Development

**HRM:** Human Resources Management

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

**ESP:** English for Specific Purposes

**OECD:** Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

**DeSeCo:** Definition and Selection of Competencies

**MA:** Master of Arts

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## General Introduction

In today's dynamic and competitive job market, employability skills are crucial for graduates to secure meaningful employment and meet employer expectations. Employability skills, often called soft skills or transferable skills, encompass a range of abilities beyond academic qualifications and technical knowledge. These skills include communication, teamwork, problem-solving, adaptability, critical thinking, and many others that employers highly value. In Algerian society, employability skills are challenging and require high academic qualifications; this calls for a revolution in educational settings that can bridge the gap between graduates' skills and job requirements. Accordingly, this research study investigates the employability skills gap among undergraduate English students in Algeria. Additionally, it will evaluate the current teaching methods employed in the program to determine their effectiveness in fostering these skills among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. Finally, the research will identify and recommend strategies for enhancing student preparedness, ensuring better alignment with employer expectations for the job market.

To thoroughly investigate this research study, we conducted our research study in the English department at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University to examine the MA students' employability skills gap through various aspects: language proficiency, communication skills, analytical thinking, and other valuable attributes that are crucial and helpful in the professional world. Our selected Master's specialty is language and communication, as it includes a variety of beneficial modules, such as Human Resources Development/ Management, E-learning, ESP, Applied linguistics, Oral Communication, and others that help us conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the skills of English undergraduates that meet the skills expected by employers to identify the skills gap.

The employability skills assessment will be conducted through qualitative and quantitative methods to gather data directly from English undergraduates. Thus, the research questions are as follows:

1. What key employability skills do English undergraduates possess in the Language and Communication Master's specialty at Mostaganem University?
2. How do teachers in the Language and Communication Master program at Mostaganem University contribute to the development of employability skills among EFL students?
3. What strategies could be implemented to enhance English undergraduates' preparedness to meet employers' expectations?

To develop the above-mentioned research questions, the following hypotheses were formulated:

1. Most English undergraduates in the Language and Communication Master at Mostaganem University possess good communication and language skills essential for employability.
2. Teachers in the Language and Communication Master at Mostaganem University may not fully contribute to the development of employability skills among EFL students due to the lack of training in the economic sector.
3. Guarantee targeted interventions, such as internships, industry collaborations, and career development programs, would positively impact the preparedness of English undergraduates.

The dissertation includes three chapters. The first chapter provides an overview of the related literature, presenting the background and significance of employability skills and employer expectations towards English undergraduates in the Algerian context. The second chapter focuses on the methodology employed in the study. The third chapter presents the data collected analysis and discusses the results obtained based on the research questions and objectives.

**Chapter One: An Overview of the Employability and its Significance in  
Today's Dynamic Job Market**

## **1. Introduction**

In today's dynamic job market, a successful career requires more than just strong English language skills. Employers increasingly seek graduates with specific employability skills, allowing them to thrive in various professional settings. The upcoming chapter will focus on exploring the concept of employability and its significance in today's dynamic job market. This chapter will delve into the essential qualities and skills required by employers across various industries; it explores the multifaceted aspects of employability skills development, examining the approaches used within university programs, the role of faculty in cultivating these skills, and students' self-assessment of employability skills. It also delves into the strategies for bridging the gap between academic training and employer expectations, highlighting the importance of industry-academia collaboration and innovative programs redesign.

### **1.1 The Concept of Employability Skills**

#### **1.1.1 Definition and Components of Employability Skills**

Employability is a complex concept with diverse research interpretations. However, there is one common theme among these interpretations: focus on skills that prepare graduates for the ever-evolving job market. It refers to a set of skills that graduates must demonstrate to secure employment and achieve career success. These skills, in turn, contribute to their personal growth, the flourishing of the workforce, and the development of both the community and the economy (Yorke, 2006).

As stated by Dacre Pool & Sewell (2007), employability encompasses the skills, knowledge, and personal qualities that enable individuals to effectively engage with, manage, and contribute to the modern work environment. According to Overtoom (2000), employability skills represent the essential, transferable competencies - including knowledge, abilities, and attitudes - required for success in the 21st-century workplace. These skills, in turn, involve a broad range of capabilities that allow individuals to identify and pursue career

opportunities, navigate the job market, and adapt to evolving workplace demands (Bridgstock, 2009). Those skills, understandings, and personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain and succeed in employment constitute employability (Knight & Yorke, 2003); ultimately, employability skills are the capabilities that equip individuals to obtain, maintain, and advance in employment while contributing to organizational and economic success (Confederation of British Industry, 2019).

Employability encompasses a set of cognitive, interpersonal, and digital capabilities that allow individuals to successfully navigate the modern work environment (Beteille et al., 2020). Employability extends beyond just technical knowledge; it includes transferable competencies such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, communication, collaboration, and digital literacy. These skills enable workers to adapt to the evolving nature of jobs and organizations (OECD, 2021).

To sum up, thriving in the modern economy requires a combination of specialized expertise, adaptable abilities, and personal qualities that empower individuals to navigate career changes and capitalize on emerging opportunities. Key employability skills in this context include adaptability, an entrepreneurial mindset, and the capacity for rapid learning in response to technological and organizational transformations (World Economic Forum, 2020; Rios et al., 2020). Having strong job skills empowers people to navigate the constantly changing job market and build satisfying, long-term careers (Bridgstock, 2009). These skills also boost people's confidence, ability to adapt to changes, and overall job satisfaction (Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007).

For companies, having employees with solid job skills makes the company more flexible, competitive, and able to adapt to market changes, which strengthens the company's overall performance (Confederation of British Industry, 2019; Knight & Yorke, 2003). On a broader level, developing job skills across the population positively contributes to economic growth,

social mobility, and the overall prosperity and resilience of communities (Overtoom, 2000; Yorke, 2006).

### **1.1.2 The Importance of Employability Skills**

Employability skills are essential for English undergraduates, helping them navigate various career paths. Employers across different industries value these skills, which include communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and digital literacy.

**Communication Skills:** Strong communication skills are vital in nearly every profession. They help graduates articulate ideas clearly, perform well in interviews, and deliver effective presentations. According to Coursera, integrating these skills into job search materials such as resumes and cover letters can significantly improve job prospects by showcasing one's ability to contribute effectively to a team and handle complex tasks (Coursera, 2023).

**Collaboration and Teamwork:** The ability to work well with others is crucial, especially in project-based environments. Coursera highlights collaboration, which involves engaging with team members, managing tasks collectively, and achieving results through effective teamwork (Coursera, 2023). This skill is particularly valued in the fast-paced and dynamic job markets where teamwork is essential for project success.

**Critical Thinking and Problem Solving:** Employers look for graduates who can think critically and solve problems creatively. Cambridge English emphasizes that higher-level thinking skills, such as critical thinking, are in high demand, as they enable employees to evaluate situations from multiple perspectives and devise well-reasoned solutions (Cambridge English, 2023).

**Digital Literacy:** Proficiency with digital tools and technologies is increasingly important. The ability to conduct research, analyze data, and present information using digital platforms enhances an English graduate's employability, making them more adaptable to the digital transformations occurring in many industries (Cambridge English, 2023).

These employability skills not only help English majors secure jobs but also ensure their success and growth within their chosen careers. By honing these skills, graduates can demonstrate their readiness to meet the challenges of the modern workforce and contribute meaningfully to their organizations.

### **1.1.3 Key Employability Skills for English Undergraduates**

For English majors, strong communication skills, both written and verbal, are essential. These skills help them clearly express complex ideas, interpret texts, and participate in academic discussions (Robles, 2012). English majors also need to develop critical thinking and analytical abilities, which will enable them to evaluate information from different perspectives and create relevant arguments. These skills are highly demanded in the workplace (Nussbaum, 2010). Moreover, Collaborative projects and the interdisciplinary nature of English programs enhance teamwork and adaptability, which are important in today's rapidly changing job market (Binkley et al., 2012). Additionally, proficiency with digital technologies, including research and data presentation, improves their career readiness (Carnevale et al., 2015). Research analysis is also crucial in many professions as it significantly prepares these students to manage complex information (Hillman, 2014). By recognizing this combination of employability skills, English majors can effectively present themselves to employers and pursue various career paths that match their strengths and interests (Bridgstock, 2009).

### **1.1.4. Examples of Employability Skills Valued by Employers**

Numerous guidelines have been developed to identify the critical skill sets needed in the modern workplace, particularly for humanities and social sciences graduates. The 2017 British Academy report highlighted four essential skills in this domain: effective communication, the ability to collaborate and work towards shared goals, proficiency in research and data analysis to inform decision-making, and demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviors such as problem-solving and creativity. These skills closely align with the

framework outlined by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and described by Brewer (2013). This ILO model emphasizes the importance of learning agility and the capacity to acquire new knowledge, strong communication competencies in areas like writing and public speaking, the interpersonal skills required for productive teamwork and group decision-making, and the cognitive flexibility to identify and adapt to novel challenges. Across these various skill taxonomies, a common thread emerges - the need for humanities and social science graduates to develop a versatile and transferable skill set centered on communication, collaboration, research, and creative problem-solving in order to thrive in the evolving 21st-century workforce.

### **1.1. Employer Expectations**

#### **1.2.1 Overview of Employer Expectations**

Employer expectations refer to the specific knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal attributes organizations seek in their prospective and current employees (Garcia & Glick, 2017). These expectations are shaped by the employer's unique needs, goals, and values, as well as broader industry standards and societal trends (Duffy & Dik, 2009).

At the most fundamental level, employer expectations encompass the baseline qualifications required for a given role, such as educational background, prior work experience, technical proficiencies, and professional certifications (Wilson & Parker, 2015). However, employer expectations often extend beyond these objective criteria to include more subjective factors, such as cultural fit, problem-solving aptitude, communication skills, and alignment with the organization's mission and values (Erikson & Alvarez, 2018). Employers use these expectations as a benchmark to evaluate job candidates during the hiring process and assess their workforce's ongoing performance and development needs (Lund & Karlsson, 2020). By clearly articulating and communicating their expectations, organizations aim to attract, select, and retain employees who can contribute to the achievement of their strategic objectives. Understanding and aligning with employer expectations is a critical component of successful

career planning and management. It enables individuals to make informed decisions about their professional development and pursue roles that are the best fit for their capabilities and aspirations.

Furthermore, these expectations mirror the labor market's dynamic nature, influenced by technological advancements and globalization (Sloane, 2016). Industry trends, organizational culture, and strategic objectives further shape these expectations (Fugate et al., 2004). Carefully designed to align with evolving business needs, employer expectations highlight the importance of adaptability and proficiency in navigating contemporary work environments. Moreover, Byars & Rue (2018) emphasize the role of employer expectations in recruitment: The expectations held by employers function as key standards for assessing the qualifications of job candidates throughout the recruitment and hiring process. By aligning recruitment strategies with employer expectations, organizations can attract and retain talent that meets their current and future needs, thereby enhancing organizational performance and competitiveness; this highlights the strategic importance of understanding and meeting employer expectations in recruitment.

### **1.2.2 Factors Shaping Employer Expectations**

Employer expectations are not static; they dynamically evolve in response to various internal and external factors. Here are some key influences:

- **Technological Advancements:** As Hirsh (2013) highlights, the rapid pace of technological change drives constant evolutions in the skills employers seek. Hirsh notes that "the rapid pace of technological change... means that the skills needed by employers are constantly evolving. Employers need employees who can adapt and thrive in a technology-driven work environment.

- **Industry Trends:** The rise of specific industries or economic shifts can significantly impact employer expectations. Green (2008) emphasizes the impact of changing industry trends, noting that the growth of the knowledge-based economy has made skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity more valued. For example, the growing importance of data analysis in various fields may lead employers to value employees with proficiency in data analysis tools.
- **Organizational Culture and Strategy:** An organization's unique culture and strategic goals can significantly influence what they value in their workforce. Purcell and Tilly (1997) assert that employer expectations are fundamentally shaped by the distinct organizational context, encompassing its unique culture, strategic priorities, and competitive environment. A company focused on innovation may prioritize employees with creative problem-solving skills, while a company focused on efficiency may seek individuals with strong organizational and time management skills.
- **Globalization:** The interconnectedness of the global economy presents both challenges and opportunities for businesses. Employers may seek candidates with international experience or fluency in multiple languages to navigate this complex environment (Brewster & Sparrow, 2004).
- **Demographics:** Demographic shifts in the workforce, such as an aging population or a rise in the millennial generation, can influence employer expectations. Organizations may need to adapt their expectations to accommodate the needs and skills of a changing workforce (Walker, 2012).
- **Government Regulations:** Government regulations on workplace safety, hiring practices, or environmental sustainability can influence employer expectations. Employers need to ensure their hiring practices and employee skill sets comply with these regulations (Boxenbaum & Rousseau, 2019).

By understanding the factors shaping employer expectations, individuals can make informed decisions about their career development and pursue roles that align with their skills and aspirations.

### **1.2.3 Factors Shaping Employer Expectations in the English Language Field**

The English language teaching (ELT) field is constantly evolving, and employer expectations for qualified educators reflect this dynamism. Here are some key factors influencing what employers seek in their English language personnel:

**Technological Advancements:** The digital landscape continuously transforms how English language learning is delivered. Gu and Zhu (2020) highlight the growing importance of technology in ELT, stating that the integration of technology has become an integral component of contemporary language education. Online platforms, mobile applications, and various technological instruments now facilitate novel opportunities for personalized and interactive learning experiences. Employers may value candidates proficient in online learning platforms, content management systems, or digital assessment tools to leverage technology in their teaching practices effectively.

**Industry Trends:** The ELT field continually adapts to address the needs of diverse learners with varying goals. This may involve expertise in specific teaching methodologies (e.g., Communicative Approach, Task-Based Learning) as discussed by Littlewood (2014). Alternatively, employers may seek individuals with experience in teaching English for specific purposes (ESP), as detailed by Johns & MacKay (2001).

**Organizational Culture and Strategy:** Language schools, universities, and online learning platforms have unique cultures and strategic goals. Harmer (2007) emphasizes the importance of aligning teaching style with an institution's mission. Employers might prioritize candidates with strong communication and interpersonal skills to build rapport with students or those with a research and curriculum development focus aligned with the organization's objectives.

**Globalization:** The global demand for English language skills continues to rise. This necessitates intercultural competence among educators. Byram (1997) defines intercultural competence as "the ability to interact effectively and respectfully with people from different cultures" (p. 19). Employers may value candidates who can adapt teaching styles to diverse learners from various backgrounds and potentially be fluent in additional languages.

By understanding these factors shaping employer expectations in the English language field, you can tailor your professional development and highlight relevant skills to position yourself for success in the job market.

#### 1.2.4 The Skills Youth Need to Gain Employment in Algeria



##### **Intrapersonal**

Positive self-concept  
Self-motivation  
Perseverance  
Adaptability  
Managing emotions  
Goal-orientation  
Conscientiousness



##### **Interpersonal**

Social skills  
Communication skills  
Professionalism



##### **Cognitive**

Problem-solving  
Planning & Time management



##### **Functional Skills**

Language skills  
IT/Software skills  
Career planning  
Job search strategies  
CVs and online profiles  
Job interviews

**Figure 01:** 18 skills Algerian youth need to gain employment (Source: Catherine A. Honeyman (2019), *Soft Skills for Youth Employment in Algeria: Qualitative Research Report*. Washington, Dc: World Learning, Inc., p.23.)

Figure 01 presents the 18 skills identified by Honeyman (2019) as crucial for Algerian youth seeking employment. The figure categorizes these skills into four main sections: interpersonal, intrapersonal, cognitive, and functional skills.

**Interpersonal Skills:** Interpersonal skills refer to the abilities related to effective

communication, teamwork, and collaboration. This includes verbal and nonverbal communication, active listening, and building positive relationships with others (National Association of Colleges and Employers [NACE], 2023). These skills are critical for success in any work environment, as they enable individuals to collaborate effectively with colleagues, clients, and supervisors.

**Intrapersonal Skills:** Intrapersonal skills encompass abilities related to self-management, time management, and self-motivation. This includes a person's self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-motivation (Cherry, K., 2020). These skills enable individuals to effectively manage their emotions, set goals, and persevere through challenges. Developing robust intrapersonal skills allows young people to take greater ownership of their learning and career development.

**Cognitive Skills:** Cognitive skills refer to the mental abilities used to process information, learn new things, and solve problems. This includes critical thinking, analysis, decision-making, and creativity (World Economic Forum, 2020). In today's rapidly evolving job market, robust cognitive skills are crucial for adapting to new technologies and addressing unforeseen challenges.

**Functional Skills:** Functional skills refer to the specific abilities required to perform particular job functions. These skills can be technical in nature, such as computer literacy or proficiency in certain software, or they may be related to specialized industry knowledge (U.S. Department of Labor, 2023). The specific needed functional skills will vary depending on one's chosen career path.

### **1.3 Employability Skills Development in Higher Education**

The development of job skills within colleges and universities is increasingly seen as essential for preparing graduates to meet the needs of the job market. Colleges and universities are working on teaching important job skills in their classes such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and working with others. The goal is to better prepare students for

getting jobs after they graduate (Tomlinson, 2012). This involves not only providing subject-specific knowledge but also fostering transferable skills that allow graduates to adapt to various job roles and industries. As Yorke (2006) states, universities train students in skills that can be used in all kinds of jobs. The goal is to give students abilities to take them to different workplaces.

Furthermore, Jackson (2014) emphasizes that College curriculums need to teach both job skills and technical knowledge in their programs. Important job skills include teamwork, communication, and leadership. Teaching these skills and technical subject matter can better prepare graduates for jobs after they finish college. A strategic approach is necessary, involving the integration of these skills into the learning process so that students can practice critical thinking, problem-solving, and self-management, as highlighted by Knight & Yorke (2003). Furthermore, Cole & Tibby (2013) argue that Universities can help students develop job skills by including them in different parts of the university experience. This means adding employability skills to courses and providing skill-building activities outside classes. Universities can better prepare students for careers after graduation by including job skills in many areas.

### **1.3.1 Approaches to Employability Skills Development in University programs**

Developing employability skills within university programs requires a balanced approach that integrates both soft skills, such as communication and teamwork, and hard business knowledge. This dual focus ensures that graduates are well-prepared to meet the demands of the modern workplace (Andrews & Higson, 2008). Effective strategies involve embedding employability skills across all aspects of the curriculum, from course design and delivery to assessment and extracurricular activities, thereby creating a holistic learning environment (Pegg et al., 2012). Additionally, it is essential that students engage in activities that develop both their subject knowledge and transferable skills, as these combined efforts enhance their readiness and adaptability for various job roles (Yorke & Knight, 2006). Furthermore,

initiatives embedded into the curriculum positively impact graduates' labor market outcomes by enhancing their overall readiness for the workforce (Mason et al., 2009).

### **1.3.2 Integrating Employability Skills into Language and Communication Programs**

Integrating employability skills into language and communication programs can significantly enhance students' career prospects by developing key competencies such as effective communication, cultural awareness, and teamwork. Bridgstock (2009) argues that these programs naturally develop essential employability skills and can be further enhanced by embedding career management skills into the curriculum. (Gunn et al., 2011) suggest that academic literacy skills should be incorporated into the curriculum to ensure students develop the ability to communicate effectively in diverse professional contexts. Barrie (2006) emphasizes that language and communication courses should explicitly incorporate employability skills such as presentation skills, negotiation, and intercultural communication to better prepare students for global workplaces. Tymon (2013) highlights the importance of ensuring that graduates not only possess technical language skills but also the ability to apply these skills effectively in various professional settings, which can be achieved by embedding employability skills into these programs. By integrating these skills into language and communication curricula, universities can help students develop a comprehensive skill set that enhances their employability.

### **1.3.3 Challenges and Barriers to Effective Employability Skills Development**

Despite the recognized importance of employability skills, several challenges and barriers hinder their effective development within higher education. Tymon (2013) identifies one of the main challenges as ensuring that students recognize the relevance of these skills to their future careers. Many students fail to see the immediate applicability of employability skills, which can hinder their engagement with these initiatives. Wilton (2011) points out that barriers often include a lack of alignment between academic curricula and industry requirements, insufficient practical experience opportunities, and limited institutional support

for employability initiatives. Bridgstock (2009) adds that a significant barrier is the tendency for curricula to prioritize academic content over practical skills training, leaving graduates underprepared for the workforce. Yorke (2006) further notes that challenges to embedding employability in higher education include institutional resistance to change, the difficulty of measuring employability outcomes, and the need for sustained collaboration between educators and employers. Overcoming these barriers requires a concerted effort from all stakeholders to align educational practices with the needs of the labor market and to create supportive environments that foster the development of employability skills.

#### **1.4 The Role of Faculty in Employability Skills Development**

The role of faculty in employability skills development is multifaceted, involving the integration of these skills into the curriculum and fostering an environment conducive to practical learning. Faculty members play a crucial role in designing and delivering programs that not only impart academic knowledge but also develop employability skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. This integration requires faculty to have a deep understanding of both the subject matter and the skills that employers seek in graduates. Effective employability skills development hinges on the commitment and expertise of faculty, making their role pivotal in bridging the gap between academic education and the demands of the workforce.

##### **1.4.1 Faculty Perspectives on Employability Skills**

Faculty perspectives on employability skills are essential in shaping the curriculum and enhancing student career readiness. Jorre de St Jorre and Oliver (2018) highlight that many educators recognize the importance of integrating employability skills but face challenges in balancing academic content with skill development. Jackson (2016) further emphasizes the evolving perception among faculty, with an increasing number seeing the value in developing a pre-professional identity among students, which includes fostering employability skills. These diverse perspectives underline the need for a balanced approach to integrating

employability skills in higher education. Moreover, many faculties believe that developing employability skills should be a shared responsibility between educators and employers, requiring a collaborative approach (Kinash et al., 2016).

#### **1.4.2 Teaching Strategies and Pedagogical Approaches**

Effective teaching strategies for employability skills development include active learning techniques and pedagogical approaches that engage students in practical, real-world scenarios. Healey and Jenkins (2009) suggest integrating research and inquiry-based learning into the curriculum, encouraging students to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills through hands-on projects. Knight and Yorke (2003) emphasize the importance of formative assessments and reflective practices, which help students understand and articulate their skill development, thereby enhancing their employability. (Bennett et al., 1999) highlight the value of embedding generic skills within the curriculum through collaborative projects and interdisciplinary activities, which promote teamwork and communication skills. These teaching strategies and pedagogical approaches ensure that students develop a comprehensive set of employability skills alongside their academic knowledge.

#### **1.4.3 Professional Development for Faculty in Employability Skills**

Continuous professional development is crucial for faculty to stay updated with the latest industry trends and pedagogical techniques for teaching employability skills (Knight & Yorke, 2003). Workshops and training programs focusing on employability skills can equip educators with the necessary tools to better prepare students for the workforce (Tymon, 2013). Moreover, collaboration with industry professionals during professional development sessions can provide faculty with insights into current employer expectations and skills demands (Jackson, 2014). Professional development for faculty is crucial in equipping educators with the tools and techniques necessary to integrate employability skills into their teaching practices. Evans (2015) highlights the importance of training in assessment feedback practices that focus on employability skills, enabling faculty to provide constructive feedback that

supports student skill development. Knight (2006) points out that continual professional development ensures educators remain current with industry trends and can adapt their teaching methods accordingly.

## **1.5 Students' Self-Assessment of Employability Skills**

### **1.5.1 Factors Influencing Students' Perception of Employability Skills**

Students' perceptions of their employability skills are shaped by their educational experiences, internships, and extracurricular activities (Tymon, 2013). Additionally, feedback from mentors and peers plays a significant role in how students assess their own employability skills (Clements & Cord, 2013). Furthermore, personal reflection and self-efficacy are key factors influencing students' confidence in their employability skills (Bandura, 1997).

### **1.5.2. Discrepancies between Student Self-Assessment Employer Expectations**

There is a notable gap between students' self-assessment of their employability skills and the expectations of employers, indicating a misalignment in perceptions (Jackson, 2014). Employers often find that graduates overestimate their readiness for the workplace, particularly in areas such as teamwork and communication (Finch et al., 2013). Therefore, bridging the gap between student self-assessment and employer expectations requires better alignment of educational outcomes with industry needs (Tymon, 2013).

### **1.5.3 Strategies for Enhancing Students' Employability Skills Awareness**

Integrating self-assessment tools and reflective practices into the curriculum can help students better understand and develop their employability skills (Moon, 2004). Moreover, career services and employability workshops provide students with valuable insights into employer expectations and the skills needed in the job market (Yorke, 2006). Regular feedback from educators and industry professionals can enhance students' awareness of their employability skills and areas for improvement (Clements & Cord, 2013).

## **1.6 Bridging the Employability Skills Gap**

### **1.6.1 Industry-Academia Collaboration**

Collaboration between industry and academia is essential for ensuring that graduates possess the skills needed by employers (Archer & Davison, 2008). Partnerships with industry can provide students with opportunities for internships, mentoring, and real-world projects (Bridgstock, 2009). Effective industry-academia collaboration can lead to the development of curricula that are closely aligned with market needs (Lowden et al., 2011).

### **1.6.2 Curriculum Redesign and Alignment**

Redesigning curricula to include employability skills ensures that students are better prepared for the workforce demands (Bridgstock, 2009). Embedding employability skills within academic programs can improve graduates' job readiness and adaptability (Yorke, 2006). Furthermore, curriculum alignment with industry standards is crucial for producing graduates who meet employer expectations (Finch et al., 2013).

### **1.6.3**

### **Employability Skills Development Programs**

Programs focused on developing employability skills through practical experiences, such as internships and cooperative education, are highly effective (Lowden et al., 2011). Moreover, workshops and seminars on employability skills can provide students with targeted training in areas such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving (Knight & Yorke, 2003). Career development programs that integrate academic learning with professional skills training can significantly enhance students' employability (Andrews & Higson, 2008).

### **1.6.4 The Role of HRD Courses in Developing Employability Skills**

Effective HRD practices, such as training, mentoring, and job rotations, can equip employees with a diverse set of skills and competencies that increase their overall employability (Sambrook, 2005). Moreover, HRD initiatives that focus on developing core competencies and adaptive expertise among employees can significantly contribute to their long-term

employability within and across organizations (Clardy, 2008). Collaboration between HRD professionals and industry experts can help align employee skill development with the evolving demands of the labor market, thereby enhancing the employability of the workforce (Jackson, 2014).

In the educational context, continuous professional development supported by HRD departments enables faculty to stay updated with industry trends and pedagogical techniques, which is essential for effectively integrating employability skills into their teaching practices (Evans, 2015). Furthermore, HRD's role in fostering a culture of lifelong learning and facilitating the acquisition of transferable skills can significantly contribute to the long-term employability of the workforce (Knight, 2006). By leveraging these HRD-driven strategies, organizations and educational institutions can better prepare their employees and students for the evolving demands of the job market.

#### **1.6.5 Effectiveness of Online Learning Courses in Developing Employability Skills**

According to Bates and Poole (2003), eLearning provides numerous opportunities for learners to develop a diverse range of skills that are crucial for enhancing employability. Moreover, Garrison (2011) emphasizes that online learning environments can foster the development of critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills, which are highly valued by employers and contribute to the overall employability of graduates. Additionally, Dabbagh and Bannan-Ritland (2005) state that effective online courses that integrate simulations, virtual teamwork, and project-based learning can help students acquire the practical, hands-on skills required in the workplace, thereby improving their employability.

Furthermore, Conole (2013) highlights that the flexibility and accessibility of eLearning platforms enable learners to engage in continuous skill development, which is essential for maintaining and enhancing their employability throughout their careers. Likewise, Tynjälä

and Häkkinen (2005) state that employer-led online training programs can provide employees with industry-specific skills and certifications, directly addressing the skill gaps identified by organizations and enhancing the employability of the workforce. Moreover, Palloff and Pratt (2005) emphasize that collaborative eLearning activities, such as virtual group projects and peer feedback, can assist students in developing essential soft skills, such as teamwork, communication, and conflict resolution, which employers highly value.

As the authors discuss, by harnessing the transformative potential of Online Learning, educational institutions, and organizations can empower learners to develop a comprehensive set of skills and competencies that align with the evolving demands of the labor market, ultimately enhancing the employability of the workforce.

### **1.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has explored the concept of employability skills. It has explored the various approaches used within university curricula, the crucial role of faculty in fostering these skills, and the self-assessment of employability by students. Additionally, it has shed light on the strategies for bridging the gap between academic training and employer expectations, emphasizing the value of industry-academia collaboration and curriculum redesign. It has also highlighted the role of human resource development (HRD) and online learning courses in developing employability skills. The findings from this review show that there is a pressing need for a collaborative and comprehensive approach to developing employability skills. Universities can better prepare graduates for the job market by using new teaching methods, supporting their faculty, and working closely with employers. This review provides useful information for educators, administrators, and policymakers on how to effectively enhance the employability of students and address the skills gap.



**Chapter Two: Methodology and Data Collection**

## **2. Introduction**

This chapter provides the methodology used in this study to collect appropriate data through rigorous research methods and techniques. It discusses the research design, research method, and data collection instruments, including a student questionnaire, a teacher interview, and participant profiles, to assess employability skills among First-Year MA students, explore the role of the teachers in developing the students' employability skills, and determine effective strategies that could be implemented to enhance their workforce readiness.

### **2.1 Research Design**

A solid research design is a pivotal part of any study. It is a plan that outlines the procedures a researcher uses for data collection, analysis, and interpretation in a research project (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). There are two main types of research design: qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative designs explore experiences and perspectives (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), while quantitative designs involve measuring specific phenomena through polls, questionnaires, and surveys (Barnham, 2015). The choice of research design should depend on the specific question and hypothesis, with a clear plan for data collection, measurement, and analysis (Akhtar, 2016).

In this study, a mixed-methods approach combining both qualitative and quantitative elements will be well-suited to address the research questions. The first research question, "What are the key employability skills possessed by English undergraduates in the Language and Communication Master specialty at Mostaganem University?" is explored through a quantitative survey of students to assess their perceived levels of various employability skills. This would comprehensively understand the MA students' current skill set.

A qualitative investigation would benefit the second question, "How do teachers in the Language and Communication Master program at Mostaganem University contribute to the development of employability skills among EFL students?" Interviews with faculty members

can shed light on the specific teaching methods, course content, and other initiatives to cultivate students' employability skills.

Finally, the third question, "What strategies can be implemented to enhance English undergraduates' preparedness and align it with employer expectations?" can draw on insights from both the student survey and the teacher interviews. This will allow us to identify gaps between student skills and employer needs and then propose targeted strategies to bridge that gap through curriculum modifications, industry-academia collaborations, and other innovative approaches.

By employing a mixed-methods design, the study will gather comprehensive data to thoroughly address each research question and provide meaningful insights to enhance the employability of English undergraduates in the Language and Communication program.

## **2.2 Research Method**

As previously said, this research highlights and assesses the employability skills gap among English Undergraduates in Algeria and provides strategies that can bridge the gap, enhance their preparedness, and align it with employer expectations; it seeks to ensure that the language and communication Master's program adequately prepares students to enter the job market successfully. To achieve this, we opted for a mixed-methods approach, involving both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques to comprehensively investigate the job skills gap among Master's students, including communication, teamwork, digital literacy, and others. This approach involved evaluating the role of teachers in equipping students with these essential skills. By integrating data collected through student questionnaires and a teacher interview, we gained a deeper understanding of the issue, allowing us to obtain beneficial results and draw meaningful conclusions.

## **2.3 Procedure and context**

The research study took two weeks during the second semester. It utilized both questionnaires and interviews with first-year MA students in the language and communication

specialty and the HRD and E-learning teacher in the English Department at Abelhamid Ibn Badis University. We conducted a mixed-methods study using a questionnaire for first-year MA students and an interview with the teacher. This combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods allowed us to deeply explore the students' perspectives, experiences, and development of key employability competencies.

## **2.5 Data Collection Instruments**

Two main instruments were used to investigate our research questions and test our hypotheses: an online questionnaire and an email interview.

### **2.5.1 Questionnaire**

A questionnaire is a research tool that consists of a set of questions designed to gather information from the people participating in the study to accomplish the objectives of the research project (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). They are one of the most widely used data collection techniques in social science research, as they provide an efficient way to collect information from a large number of respondents (Lavrakas, 2008). Questionnaires are a valuable tool for researchers as they can gather quantitative data that can be analyzed to identify patterns, trends, and relationships between variables, which can then be used to draw conclusions and make informed decisions (Creswell, 2014; Fraenkel et al., 2012). Questionnaires include two types of questions: open-ended and close-ended questions. Open-ended questions are unstructured questions that enable respondents to answer freely in their own words, providing qualitative data, while closed-ended questions are structured and limit respondents' answers to predefined choices, providing quantitative data (Bird, 2009).

#### **2.5.1.1 Online Questionnaire**

An online questionnaire is designed and distributed using online survey software or a platform such as Google Forms, SurveyMonkey, etc. It provides remote access, which allows participants to access and complete the questionnaire using their own devices and internet connection.

### **2.5.1.2 Students' Online Questionnaire**

A questionnaire was used for students in order to assess their level of proficiency and self-confidence in various employability skills, including communication, critical thinking, digital literacy, and others. It was created using Google Forms and distributed online to reach a wider audience. The questionnaire contained a total of (9) questions, divided into (5) sections covering personal information, educational background, self-assessments of proficiency and confidence, challenges faced by the students in developing employability skills, and strategies for skill development. The questions varied in format, including closed-ended (multiple choice, linear scale) and open-ended questions. The majority of the questions used closed-ended response options. The choice of questions was designed to address all three of the research hypotheses.

The questionnaire starts with three general questions about general information about students, asking about their gender, age, and years of studying English. The fourth question asks whether the respondent has completed any internships or other work experiences related to their field of study. The next two questions were about the respondent's self-reported confidence level and proficiency in eight different employability skills. They were then required to identify the challenges in developing those skills. The final two questions ask the respondent to suggest strategies or actions they could take to further develop their employability skills.

### **2.5.2 Interview**

An interview is a qualitative research tool that involves engaging in in-depth individual conversations with a small number of participants in order to deeply explore their views, experiences, and perspectives on a specific concept (Boyce & Neale, 2006). Qualitative interviews can be classified into three broad types: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured. Structured interviews involve a predetermined and standardized set of questions; semi-structured interviews have a flexible format with some predetermined questions but

allow for additional questioning and exploration, while unstructured interviews have a very open-ended format and resemble a guided conversation (Gill et al., 2008). They could be done in-person interviews, online interviews, and by email, which is the type that was done due to the non-availability of the teacher. Email interviews are a qualitative data collection tool in which the researcher and participant engage in an exclusive exchange of written communications via email, enabling the gathering of textual data over an extended timeframe. (Opdenakker, 2006).

### **2.5.1 The Teacher's Email Interview**

The Interview was first created as a Word document containing (8) open-ended questions. This Word document was then sent via email to an experienced language and communication master teacher who was responsible for teaching the HRD and E-learning modules. The questions explored the teacher's perspectives on the following areas:

**Q1.** "In your opinion, how well do the HRD and E-learning syllabi currently affect the development of language and communication skills, as well as other essential employability skills, such as teamwork, problem-solving, and digital literacy?"

- ✓ This question aims to understand the teacher's perspective on how well the current HRD and E-learning syllabi in the language and communication specialty are developing students' employability skills, including language/communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and digital literacy.

**Q2.** "Based on your long experience with MA language and communication students, what are some strengths and weaknesses you have observed regarding their oral communication skills?"

- ✓ This question aims to obtain the teacher's insights on the students' current oral communication skills, strengths, and weaknesses based on the teacher's extensive experience with the program.

**Q3.** "Are there any specific methods, materials, or techniques you use in the classroom to help develop the students' employability skills?"

- ✓ This question aims to understand what teaching methods, materials, or techniques the teacher employs in the classroom to help develop the students' employability skills.

**Q4.** "How do you assess the effectiveness of the selected teaching methods and materials used in your module(s) in developing the students' employability skills?"

- ✓ This question aims to understand how teachers evaluate the effectiveness of their chosen teaching methods and materials in developing students' employability skills.

**Q5.** "What modifications or enhancements would you suggest for the teaching methods or syllabus of your module(s) to better address the employability skills requirements?"

- ✓ This question aims to gather the teacher's suggestions for how the teaching methods or syllabus of their module(s) could be modified or enhanced to better address the employability skills that students need.

**Q6.** "If you were to create a program to fully prepare students for the job market in terms of employability skills, what key elements would it include?"

- ✓ This question aims to get the teacher's ideas on the key elements of an ideal program to fully prepare students for the job market in terms of employability skills.

**Q7.** "Do collaboration with graduates who have successfully entered the job market or employers across various industries help bridge the skills gap among current students? If so, how do you envision this collaboration taking place?"

- ✓ This question aims to understand the teacher's perspective on whether collaboration with graduates or employers could help address the skills gap among current students and how they envision such collaboration being implemented.

**Q8.** "Could a dedicated career services program help address these challenges?"

- ✓ This question aims to get the teacher's opinion on whether a dedicated career services program could help address the challenges surrounding developing students' employability skills.

The teacher's responses to these questions will provide valuable insights into the strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement in the Language and Communication MA program's efforts to enhance students' employability skills.

## **2.6 The Sample Profile**

A sample profile is a crucial component of any research study, providing a detailed description of the characteristics of the individuals or units that make up the sample (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The sample profile should include information about the demographic characteristics of the participants, such as age, gender, educational background, and any other relevant attributes (Bryman, 2016). Presenting a clear and comprehensive sample profile is important for contextualizing the research findings and allowing readers to assess the results (Saunders et al., 2019). Researchers should present the sample profile to give the reader a clear understanding of the participants and how they relate to the overall population of interest (Etikan et al., 2016). By providing a well-defined sample profile, researchers can better situate their findings and enhance their study's overall quality and credibility.

### **2.6.1. The Teacher's Profile**

The informant for the interview is a full professor who teaches Human Resource Management (HRM), Human Resource Development (HRD), and E-Learning courses in the MA in Language and Communication. This faculty member has been teaching these modules for over seven years and was selected because the course content is directly relevant to the development of employability skills among language and communication students.

### **2.6.2. The Students' Profile**

Twenty-eight first-year MA students at in the English Department at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University, Mostaganem, aged between 21 and 24, participated in our study. All of them hold an English language licence and have been studying English for thirteen years.

### **2.7 Data Analysis Procedure**

Data analysis is an important part of research. After using the relevant tools to gather the necessary data, the next step is to analyze the data collected. This process involves organizing and synthesizing data in order to discover useful information and draw conclusions. The gathered data was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. This section provides a detailed description of each method employed.

#### **2.7.1. Quantitative Analysis**

Quantitative analysis is a research methodology involving collecting and numerical evaluating data to investigate phenomena and test hypotheses. It relies on quantifiable information measurement and statistical analysis to draw conclusions. As Creswell (2014) described, quantitative research methods allow researchers to study the connections between different measurable factors objectively. Using standardized tools, researchers can collect numerical data that can be thoroughly analyzed using statistical procedures. This process helps researchers rigorously test and validate theoretical models. The process of quantitative analysis typically involves collecting quantifiable data through methods such as surveys, experiments, or existing datasets.

The process of quantitative analysis in research typically begins by clearly defining the research question and developing a hypothesis about the expected relationships between variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Researchers then operationalize these variables, specifying how they will be measured (Shadish et al., 2002). Next, they select an appropriate quantitative research design, such as an experiment or survey (Campbell & Stanley, 1963), and collect numerical data on the variables of interest. After preparing and cleaning the data,

researchers conduct statistical analyses to examine the relationships between variables using techniques like correlation, regression, or ANOVA (Analysis of variation) (Field, 2013). Finally, they interpret the findings, draw conclusions about whether the hypothesis was supported, and communicate the study's methods and results clearly and structured, often in the form of a research paper or report (American Psychological Association, 2020). Maintaining a focus on validity, reliability, and generalizability is crucial throughout the quantitative research process (Shadish et al., 2002).

#### **2.4.1.2. Description of the Quantitative Analysis**

For the quantitative analysis, the research question was 1) What are the key employability skills possessed by English undergraduates in the Language and Communication Master specialty at Mostaganem University?

To examine this, we identified employability skills and MA language and communication students as the key variables. Then, we developed a questionnaire that was created using Google Forms as the data collection tool. The questionnaire included a list of common employability skills (adapted from frameworks such as the OECD's DeSeCo model) and asked students to rate their own proficiency level on each skill using a 5-point Likert scale to provide quantitative values to the required qualitative data.

After collecting the survey responses, we analyzed the results using the charts and visualizations provided by the Google Forms platform. This allowed us to quickly identify patterns in the students' self-reported skill levels across the different employability competencies. For example, the bar charts showed that the students reported relatively high proficiency in skills like "oral communication" and "digital literacy," with the majority of respondents rating themselves as 4 or 5 on the 5-point scale. However, the charts also revealed potential weaknesses, such as in "leadership" and "critical thinking," where a larger proportion of students indicated lower skill levels 2 or 3 on the scale.

By examining these visual representations of the survey data, we were able to develop a comprehensive profile of the employability skills possessed by this group of MA language and communication students. This helped us identify the specific areas of strength and the potential skills gaps that could be addressed through program updates or targeted training programs.

#### **2.4.2. Qualitative Analysis**

The process of qualitative analysis in research typically begins by identifying the research problem or question and establishing the purpose of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Researchers then selected an appropriate qualitative research design, such as a case study, ethnography, or grounded theory (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). As Patton (2015) explains, "Qualitative inquiry typically focuses in depth on relatively small samples...selected purposefully" (p. 264). Next, they collected detailed, descriptive data using interviews, observations, and document analysis (Saldaña, 2016). The latter further explains, "Qualitative data consists of open-ended information the researcher gathers through interviews, focus groups, and observations" (p. 2). After organizing and preparing the data, researchers engage in a process of inductive analysis, identifying themes, patterns, and relationships within the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Finally, researchers interpret the findings, develop a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study, and communicate their results in a rich, narrative format, often including direct participants' quotes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Researchers must maintain reflexivity throughout the qualitative research process, acknowledging their biases and perspectives (Patton, 2015).

##### **2.4.2.1 Description of the Qualitative Analysis**

To complement the quantitative assessment of students' employability skills, we also conducted a qualitative analysis focusing on the role of faculty in developing these competencies. The key research questions guiding this component were to understand the

teacher's role in developing the students' employability skills and to explore what strategies can be implemented to enhance English undergraduates' preparedness and align it with employer expectations. We carried out an in-depth interview with the instructor who teaches Human Resource Management (HRM), Human Resource Development (HRD), and E-Learning courses. This subject matter expert was selected due to the relevance of the course content and teaching responsibilities to the development of employability skills among the language and communication students.

The interview was carefully analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. We closely reviewed the faculty member's responses, identifying and coding key themes and patterns that emerged related to the role of instructors, specific employability skills emphasized, teaching strategies utilized, and recommendations for improvement.

By analyzing the interview responses, we better understood the teachers' viewpoints on how students develop employability skills. We identified key themes in their responses, which were then compared to the results from the student survey. This comparison allowed us to get a more complete picture of the strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement within the Master's program's system for developing employability skills.

## **2.6 Research Study Limitations**

One key limitation was the inability to conduct the planned interviews. We had intended to interview the ESP teacher in the MA Language and Communication program. Unfortunately, the teacher was on medical leave during the data collection period, preventing this additional data source from being included.

We also wanted to analyze a sample of student CVs to further investigate their demonstrated employability skills. However, none of the students were willing to provide access to their CVs, even with assurances that their names would not be mentioned, limiting the scope of the document analysis. Collecting the questionnaire data was also challenging, as we had to send

the survey twice and persistently remind students to respond. Out of the 40 students in the target Messenger group, only 28 ultimately provided answers.

Despite encountering limitations such as the unavailability of the planned ESP teacher interview and student CVs, we were able to conduct a comprehensive study using a student questionnaire and an interview with another faculty member whose expertise aligns with the development of employability skills. While these limitations constrain the generalizability and depth of the quantitative findings, the survey data combined with the teacher interview provides valuable insights into employability skills among Master's students.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

This chapter explained the research methodology employed in our study by outlining the research design and methods, including data collection tools, participant profiles, and analysis procedures. The following chapter will discuss the data analysis using these methods to extract meaningful insights.

**Chapter Three:**  
**Findings and Discussion**

### **3. Introduction**

This chapter presents the key findings that emerged from the data analysis of the online questionnaire completed by first-year MA students in Language and Communication and the email interview conducted with an instructor in the same specialization. It aims to develop the research questions and evaluate the hypotheses. It also offers further suggestions and recommendations for students and teachers regarding developing employability skills.

#### **3.1 Data Analysis**

This section analyses the data gathered from the students' questionnaire and the teacher's interview.

##### **3.1.1. Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire:**

The questionnaire was addressed to First-year MA students in the Language and Communication specialty; twenty-eight of them accepted to complete it. The questionnaire aimed to assess and evaluate the students' self-perceived employability skills, the gaps they identify, the challenges they face, and the strategies they believe could enhance their readiness for the job market.

##### **Section A: Demographic information**

The questionnaire was administered to 28 first-year participants enrolled in the language and communication specialty at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University in Mostaganem, Algeria. The majority of the participants are females, i.e., out of twenty-eight participants, twenty-four are females, and four are males. The high percentage of female participants is not surprising as the research questionnaire has been distributed to a population with a higher proportion of women. A more balanced gender distribution would strengthen the generalizability of the research findings. The participant ages span from 21 to 24, with the 22-year-old age group being the most prevalent.

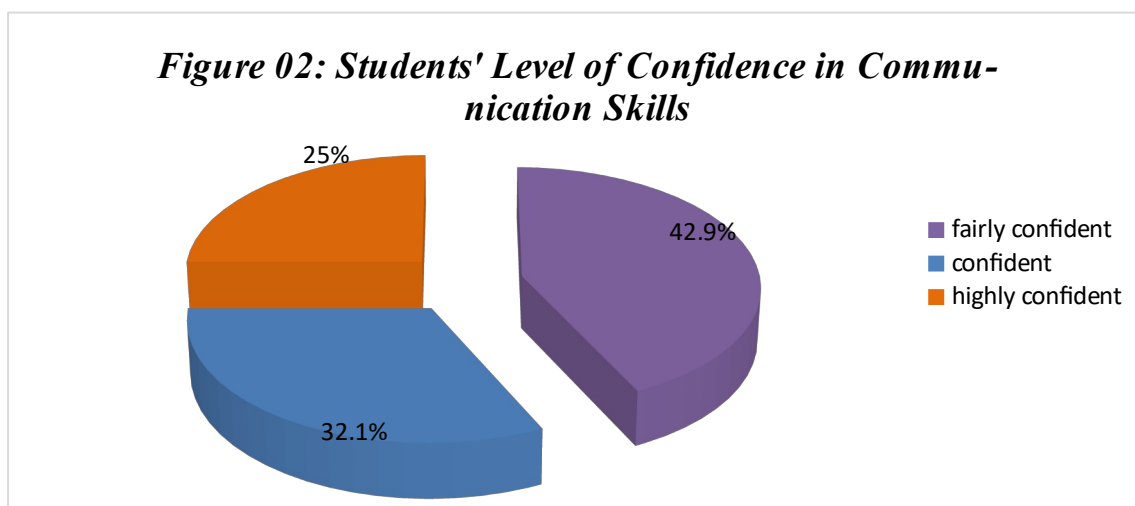
## Section B: Educational Background

All of the participants have been studying English since middle school for a total of thirteen years. The results revealed that over half of the participants have not completed any internships or work placements related to their field of study. However, a significant portion (42.9%) has gained practical experience.

## Section C: Self-assessments of Confidence and Proficiency

To assess students' confidence level in key employability skills, they were asked to rate themselves on a 5-point Likert scale. This scale ranged from "Not Confident at All" (1) to "Very Confident" (5), with intermediate points representing "Somewhat Unconfident" (2), "Average" (3), and "Confident" (4). Additionally, to assess their level of proficiency in these key employability skills, students were asked to rate themselves by selecting from multiple options: excellent, good, average, below average, and poor.

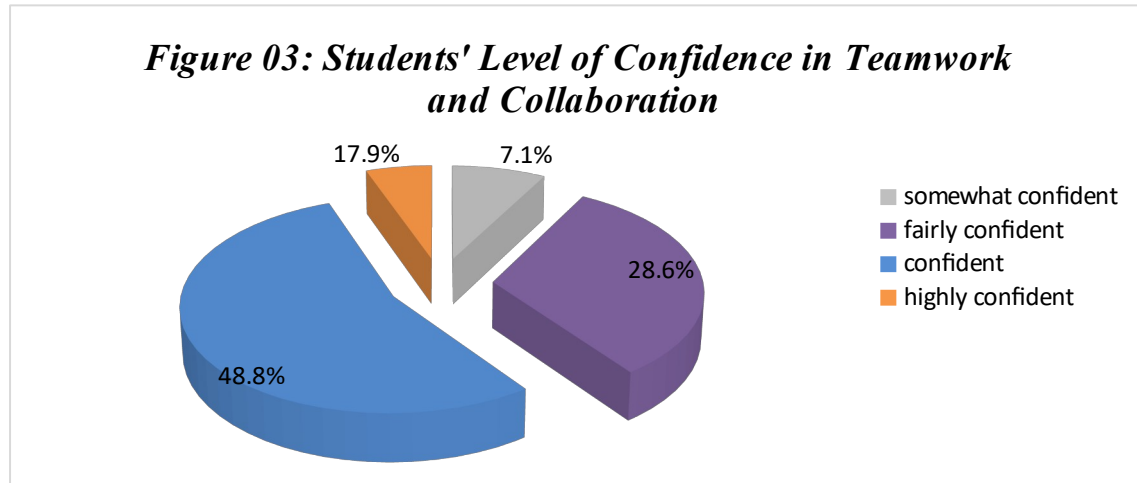
**Question 01:** What is your confidence level? Please rate your level of confidence in the following skills on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "Not confident at all" and 5 being "Very confident."



**Figure 02: Students' Level of Confidence in Communication Skills**

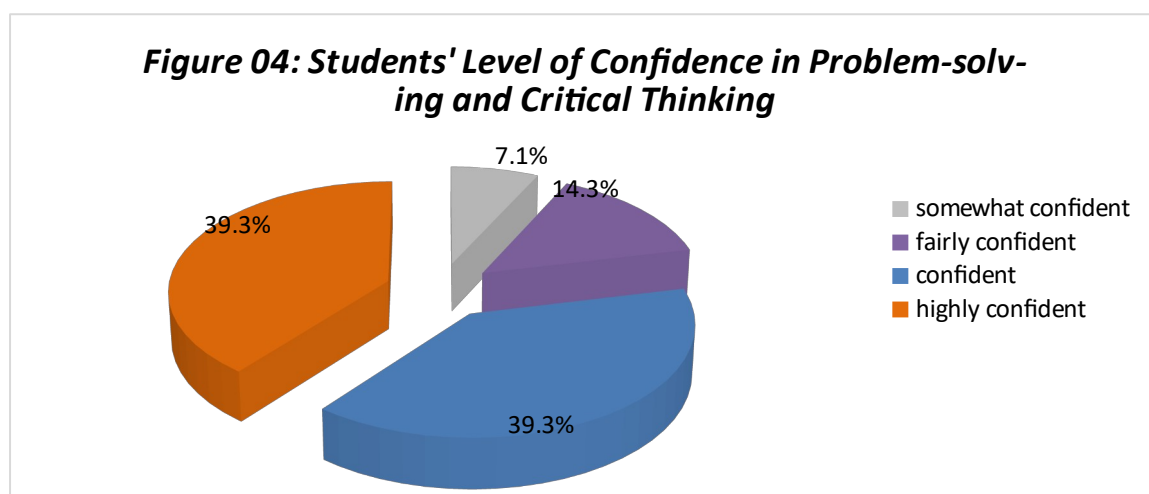
Figure 02 shows the results of students' self-reported confidence in their communication skills. It is measured on a linear scale, and out of 28 students, 12 (42.9%) students rated their

confidence as average (3 out of 5), 9 (32.1%) students rated their confidence as high (4 out of 5), and 7(25%) students rated their confidence as very high (5 out of 5). This shows how the 28 students self-assessed their communication skills and confidence levels on a 1-5 scale.



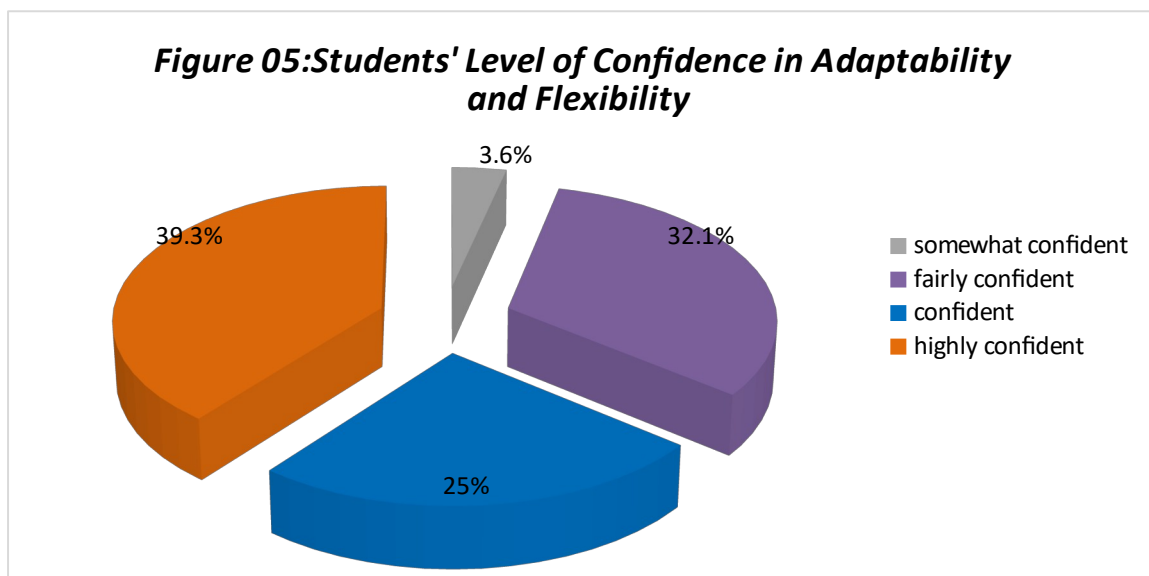
**Figure 03: Students' Level of Confidence in Teamwork and Collaboration**

The figure above shows the distribution of how the students rated their confidence in their teamwork and collaboration abilities. Two students (7.1%) rated themselves as 2 out of the maximum score of 5 (low confidence), 8 students (28.6%) rated themselves as a 3 out of 5 (average), 13 students (46.4%) rated themselves as a 4 out of 5 (high confidence), and 5 students (17.9%) rated themselves as the maximum score of 5 out of 5 (very high).



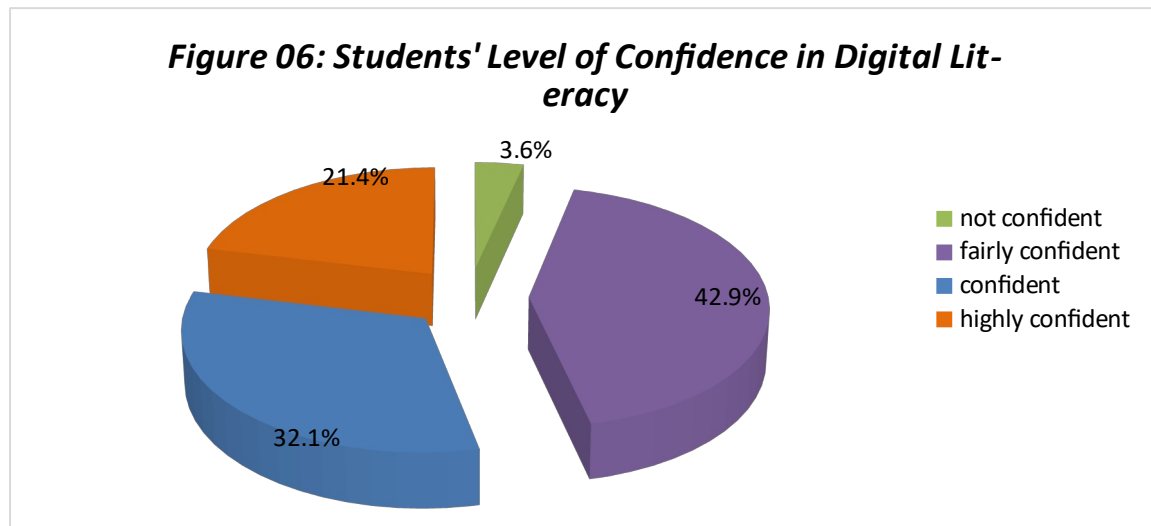
**Figure 04: Students' Level of Confidence in Problem-solving and Critical Thinking**

Figure four shows the distribution of how the 28 students rated their confidence in problem-solving and critical thinking abilities on a 1-5 scale. Similar to the previous figure, eleven students (39.3%) assessed their skills as a 4 out of 5 (high confidence). Notably, another 11 students went even further, rating themselves the maximum score of 5 out of 5 (very high confidence). Four students (14.3%) rated their confidence as 3 out of 5 (average) and two students (7.1%) rated themselves as 2 out of 5 (low confidence).



**Figure 05: Students' Level of Confidence in Adaptability and Flexibility**

Figure five presents the students' self-assessed confidence level in their flexibility and adaptability skills. The data shows that 11 (39.3%) out of the 28 total students rated themselves at the maximum confidence level of 5, indicating they feel exceptionally confident in their ability to be flexible and adapt to changing circumstances. Another 7 (25%) students rated their confidence level as 4 out of 5 (high confidence). However, 9 (32.1%) students assessed their confidence in flexibility and adaptability as 3 out of 5 (average), and 1 student rated their confidence as a 2 out of 5 (low confidence).



**Figure 06: Students' Level of Confidence in Digital Literacy**

Figure 6 shows the distribution of how the 28 students rated their confidence in digital literacy skills on a 1-5 scale. 1 student (3.6%) rated themselves as a 1 out of 5 (not confident), 12 students (42.9%) rated themselves as a 3 out of 5 (fairly confident), 9 students (32.1%) rated themselves as a 4 out of 5 (confident), and 6 students (21.4%) rated themselves as the maximum score of 5 out of 5 (highly confident).

In addition to the data on communication, teamwork, critical thinking, digital literacy, and flexibility, the students also provided self-ratings for a few other key employability skills:

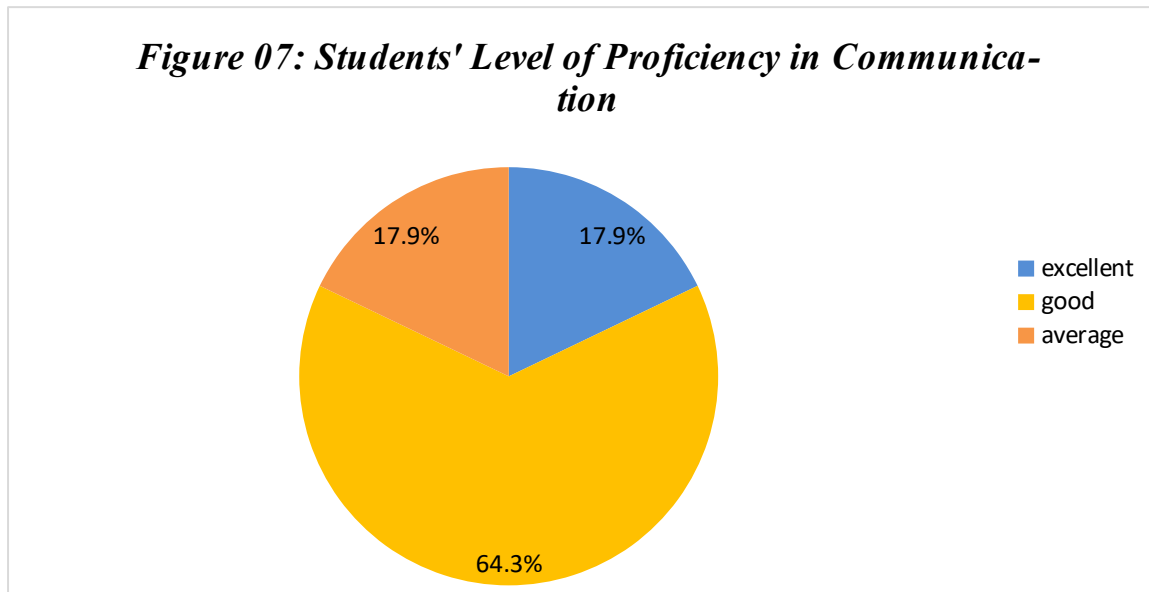
**Leadership:** Confidence in this area varied, with 18% [3 students] feeling "Not Confident At All" (1), 12% [2 students] "Somewhat Unconfident" (2), 56% [9 students] "Average" (3), 24% [4 students] "Confident" (4), and a strong 60% [10 students] feeling "Very Confident" (5) in their leadership abilities.

**Time Management:** Students also assessed their time management skills. The majority (75%) [12 students] considered themselves "Average" (3) in this area. However, a healthy portion rated themselves higher as "Confident" (4) at 50% [8 students], and some (31%) [5 students] felt "Somewhat Unconfident" (2).

**Research and Analytical Skills:** Research and analytical skills followed a similar pattern to time management. Three-quarters (75%) [12 students] rated themselves as "Average" (3). A

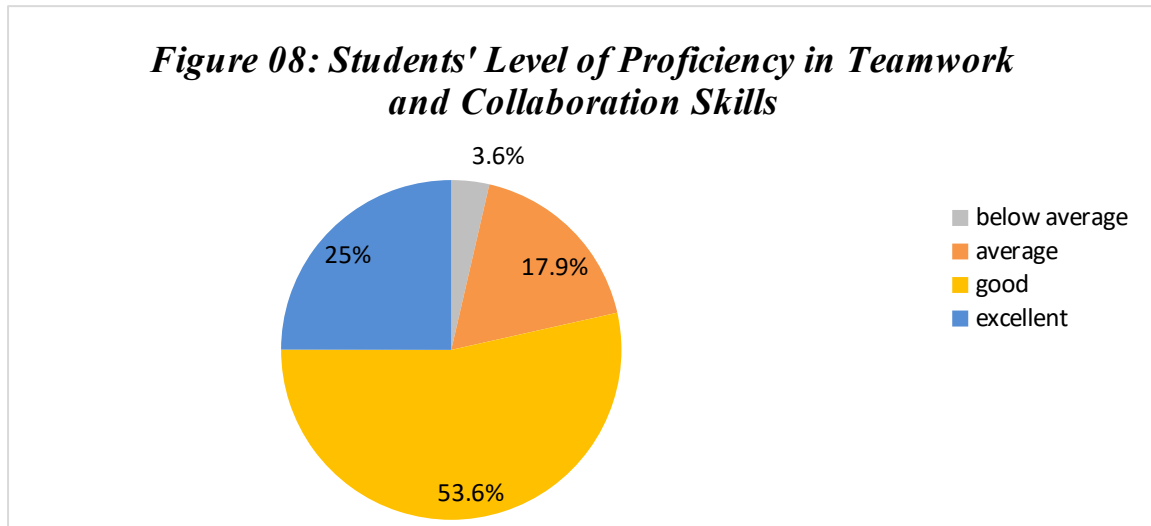
significant portion (63%) [10 students] felt "Confident" (4), while only 13% [2 students] reached the top score of "Very Confident" (5). However, a quarter (25%) [4 students] rated their research skills lower, at "Somewhat Unconfident" (2).

**Question 02:** What is your proficiency level? For each of the following skills, indicate your level of proficiency by selecting one option: Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and Poor.



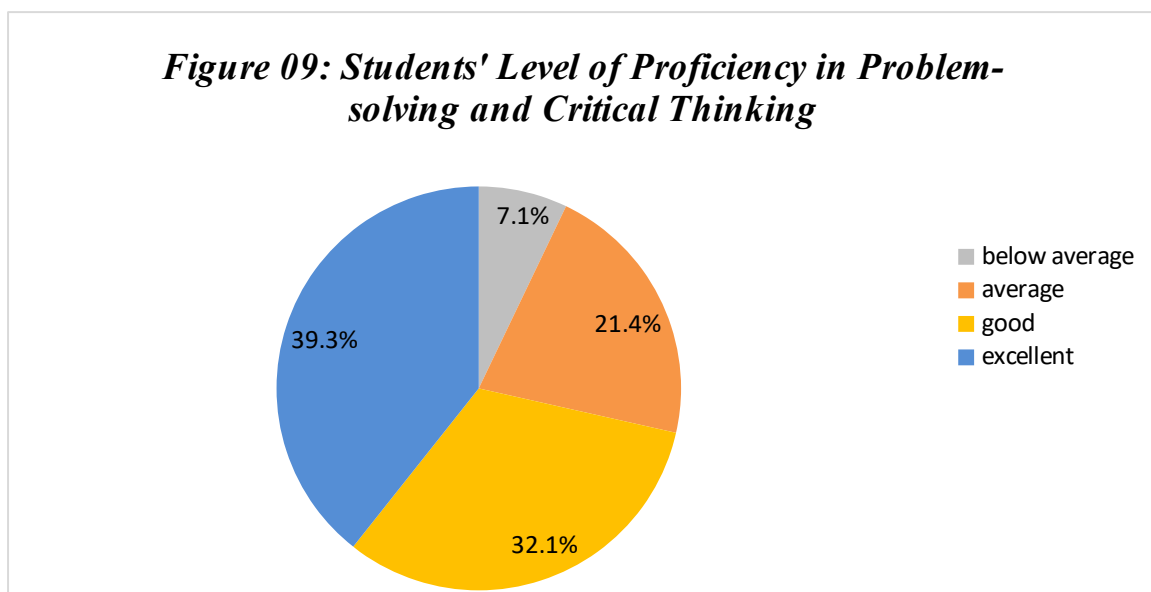
**Figure 07: Students' Level of Proficiency in Communication**

Figure 7 illustrates the self-assessed proficiency levels in communication skills among a group of 28 students. The figure reveals that the majority of students, 64.3%, rated themselves as having a "good" level of communication proficiency. Additionally, 17.9% of students perceived their communication skills to be at an "average" level, while another 17.9% assessed themselves as "excellent" in this area.



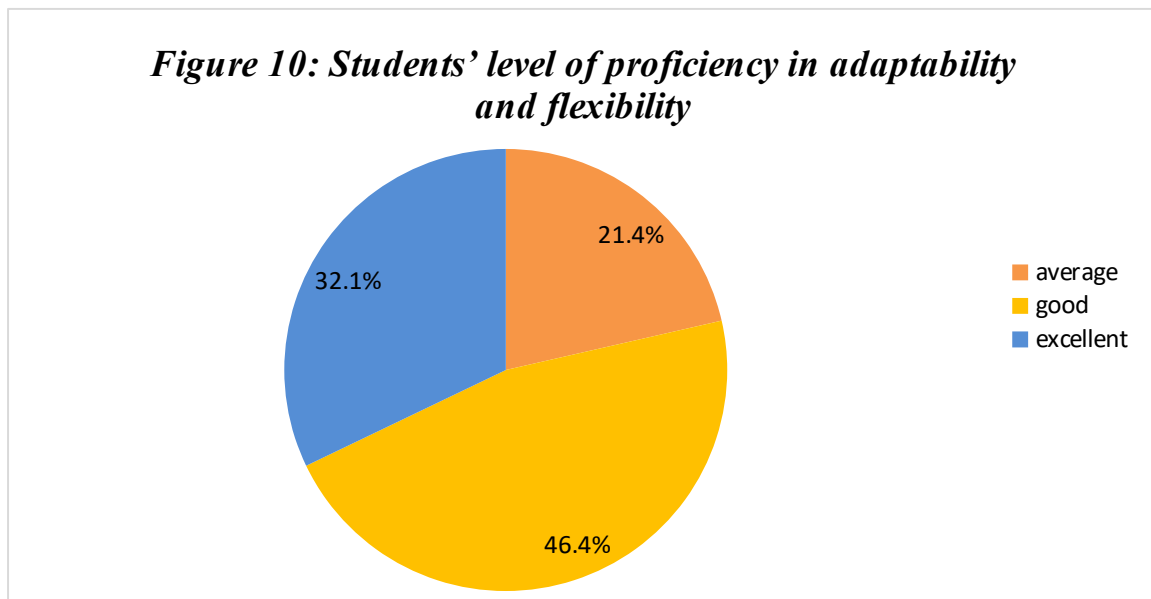
**Figure 08: Students' Level of Proficiency in Teamwork and Collaboration Skills**

Figure 8 displays the students' self-perceived levels of proficiency in teamwork and collaboration skills. The data reveals that the largest portion, 53.6% of students, rated themselves as "good" in this area. Additionally, a quarter of the students, 25%, assessed their teamwork and collaboration abilities as "excellent." Meanwhile, 17.9% of the students considered their skills to be at an "average" level. Finally, a small percentage, 3.6%, ranked themselves as "below average" in teamwork and collaboration proficiency.



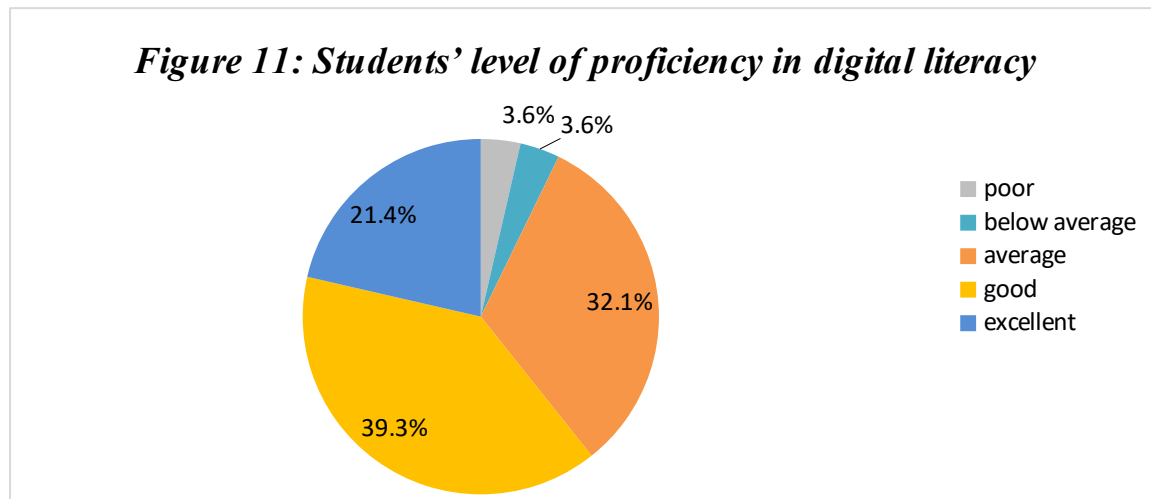
**Figure 09: Students' Level of Proficiency in Problem-solving and Critical Thinking**

The data presented in Figure 9 shows the self-assessed levels of proficiency in problem-solving and critical thinking skills among the 28 student participants. The largest percentage of students, 39.9%, rated themselves as "Excellent" in these skills, while 32.1% assessed their proficiency as "Good." 21.4% of students viewed their skills as "Average," and the smallest group, 7.1%, rated themselves as "Below Average." Overall, the majority of students, 72.0%, evaluated their problem-solving and critical thinking abilities as either "Excellent" or "Good" with the remaining 28.6% assessing their skills as "Average" or "Below Average."



**Figure 10: Students' level of proficiency in adaptability and flexibility**

The figure above shows the students' self-perceived level of proficiency in adaptability and flexibility skills. The largest percentage of students, 46.4%, rated themselves "Good" in these skills. 32.1% of students assessed their proficiency as "Excellent," and the remaining 21.4% viewed their adaptability and flexibility as "Average."



**Figure 11: Students' level of proficiency in digital literacy**

Figure eleven presents the students' self-perceived level of digital literacy, the largest group, 39.3% of students, rated themselves as "Good" in these skills. The next largest group, 32.1% of students, assessed their digital literacy proficiency as "Average." A smaller percentage, 21.4%, viewed their skills as "Excellent." The remaining students were split, with 3.6% rating themselves as "Below Average" and another 3.6% perceiving their digital literacy as "Poor". Overall, the majority of students, 71.4%, evaluated their digital literacy abilities as either "Good" or "Average," while the remaining 28.6% saw their proficiency as falling within the "Excellent," "Below Average," or "Poor" categories.

In addition to the data on communication, teamwork, critical thinking, digital literacy, and flexibility, the students also provided self-ratings for several other key employability skills.

### **1. Leadership skills:**

The majority of students, 78.5%, rated their leadership skills as either "Excellent" (46.4%) or "Good" (32.1%). The remaining 21.4% assessed their leadership proficiency as either "Average" (10.7%) or "Below Average" (10.7%). There were no students who rated themselves as "Poor" in this skill area.

### **2. Time management:**

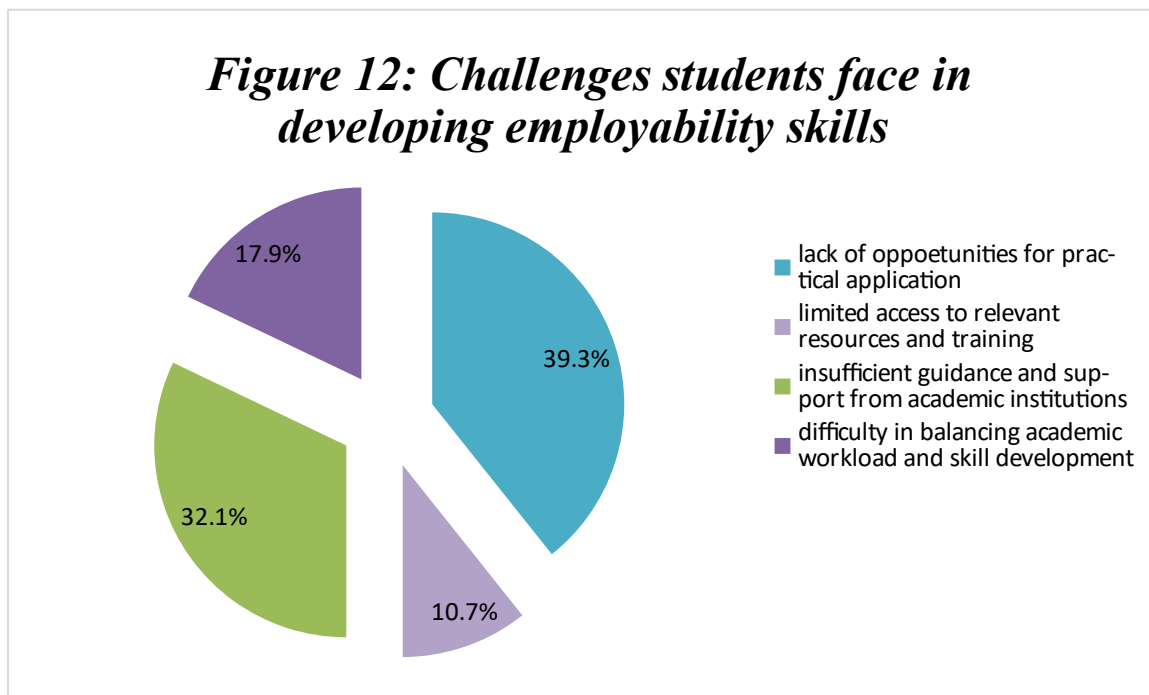
The largest group, 42.9% of students, rated their time management skills as "Good." Another 32.1% assessed their proficiency in this area as "Average." A smaller percentage, 10.7%, viewed their time management skills as "Excellent," while an equal 10.7% rated themselves as "Below Average." Finally, 3.6% of students, or one student, perceived their time management abilities as "Poor." 3.

### Research and analytical skills:

Over half of the students, 53.6%, rated their research and analytical skills as "Good." Another 28.6% assessed their proficiency in this area as "Average." A smaller percentage, 10.7%, viewed their research and analytical skills as "Below Average." Finally, 7.1% of students considered their skills in this domain to be "Excellent."

### Section 04: Challenges Students Encounter in Developing Employability Skills

**Question 01:** What are the challenges you face in developing your employability skills?



**Figure 12:** Challenges students face in developing employability skills

Figure 12 presents the challenges students face in developing employability skills:

#### 1. Lack of Practical Application:

The majority of students, 39.3%, cited the lack of opportunities for practical application as the biggest obstacle they face.

## 2. Insufficient Guidance and Support from Academic Institutions:

A significant portion of students, 32.1%, considered insufficient guidance and support from their academic institutions as a major challenge.

## 3. Difficulty in Balancing Academic Workload and Skills Development:

17.9% of students stated that the difficulty in balancing their academic workload with the time required for skills development was a key challenge.

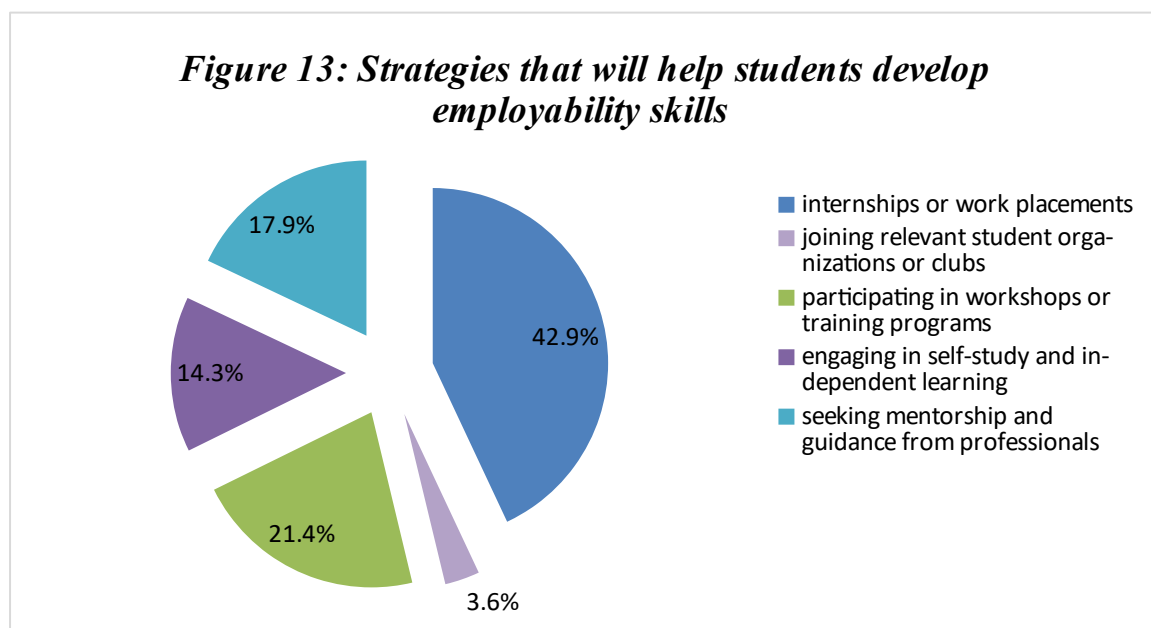
## 4. Limited Access to Relevant Sources and Training

Finally, 10.7% of students reported that limited access to relevant sources and training programs was their biggest challenge in developing their employability skills.

**Section 05:** Strategies for skill development.

**Question 01:** What strategies do you believe could help enhance your employability skills?

Please indicate which strategies you believe could help enhance your employability skills by selecting one or more options.



**Figure 13: Strategies that will help students develop employability skills**

As shown in Figure 13, 42.9% of the students highly suggested participating in internships and work placements. This was followed by engaging in workshops and training programs, which were recommended by 21.4% of the students.

Seeking mentorship and guidance from professionals was suggested by 17.9% of the students as an effective way to develop their employability skills. Additionally, 14.3% of the students believed that engaging in self-study and independent learning would be beneficial.

Finally, the strategy with the lowest percentage of recommendations, at 3.6%, was joining relevant student organizations or clubs.

**Question 2:** Is there anything else you would like to share about your employability skills development or any suggestions you have for improving employability skills among English undergraduate students?

When asked if there were any other suggestions for improving employability skills among English undergraduate students, the participants provided the following insightful comments:

➤ **Implement Professional Training Programs:**

Several students suggested that universities should create more professional training programs across different fields of study. Specifically, they noted that programs focused on areas like English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and Human Resources Development (HRD) would be "very beneficial" for enhancing their employability.

➤ **Holistic Self-Development:**

The students emphasized that improving employability skills starts with a personal commitment to developing oneself "from different aspects" in order to become better prepared for the job market. This holistic approach to self-improvement was seen as crucial.

➤ **Increase Internship and Resource Availability:**

A common concern was the "unavailability of internships and resources" that could be used to further develop their skills. The students strongly desired more opportunities to gain practical experience and access relevant learning resources.

➤ **Provide Targeted Skills Training:**

Along those lines, the participants suggested that it would be "beneficial" for the universities to offer training programs that could better explain the realities of "professional life" and equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge.

### **3.1.2. The Interpretation of the Questionnaire**

The purpose of the questionnaire was to assess and discover the level of employability skills among students in the language and communication master specialty. The latter is highly relevant to developing key skills such as communication, teamwork, and digital literacy. The questionnaire was completed by 28 first-year MA students, most of whom were female and aged 21 to 24.

The questionnaire was divided into five sections, covering personal information, educational background, students' self-assessment of confidence and proficiency in eight key skills, their challenges in developing these skills, and their suggested strategies to help improve them. In the educational background section, a significant portion (42.9%) of the students reported having internships or work related to their field, while the majority said they had not.

When it came to self-assessing their confidence and proficiency in key skills, most students rated their confidence between 3 and 5 (out of 5) on the scale. It is important to clarify that this refers specifically to their confidence in their skills, not their actual proficiency. While communication was the skill they rated highest in terms of confidence (64.3%) "good" and (17.9%) "excellent", a separate assessment of proficiency revealed a similar pattern. Teamwork was another strong area, with over half of the students rating their proficiency as "good" and a quarter rating it as "excellent." Problem-solving and critical thinking were also rated highly in terms of confidence.

The main challenges the students faced in developing their skills were a lack of opportunities for practical application and insufficient support and guidance from their academic

institutions. To address these issues, the majority of students (42.9%) suggested internships or work placements, as well as professional training programs, as potential solutions.

### **3.1.3. The Analysis of the Teacher's Interview**

An interview with the instructor specializing in these courses within the MA Language and Communication program was conducted to gain deeper insights into faculty perspectives on student employability skills and how the HRD and E-learning modules contribute to their development.

**Question 01:** In your opinion, how well do the HRD and E-learning syllabi currently affect the development of language and communication skills, as well as other essential employability skills, such as teamwork, problem-solving, and digital literacy?

The professor explained that she has been working hard to make her HRD and E-learning program more relevant by teaching students the skills they need for today's jobs. However, she believes the program could be even more effective because it currently lacks a training component. In her opinion, this training would help students solidify the skills they learn and ensure they are practical for the workplace.

**Question 02:** Based on your long experience with MA language and communication students, what are some strengths and weaknesses you have observed regarding their oral communication, teamwork, problem-solving, adaptability, and digital literacy skills?

The instructor observed several strengths and weaknesses in the students' employability skills. Strengths included being tech-savvy, possessing an entrepreneurial spirit, and demonstrating strong problem-solving abilities. The instructor also noted that many students in recent years presented information effectively and with confidence, indicating good oral communication skills. However, some areas for development were identified. Communication with older generations could be improved, and work-life balance might need attention due to constant social media connections; collaboration skills were reported to vary, with some students thriving in group projects while others preferring individual work. Finally, the instructor

noted their strong adaptability to new technologies, likely due to the mix of digital immigrants and natives within the class.

**Question 03:** Are there any specific methods, materials, or techniques you use in the classroom to help develop the students' employability skills?

The instructor identified the Human Resources Management (HRM) course as particularly successful in fostering student employability skills. She also highlighted a specific assignment she implemented in recent years. In this assignment, students designed their own CVs and then identified weaknesses within them. The instructor reported that this exercise served as a "wake-up call" for many students, prompting them to critically evaluate their self-presentation for the job market.

**Question 04:** How do you assess the effectiveness of the selected teaching methods and materials used in your module(s) in developing the students' employability skills?

The teacher acknowledged that her teaching methods, particularly in HRM, prioritize developing students' employability skills. However, she expressed a desire to refine her techniques further to achieve this goal more effectively. The instructor recognized that various obstacles exist, often stemming from institutional limitations, the broader educational system, and the lifestyle challenges faced by many students, particularly those in rural areas.

**Question 05:** What modifications or enhancements would you suggest for your module's teaching methods or syllabus (s) to better address the employability skills requirements?

The teacher suggested adding the training part.

**Question 06:** If you were to create a program to fully prepare students for the job market in terms of employability skills, what key elements would it include?

The instructor recommended a program that would go beyond just technical skills to build well-rounded graduates. The core focus should be on developing communication, critical thinking, and digital literacy skills while fostering a growth mindset and lifelong learning. Collaboration should also be emphasized, including teamwork, leadership, and emotional

intelligence. Importantly, the program should highlight professionalism and work ethic. It should provide industry exposure through internships, guest speakers, and mentorship. This combination of theoretical, practical, and professional development would comprehensively prepare the language and communication students for career success.

**Question 07:** Does collaboration with graduates who have successfully entered the job market or employers across various industries help bridge the skills gap among current students? If so, how do you envision this collaboration taking place?

The professor sees collaboration with graduates who have successfully entered the job market as very beneficial. According to them, these graduates should be invited to mentor other students and share their experiences with them. This may take place through place-based learning, where these grads invite the students to have real-life work experiences and also have these grads as guest lecturers.

**Question 08:** Could a dedicated career services program help address these challenges?

Finally, the teacher stated that a career services program can be helpful by offering mentorship from recent graduates, workshops on practical skills, and partnerships with employers for projects and guest lectures; such programs can equip students with industry insights, bridge the gap between theory and practice, and prepare them for the job market.

#### **3.1.4. The Interpretation of the Teacher's Interview**

The teacher's interview explored how the HRD and E-learning program fosters employability skills in language and communication students. The professor acknowledged ongoing efforts to improve the program but emphasized the need for a dedicated training component. Strengths identified included tech-savviness, problem-solving, and recent improvements in oral communication. Areas for development included communication with older generations and work-life balance. The professor highlighted the HRM course and a CV critique assignment as effective methods. The interview concluded with suggestions for

improvement, including adding training and the importance of industry exposure, mentorship, and lifelong learning for graduates to succeed in the job market.

### **3.2. Results and Discussion**

The results obtained in this study shed light on the key employability skills possessed by English undergraduates in the Language and Communication Master's specialty in the English Department at Mostaganem University and the role of the teacher of HRD in developing these skills. The results also helped us suggest potential strategies to enhance students' preparedness and better align their capabilities with employer expectations.

One of the notable strengths identified among the language and communication students was their self-reported confidence and proficiency in core skills like communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. The high ratings in communication skills, in particular, align with the program's focus on developing strong language and interpersonal abilities that employers highly value. The students' confidence in teamwork is also encouraging, as the ability to collaborate effectively is another crucial employability factor.

However, the results also revealed some areas for improvement, such as students' perceived challenges in gaining practical application opportunities and receiving adequate support and guidance from the academic institution. This suggests further strengthening the program's practical, experiential learning components, potentially through increased internships, job shadowing, or industry-based projects. More structured mentorship and career development support could also help bridge the gap between academic preparation and employer expectations.

Captivatingly, the teacher interview highlighted ongoing efforts to enhance the program, including the incorporation of an HRD/ HRM course and a CV critique assignment. These initiatives demonstrate a proactive approach to developing job-relevant skills. However, the professor's emphasis on the need for a dedicated training component and the importance of

industry exposure, mentorship, and lifelong learning aligns with the student's own suggestions for improvement.

Overall, the results of this study provided valuable insights into the strengths and areas for growth in preparing language and communication students for the job market. The combination of student self-assessments and faculty perspectives offers a well-rounded understanding of employability skill development, paving the way for targeted improvements to align student outcomes with industry needs.

### **3.3. Suggestions and Recommendations**

Preparing students for the workforce demands a multifaceted approach that goes beyond traditional classroom instruction. Based on the study's results, the following recommendations could help enhance the employability of language and communication program graduates.

- Expand work-integrated learning opportunities, such as quality internships and job shadowing, to bridge the gap between academic preparation and employer expectations.
- Enhance career development support through structured guidance, mentorship, and targeted training programs to equip students with essential job search and transition skills.
- Provide dedicated career counseling services within the faculty to further empower students in navigating the job market successfully.
- Strengthen industry partnerships and incorporate dedicated employability skill development modules within the program to be aligned with evolving skill needs.
- Conduct regular skills gap analyses and implement an employability skills certification to signal graduates' readiness to prospective employers.
- Collaborate with graduates who have successfully transitioned into the job market and employers across various industries to gain valuable insights and inform program improvements.
- Providing faculty with professional development opportunities to stay up-to-date on industry trends and effectively develop the employability of their students.

By implementing these multifaceted recommendations, the language and communication program can better prepare its graduates for the workforce and foster their long-term career success.

### **3.4. Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the insights gathered from students' questionnaires and a teacher's interview regarding the skills gap among language and communication students and the program's effectiveness in preparing them for the workforce. By analyzing the perspectives of both learners and instructors, the chapter sought to uncover the program's key strengths, gaps, and areas requiring improvement. Ultimately, the chapter provided the program leadership with evidence-based insights to guide strategic enhancements that would better position graduates for long-term career success.

## General Conclusion

This study explored the critical employability skills gap faced by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students enrolled in the Master's program in Language and Communication in the English department at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University in Algeria. It focused specifically on their experiences within the Human Resources Development (HRD) and online learning course offerings. The results revealed important insights into how this program could effectively support students in developing competencies like communication, digital literacy, teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability.

Our research confirmed all three initial hypotheses. First, while not explicitly measured, student performance and instructor observations suggest that most English undergraduates possess good communication and language skills essential for employability. Second, the instructor's desire for improved training in practical skill development and industry needs highlights a potential gap in their current ability to fully contribute to employability development. Finally, the central theme of the research – the perceived disconnect between the program and job market needs – underscores the potential positive impact of targeted interventions like internships, industry collaborations, and career development programs .

A central theme that emerged from the data is the perceived disconnect between the program's current curriculum and the evolving needs of the job market. Both students and the instructor highlighted the need for the program to better equip learners with practical, job-relevant skills. Students expressed a desire for more hands-on learning opportunities to apply these competencies in real-world settings.

Furthermore, the instructor emphasized that inviting graduates who have successfully moved into industry roles to mentor current students could yield significant benefits. Through initiatives like real-world work experiences, where graduates host students, they could leverage these alumni as a rich resource. Students would gain exposure to professional

contexts and the chance to learn directly from those who have navigated the path from academics to careers. The instructor also noted that such collaborations could help the program stay in tune with changing industry needs and make adjustments to better prepare graduates.

Beyond the integration of alumni engagement, the data highlighted several other areas needing attention. For instance, students desired more opportunities to apply their skills in practical, hands-on settings throughout their studies rather than relying solely on theoretical instruction. Suggestions centered around expanding internship placements and other real-world learning components. The instructor, meanwhile, emphasized the need to strengthen connections with business and technology programs to equip students with a more well-rounded skill set.

These findings underscored the program's solid foundation and indicated a clear need for improvement. By thoughtfully addressing the identified gaps and elevating the strengths, program leadership can position graduates for long-term career success while also boosting the program's reputation and competitiveness. A key priority should be deepening partnerships with employers to ensure the curriculum, teaching methods, and support services remain closely aligned with evolving workforce demands.

Formalizing mentorship programs that connect current students with alumni can also create a cycle of knowledge exchange and professional development. In conclusion, this research represents an important step forward in highlighting the significance of the language and communication program's ability to cultivate skilled, adaptable professionals. However, there is certainly more work to be done. Based on a spirit of continuous improvement and a commitment to student success, these recommendations have the potential to yield lasting, transformative impact. As the program evolves, this research would serve as a valuable foundation to guide strategic decision-making and position graduates for long-term career prosperity.

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## **Appendix 01: Students' Questionnaire**

Dear participants, this questionnaire aims to investigate the employability skills gap faced by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students enrolled in the Master's program in Language and Communication at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University, Algeria.

### **Demographic Information**

1) Age: .....

2) Gender: .....

### **Educational Background**

3) How many years have you been studying English? \_\_\_\_\_

4) Have you completed any internships or work placements related to your field of study?

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Perception of Employability Skills**

5) What is your confidence level? Please rate it in the following skills using the appropriate grading scale: 1: Not at all confident; 2: Only a little confident; 3: Fairly confident; 4: Mostly confident; 5: Very confident.

a) Communication skills: .....

b) Teamwork and collaboration: .....

c) Problem-solving and critical thinking: .....

d) Adaptability and flexibility: .....

e) Leadership skills: .....

f) Time management: .....

g) Digital literacy: .....

h) Research and analytical skills: .....

### **Employability Skills Gap Assessment**

6) What is your proficiency level? For each of the following skills, indicate your level of proficiency by selecting one option:

a) Communication skills: Excellent  Good  Average  Below average  Poor

b) Teamwork and collaboration: Excellent  Good  Average  Below average  Poor

c) Problem-solving and critical thinking: Excellent  Good  Average  Below average   
Poor

d) Adaptability and flexibility: Excellent  Good  Average  Below average  Poor

e) Leadership skills: Excellent  Good  Average  Below average  Poor

f) Time management: Excellent  Good  Average  Below average  Poor

g) Digital literacy: Excellent  Good  Average  Below average  Poor

h) Research and analytical skills: Excellent  Good  Average  Below average  Poor

### **Challenges Faced in Developing Employability Skills:**

7) What are the challenges you faced in developing your employability skills? Please identify them by selecting one or more options:

Lack of opportunities for practical application

Limited access to relevant resources and training

Insufficient guidance and support from academic institutions

Difficulty in balancing academic workload and skill development

Lack of awareness about the importance of employability skills

Other (Please specify):

**Strategies for Enhancing Employability Skills:**

8) Which strategies do you believe could help enhance your employability skills? Please indicate them by selecting one or more options:

Internships or work placements

Volunteering or community involvement

Joining relevant student organizations or clubs

Participating in workshops or training programs

Seeking mentorship or guidance from professionals

Engaging in self-study and independent learning

Other (Please specify):

**Additional Comments**

9) Would you like to share anything else about your employability skills development or any suggestions you have for improving employability skills among English undergraduate students?

**Thank you for participating in this questionnaire!**

**Appendix 02: Teachers' Interview**

This research study investigates whether the MA language and communication program, especially the HRD/HRM, E-learning and ESP, and syllabi, effectively provides students with

the employability skills employers seek. Since you are an experienced teacher in this master, we would greatly appreciate your insights into how the MA language and communication program can enhance students' employability skills.

1/ In your opinion, how well do the HRD and E-learning syllabi currently affect the development of language and communication skills and other essential employability skills, such as teamwork, problem-solving, and digital literacy?

2/ Based on your long experience with MA language and communication students, what are some strengths and weaknesses you have observed regarding their oral communication skills?

3/ Are there any specific methods, materials, or techniques you use in the classroom to help develop the students' employability skills?

4/ How do you assess the effectiveness of the selected teaching methods and materials used in your module(s) in developing the students' employability skills?

5/ What modifications or enhancements would you suggest for the teaching methods or syllabus of your module(s) to better address the employability skills requirements?

6/ If you were to create a program to fully prepare students for the job market in terms of employability skills, what key elements would it include?

7/D

o collaboration with graduates who have successfully entered the job market or employers

across various industries help bridge the skills gap among current students? If so, how do you envision this collaboration taking place?

8/ Could a dedicated career services program help address these challenges?

**Thank you for your time and consideration!!**