

LINKING INDUSTRY TO ACADEMIA: THE ART OF MASTERING TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS IN HIGHER EDUCATION TO SUSTAIN EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS AMONG BUSINESS DEPARTMENT' STUDENTS AT THE BRITISH UNIVERSITY IN EGYPT

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ABSTRACT

The need to use Interdependent, innovative and multiple techniques in improving higher education field learning practices arises from the increasing records of unemployment world wide that are invading the global market. A number of undergraduate students face the problem of lack of job opportunities when they graduate as their thoughts usually were inclined that the magic wand to get them a job is in their certificates around their academic knowledge only. However, the truth is that they wake up to find a saturated market that needs innovative ideas and spirits of lateral thinking creative interaction and a great percentage of soft skills to ensure their chances for work. Lauder, (2013) identified that The jump in the working age, the skill shortage, the shift in the economic power, the gap between theory and real needs for the market hit them as on one hand employers criticise the higher institutions for failing to produce the sets of skills needed by students to face global market challenges and on the other hand students complain for not being absorbed to the market. According to CBV survey in 2011, 70% of employers want to see the development of employability skills among students at both schools and universities in their higher education level. The urgency of the matter lies in the fact that employers look to trespass the academic skills to a set of employability skills in the field practices needed in today's market to display a wide range of attributes in innovation tools and methods to face a magnitude of job requirements that cannot be underestimated. The paradigm is shifting towards an era where acquiring employability skills in higher education stands out as a primary requirements if universities want to meet the competitive edge of the local and the international market for their graduates. The art of mastering these skills through the use of interdependent methods of teaching and learning is a must to face both local and international challenges of the market and to gain an insight towards the linkage of industry to academics. The concept of linking industry to academia is a base to sustain the employability skills needed in the job market by the use of multiple interdependent methods of teaching and learning. On the academic level, the purpose of this paper is to introduce practices of employability skills that will allow the concept to be explained easily and that can be used as a framework for working with students to develop their talents. On the Practical level, this paper aims to demonstrate the rationale for connecting enterprise education with employability and career development in the design of curricula and learning experiences within The British University in Egypt by using the interdependent methods of teaching and learning as a base for acquiring employability skills. Moreover, the paper reflects on the experiences of practitioners, including the author, in embedding enterprise education and in seeking to develop a holistic approach which connects enterprise and employability through personal and career development.

Keywords: *Employability skills, Interdependent Methods of Learning, Blended Learning, Emotional intelligence, Soft skills, Co-teaching, Case Studies, BUE, Employability Skills Teaching Excellence and Local and International Employability Challenges.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Employability fosters learning and education to fall under specific paradigms of skills. It is reaching to make closer links between education and the world of work. Since 1997, the report of the National committee of Inquiry into higher education, Chaired by Lord Dearing (INCIHE 1997), raised the issue of employability and pointed to the need of enhanced opportunities for students to undertake all the skills of work related environment in their curriculum of higher education. Among universities all over the world there has been a cultural shift to the need to develop those skills to meet market needs through innovative techniques of learning in higher education to relate academic learning to fieldwork practices (Mason & others, 2002). According to Lankard (1990), employability is the set of transferrable skills needed by students to make