


Research Article

Communication Skills Gap among Youth and Its Impact on Career Opportunities

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Abstract

In the modern competitive job market, effective communication skills are widely recognised as a critical determinant of employability and career progression. Despite acquiring formal education, a significant proportion of youth in India face challenges in applying their communication abilities in real-world professional contexts. This study explores the communication skills gap among youth aged 18–30 and examines its impact on career opportunities. The research focuses on verbal, written, and interpersonal communication, highlighting deficiencies in fluency, professional writing, vocabulary, pronunciation, and confidence. Data were collected from youth employed in corporate, service, and informal sectors using structured questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions. The study analyses how educational background, socio-cultural factors, and limited exposure to workplace communication influence professional effectiveness. Findings indicate that communication gaps often hinder career growth, reduce participation in workplace interactions, and limit employability in client-facing and professional roles. The study also identifies the expectations of employers regarding English proficiency and professional communication, revealing a mismatch between youth readiness and workplace requirements. Based on these insights, the study recommends targeted interventions, including curriculum reforms, workplace training programs, mentoring, and confidence-building initiatives, to bridge the communication gap and enhance employability. The results of this study contribute to understanding the critical role of communication skills in shaping career outcomes for Indian youth and provide actionable strategies for educators, employers, and policymakers.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Communication Skills as Essential Employability Traits

Communication skills are widely recognized as one of the most crucial employability traits in the modern workforce. They encompass verbal, written, and interpersonal abilities that enable individuals to convey ideas clearly, collaborate effectively, and build professional relationships. In the contemporary globalized economy, employers increasingly expect job applicants not only to possess technical knowledge but also to demonstrate strong communication competencies. Studies indicate that even candidates with excellent academic qualifications may face challenges in securing or maintaining employment if they lack the ability to communicate effectively in professional settings. Communication skills, therefore, form a vital bridge between educational preparation and successful workplace performance.

1.2 Importance of Effective Communication in Professional and Personal Growth

Effective communication is essential for both professional advancement and personal development. In professional contexts, the ability to articulate ideas, present information clearly, and interact confidently with colleagues, clients, and supervisors is directly linked to career growth, leadership opportunities, and performance evaluations. On a personal level, communication skills contribute to self-confidence, social interaction, and problem-solving abilities, which are vital for overall success. Youth who possess strong communication skills are better equipped to navigate complex workplace environments, participate actively in discussions, and handle challenging professional situations. Conversely, deficiencies in communication can lead to misunderstandings, reduced productivity, and limited professional recognition.

1.3 Global and Indian Context: Youth Workforce and Communication Expectations

Globally, organisations prioritise communication skills as a key requirement for entry-level and mid-level positions across industries. Studies from countries like the United States, Malaysia, and Saudi Arabia highlight that youth often struggle to meet workplace communication standards, particularly when English is not their first language. In India, the situation is similar, with employers emphasising English proficiency, clarity in expression, and effective interpersonal communication as critical for employability. The growing participation of Indian youth in service sectors, corporate organisations, and start-ups has amplified the demand for strong communication abilities. Despite increasing opportunities, many young professionals continue to face challenges due to limited exposure to real-world communication scenarios during their academic years, highlighting a gap between expectations and readiness.

1.4 Rationale for Studying Communication Skills Gap among Youth

The rationale for focusing on the communication skills gap among youth stems from its direct impact on employability and career progression. While formal education imparts theoretical knowledge, it often does not adequately prepare students for practical workplace communication. Many young professionals experience anxiety, hesitation, and a lack of confidence when required to communicate in professional settings, particularly in English. Understanding the nature and extent of these communication gaps is essential for designing effective educational interventions, workplace training programs, and policy measures aimed at enhancing employability. By examining the challenges faced by youth in the Indian context, the study provides insights that can help bridge the gap between academic preparation and workplace expectations.

1.5 Overview of Impact on Career Opportunities

Communication skills gaps among youth have a direct and measurable impact on career opportunities. Limited proficiency in verbal and written communication can restrict participation in team discussions, client interactions, presentations, and leadership roles. Employers often evaluate candidates not only on technical ability but also on their capacity to articulate ideas clearly and interact professionally. Consequently, youth who struggle with communication may experience slower career growth, fewer promotions, and reduced access to professional development opportunities. By identifying these gaps and their implications, this study aims to propose actionable strategies for youth, educators, and employers to improve communication competencies, thereby enhancing employability and career success.

2. Statement of the Problem

In today's competitive job market, possessing technical knowledge alone is insufficient for securing and sustaining employment; effective communication skills are equally critical. Despite formal education, many youth in India face significant challenges in applying their communication abilities in professional environments. A considerable gap exists between the theoretical English or language education provided in schools and colleges and the practical communication demands of modern workplaces. For instance, a student who excels in academic examinations may still struggle to participate in meetings, write professional emails, or interact confidently with clients, which directly affects employability.

This communication skills gap manifests in various forms. Verbal communication difficulties, such as poor pronunciation, limited vocabulary, hesitation, and lack of fluency, often cause young professionals to avoid speaking opportunities, reducing their visibility in workplace interactions. Similarly, weaknesses in written communication—ranging from drafting formal letters and reports to professional emails—can lead to misunderstandings, decreased efficiency, and even loss of credibility in the workplace. Interpersonal communication skills, including the ability to work collaboratively, negotiate,

and engage in professional discussions, are also frequently underdeveloped among youth, especially for those transitioning from academic to corporate or service sector environments.

Several psychological and socio-cultural factors contribute to these challenges. Many youth experience anxiety or fear of making mistakes when speaking English, particularly in client-facing or high-stakes professional scenarios. Youth from Hindi-medium or regional-language schools often face additional challenges due to limited exposure to English during formative academic years. Furthermore, the expectations of employers regarding English proficiency, clarity, and professional etiquette often exceed the preparation provided by educational institutions, creating a mismatch between workforce readiness and employer requirements.

The problem is especially significant in the Indian context, where the workforce is increasingly multilingual, and English serves as the primary medium for professional and corporate communication. The communication gap not only hinders day-to-day workplace performance but also affects long-term career growth, including promotions, leadership opportunities, and participation in professional development programs. By examining this issue, the study seeks to identify the specific communication challenges faced by youth, analyze their impact on employability and career opportunities, and provide recommendations for bridging the gap between academic preparation and professional expectations.

The primary objective of this study is to examine the communication skills gap among youth and its impact on career opportunities in the Indian context. Effective communication is widely recognized as a crucial employability trait, yet many young professionals struggle to bridge the gap between academic preparation and practical workplace demands. To address this overarching goal, the study has several specific objectives designed to explore different dimensions of communication challenges and their implications.

Firstly, the study aims to identify the specific communication deficiencies among youth, including verbal, written, and interpersonal skills. This involves understanding common issues such as poor pronunciation, limited professional vocabulary, difficulty in drafting emails and reports, and lack of confidence in interacting with colleagues and clients. For example, a youth working in a corporate call centre in Bhopal may have technical expertise but struggles to respond fluently to client queries due to limited spoken English skills, highlighting the practical relevance of this objective.

Secondly, the study seeks to examine the impact of communication gaps on employability and career progression. Limited communication competence can affect participation in workplace discussions, team collaboration, client interactions, and professional presentations. These deficiencies often lead to reduced visibility and slower career advancement, as employers prioritise employees who can communicate ideas clearly and professionally. By analysing these effects, the study aims to quantify the extent to which communication gaps restrict growth opportunities.

Thirdly, the study intends to analyse the role of education and training in shaping communication skills among youth. This includes examining differences between students from English-medium and regional-language-medium institutions, as well as evaluating the effectiveness of vocational training programs, language labs, and other interventions designed to enhance workplace communication. For instance, youth who have undergone internship-based training with exposure to client meetings may demonstrate higher confidence and fluency compared to those who received only classroom instruction.

Fourthly, the study aims to explore employer expectations regarding communication competencies in various sectors, including corporate, service, and informal workplaces. Understanding these expectations helps highlight the gap between what youth currently possess and what the professional environment demands. Employers often value clarity, conciseness, professionalism, and the ability to engage in cross-functional communication, all of which are critical for successful career progression.

Finally, the study seeks to suggest remedial measures and strategies for bridging the communication gap among youth. These may include curriculum reforms, focused language training, mentoring programs, and confidence-building workshops. By offering practical recommendations, the study aims to equip youth with the tools necessary to enhance their communication competence, improve employability, and unlock career opportunities.

In summary, the objectives of this study are designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the communication skills gap, its causes, and its consequences, while also offering actionable solutions to strengthen the professional prospects of youth in India.

4. Research Questions and Hypotheses

The purpose of this study is to explore the communication skills gap among youth and its impact on employability and career opportunities. To achieve this, the research is guided by several focused research questions that address the nature, causes, and consequences of communication deficiencies in professional contexts. These questions are designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how communication skills affect career growth and to identify actionable interventions.

The first research question asks: "What types of communication gaps are most prevalent among youth?" This question seeks to identify specific areas where young professionals struggle, such as verbal fluency, pronunciation, professional writing, or interpersonal interaction. For example, in the Indian corporate context, youth may have strong technical knowledge but may hesitate during client presentations due to limited spoken English skills, highlighting verbal communication as a critical area of concern.

The second research question examines: "How do communication gaps affect employability, confidence, and career progression?" This question explores the practical consequences of communication deficiencies on workplace performance and professional growth. Evidence from service

and corporate sectors in India suggests that youth with limited communication competence often face restricted opportunities for promotion, leadership roles, or participation in important meetings, emphasising the link between communication skills and career advancement.

The third research question considers: "Is there a significant relationship between educational background and communication competence?" This question investigates whether youth from English-medium institutions perform better in workplace communication compared to those from Hindi-medium or regional-language schools. For instance, youth educated in regional-language settings may experience greater difficulty in professional email writing, client interactions, or formal presentations, highlighting the influence of academic background on communication readiness.

The fourth research question addresses: "How do employers perceive youth communication skills in recruitment, onboarding, and professional evaluation?" This question examines employer expectations and satisfaction regarding the communication abilities of young employees. Interviews with managers in Indian companies reveal that employers often consider effective communication as equally important as technical knowledge, particularly for client-facing and team-oriented roles. Understanding employer perspectives helps identify gaps and areas for improvement in youth preparedness. Based on these research questions, the study also proposes the following hypotheses to be tested:

H₁: Youth with limited communication skills face significant challenges in employability and professional growth.

H₂: Educational background has a measurable impact on communication competence and workplace effectiveness.

H₃: Targeted interventions, such as training programs and mentoring, improve communication skills and career outcomes for youth.

H₄: Employers perceive communication deficiencies as a major barrier to career advancement among young professionals.

These research questions and hypotheses provide a structured framework for the study, guiding data collection, analysis, and interpretation. They aim to connect the theoretical understanding of communication skills with the practical challenges faced by youth in Indian workplaces, thereby offering insights for educators, employers, and policymakers to address this critical employability issue.

5. Review of Related Literature

A comprehensive review of literature provides insights into the existing knowledge, trends, and gaps regarding communication skills among youth and their impact on career opportunities. Research in both Indian and global contexts highlights the critical role of communication competence in employability and professional success.

Importance of Communication Skills in Employability

Several studies emphasise that effective communication is a key employability trait across sectors. Clement and Murugavel

(2015) noted that youth with strong verbal and written communication skills are more likely to succeed in client interactions, presentations, and team projects. Similarly, Singh (2019) highlighted that English proficiency directly influences professional opportunities in India, particularly in the corporate and service sectors.

Communication Gaps among Youth

Research has documented a persistent gap between academic preparation and workplace communication requirements. Grover and Pandya (2024) found that many technical graduates in India struggle with practical English despite high academic scores, leading to reduced confidence and limited participation in professional discussions. Haryani et al. (2024) reported similar issues among students transitioning from classrooms to internships, where the absence of real-world communication practice resulted in anxiety and hesitation.

Influence of Educational Background

Studies indicate that educational background significantly affects communication competence. Youth from English-medium institutions generally demonstrate stronger fluency and confidence in professional English, whereas those from Hindi-medium or regional-language schools often face challenges in formal writing and spoken communication (Deshmukh & Kumar, 2025). This disparity underscores the need for additional support and training for students from regional-language educational backgrounds.

Employer Expectations and Workplace Reality

Employer perceptions of communication competence play a vital role in employability. Suhaili et al. (2024) observed that employers in both India and Southeast Asia prioritise verbal clarity, professional writing skills, and interpersonal effectiveness over purely technical knowledge. Studies in India (Gulati, Arora, & Bhatt, 2025) found a mismatch between employer expectations and the actual communication skills of youth, highlighting a critical area for intervention.

Global Perspectives on Communication Skills

International studies reinforce the importance of communication for career advancement. Research from the United States, Malaysia, and Saudi Arabia (Harun et al., 2025) emphasises that youth often face challenges similar to those of Indian youth, such as limited fluency, a lack of vocabulary, and difficulty adapting to professional communication norms. These studies suggest that communication challenges are a universal concern, though regional and linguistic contexts influence the severity and nature of the gap.

Training and Remedial Measures

Several studies advocate for targeted interventions to improve communication competence. Purohit and Kaushik (2024) recommend workplace-oriented English courses, mentoring, and exposure to practical communication situations to bridge the gap. Similarly, Anand (2025) emphasises curriculum

reforms, language labs, and experiential learning as effective strategies for enhancing professional communication skills among youth.

Research Gaps

While much research highlights communication deficiencies among youth, few studies focus on specific regional contexts or the direct impact on career opportunities in India. There is limited empirical evidence examining how communication gaps affect promotion, job performance, and professional growth across diverse sectors. The present study addresses this gap by focusing on youth in Indian workplaces and analysing both the challenges and their implications for career trajectories.

In conclusion, the literature clearly demonstrates that communication skills are a critical determinant of employability, yet a substantial gap exists between academic preparation and workplace expectations. Studies underscore the influence of educational background, socio-cultural factors, and workplace readiness on communication competence. By reviewing Indian and global perspectives, this study establishes a foundation for investigating communication gaps among youth and identifying strategies to enhance career opportunities.

6. Scope of the Study

The present study focuses on the communication skills gap among youth and its implications for career opportunities, with a particular emphasis on the Indian context. The geographical scope is confined to urban and semi-urban areas where a significant number of young professionals are employed in corporate, service, and informal sectors. This focus allows for an in-depth analysis of workplace communication challenges in settings that reflect both organised and unorganised employment structures, which are representative of broader trends in India.

The population of the study includes youth aged 18–30 years, encompassing students, fresh graduates, and early-career professionals. This age group represents individuals who are transitioning from academic environments to professional workplaces, a stage where communication skills are critical for employability and career advancement. The study specifically includes youth employed in diverse sectors such as IT and corporate organisations, retail and service industries, government offices, and start-ups, providing a comprehensive view of how communication gaps manifest across different workplace contexts.

The focus of the study is on three key aspects of communication: verbal, written, and interpersonal skills. Verbal communication involves spoken English used in meetings, presentations, discussions, and client interactions. Written communication includes drafting professional emails, reports, proposals, and official correspondence. Interpersonal communication refers to interactions with colleagues, supervisors, clients, and team members, emphasising collaboration, clarity, and professionalism. By addressing all three dimensions, the study aims to provide a holistic

understanding of communication challenges that affect workplace performance and career growth.

The study also considers time-bound and contextual limitations. Data collection is limited to the period of the research study, which may not capture long-term changes in communication skills or career progression. The research relies on self-reported data collected through questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions, which may be influenced by respondents' subjective perceptions or biases. Additionally, due to practical constraints, the sample size may be limited, which could affect the generalizability of the findings beyond the study population. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into communication gaps among youth and offers actionable recommendations for educators, employers, and policymakers.

In summary, the scope of this study encompasses youth in the early stages of their careers, diverse workplace sectors, and multiple dimensions of communication within the Indian professional context. It seeks to examine the causes, consequences, and potential solutions for the communication skills gap, providing a framework for interventions that can enhance employability and career opportunities for young professionals.

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

7.1 Research Design

The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to explore the communication skills gap among youth and its impact on career opportunities. The descriptive component is used to systematically record and describe the communication challenges faced by young professionals in real workplace settings, including verbal, written, and interpersonal skills. The analytical component examines the relationships between variables such as educational background, exposure to practical communication opportunities, English proficiency, confidence levels, and career outcomes. By combining descriptive and analytical approaches, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of the problem and allows for interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative data.

7.2 Sample Selection

The sample for this study consists of youth aged 18–30 years, including students, fresh graduates, and early-career professionals from various sectors in India, such as corporate organisations, service industries, start-ups, government offices, and informal workplaces. A purposive sampling technique is employed to ensure representation across different sectors, educational backgrounds, and employment levels. This approach helps capture the diversity of experiences regarding communication skills gaps. The sample size is determined to balance the depth of qualitative insights with sufficient quantitative data for statistical analysis. Special emphasis is placed on including respondents who interact frequently in English within their professional roles, as this allows for a focused investigation of the challenges and their career implications.

7.3 Tools for Data Collection

Data are collected using a combination of primary and qualitative tools. A structured questionnaire serves as the primary instrument to gather quantitative data on communication challenges, perceived proficiency, confidence levels, and career impacts. The questionnaire contains both closed-ended and Likert-scale items for systematic analysis. Additionally, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions are conducted with a subset of respondents to gain deeper qualitative insights into their experiences, attitudes, and perceptions regarding communication in professional settings. Observational methods may also be applied where feasible, particularly in service-oriented workplaces, to assess real-time communication behaviour and interaction dynamics. The use of multiple data collection methods ensures triangulation, enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings.

7.4 Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative data obtained through questionnaires are analysed using percentage analysis to identify trends, frequencies, and patterns in communication deficiencies. Statistical measures such as mean and standard deviation are applied to evaluate variations in responses related to proficiency and confidence levels. Inferential statistical tests, including Chi-square and t-tests, are employed where appropriate to examine relationships between variables such as educational background, sector of employment, and communication competence. Qualitative data from interviews and focus group discussions are analysed using thematic analysis, which involves coding responses, identifying recurring themes, and interpreting insights within the context of career opportunities and employability. This mixed-method approach allows for a nuanced understanding of the communication skills gap and its practical implications for youth in India.

8. Findings and Discussion

8.1 Prevalence and Nature of Communication Gaps among Youth

The study reveals that communication gaps among youth are widespread and manifest in multiple forms. The most commonly reported issues include limited verbal fluency, poor pronunciation, restricted vocabulary, and hesitation during professional interactions. For example, youth working in call centres or client-facing roles often struggle to respond confidently to queries, despite having adequate technical knowledge. Written communication challenges are equally significant, with many respondents reporting difficulties in drafting professional emails, preparing reports, and structuring formal documentation. Interpersonal communication deficits, such as the inability to engage in collaborative discussions, negotiate effectively, or build rapport with colleagues and clients, were also observed. These findings highlight that communication challenges are not limited to language proficiency but also encompass behavioural and social aspects essential for professional interaction.

8.2 Impact on Confidence and Workplace Performance

A key finding of the study is the strong relationship between communication gaps and reduced workplace confidence. Youth with limited English proficiency or weak communication skills reported higher levels of anxiety, hesitation, and fear of making mistakes, particularly in high-stakes or client-facing scenarios. This lack of confidence often leads to avoidance of speaking opportunities, reducing visibility in meetings, collaborative projects, and presentations. From a performance perspective, communication deficiencies were found to affect task efficiency, clarity of instructions, and the overall quality of work. In customer service and corporate environments, miscommunication sometimes results in misunderstandings, errors in task execution, and lower client satisfaction. These findings align with prior studies emphasising that communication competence is closely linked to both psychological well-being and professional effectiveness.

8.3 Role of Educational Background

The study confirms that educational background significantly influences communication competence. Respondents from English-medium schools and colleges generally exhibited higher confidence, better vocabulary, and more fluency in workplace communication compared to those from Hindi-medium or regional-language institutions. Youth from regional-language backgrounds often lacked exposure to professional English writing, presentations, and formal discussions, which became evident when interacting in corporate or service sector environments. This suggests that academic preparation alone is insufficient unless supplemented by practical, workplace-oriented training and exposure.

8.4 Employer Expectations vs. Youth Readiness

Analysis of employer expectations reveals a substantial gap between what is required and the communication skills of youth entering the workforce. Employers consistently expect clear, professional, and fluent communication, along with effective interpersonal interaction and formal writing skills. However, many youth reported feeling unprepared to meet these expectations, especially during initial employment. This gap was more pronounced among youth entering technical, service, and start-up sectors where English serves as the primary medium of communication. The absence of structured language support or training at the workplace further exacerbates these challenges, placing additional pressure on employees to improve independently.

8.5 Influence on Career Opportunities and Professional Growth

The findings indicate that communication gaps directly affect career opportunities and long-term professional growth. Youth with weaker communication skills reported being overlooked for promotions, leadership roles, and participation in important projects, even when their technical knowledge was adequate. Performance evaluations often incorporate communication ability as a key criterion, reinforcing the importance of effective

workplace communication. These outcomes underscore that career progression is not solely dependent on technical expertise but is heavily influenced by the ability to communicate ideas clearly, collaborate efficiently, and interact professionally with colleagues, clients, and supervisors.

8.6 Discussion in Relation to Existing Literature

The study's findings align with both Indian and global literature on youth employability and communication competence. Similar to prior research by Grover and Pandya (2024) and Haryani et al. (2024), this study confirms that youth face persistent challenges in bridging the gap between academic learning and workplace communication requirements. The influence of educational background, limited exposure to practical communication scenarios, and communication-related anxiety observed in this study corroborates earlier findings in both Indian and international contexts. However, the study adds regional specificity by highlighting these issues among youth employed in urban Indian workplaces, providing insights into practical challenges and career implications unique to the Indian professional environment.

9. Suggestions and Recommendations

9.1 Introduction

Based on the findings of the study, it is evident that the communication skills gap among youth significantly affects confidence, employability, and career growth. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated interventions at the educational, workplace, and individual levels. The following suggestions are designed to provide practical and actionable strategies to help youth overcome communication deficiencies, meet professional expectations, and enhance their career prospects.

9.2 Educational Interventions

Educational institutions play a pivotal role in developing communication competence. Curriculum reforms should include practical modules that emphasise professional English, written and verbal communication, and real-life workplace scenarios. Activities such as role plays, presentations, group discussions, and mock interviews can help students practice and improve their communication skills in a supportive environment. Establishing language labs equipped with audio-visual tools, interactive software, and online learning platforms can provide additional practice opportunities. Moreover, incorporating workplace-oriented training programs or internships that require active engagement in English communication can bridge the gap between academic knowledge and professional application.

9.3 Workplace-Based Support

Organisations should also play an active role in addressing communication challenges. Employee induction and training programs focusing on professional communication skills can enhance effectiveness in client-facing and internal interactions. Companies can establish mentoring systems, where experienced employees guide young professionals in professional writing,

presentations, and interpersonal communication. Encouraging peer discussions and English-speaking clubs within the workplace creates informal platforms for practice and feedback. Additionally, the adoption of digital tools, such as online language courses and mobile applications, can allow employees to practice and improve communication skills at their own pace, fostering continuous development.

9.4 Psychological and Social Support

Confidence and self-efficacy are critical for effective communication. Workshops on public speaking, presentation skills, and interpersonal communication can reduce anxiety and build self-assurance among youth. Creating a supportive organisational culture where employees feel safe to communicate without fear of judgment or criticism encourages active participation and experimentation with professional language. Peer interaction initiatives, such as discussion groups and collaborative problem-solving exercises, further reinforce communication learning in a practical, social context.

9.5 Collaboration Between Institutions and Employers

Collaboration between educational institutions and employers can strengthen the transition from classroom learning to workplace readiness. Industry-academia partnerships can help design training programs aligned with real workplace requirements, including sector-specific communication practices. Customised workshops for sectors such as IT, healthcare, hospitality, and banking can focus on relevant communication scenarios, ensuring youth develop skills that are immediately applicable in professional settings. Such collaboration also allows for feedback from employers to improve curriculum design and training methodologies, ensuring that youth are better prepared for workplace demands.

9.6 Summary of Recommendations

In conclusion, the study emphasises a multi-pronged approach to addressing communication gaps. Interventions at the educational level, workplace level, and psychological support level are essential to improve verbal, written, and interpersonal communication competencies. Implementation of these measures can help youth overcome linguistic and confidence barriers, meet employer expectations, and achieve career growth. The recommendations aim to create a well-rounded framework that enhances employability, professional effectiveness, and long-term career success for youth in India.

10. CONCLUSION

The present study explored the communication skills gap among youth and examined its impact on career opportunities in the Indian context. The findings demonstrate that despite academic preparation, many young professionals face significant challenges in verbal, written, and interpersonal communication within the workplace. Deficiencies such as limited fluency, poor pronunciation, inadequate professional vocabulary, and low confidence were found to negatively affect workplace participation, client interactions, and overall job

performance. The study also highlights the critical role of educational background, showing that youth from regional-language schools often experience greater communication difficulties than their English-medium counterparts.

Employer expectations further accentuate the gap between academic learning and workplace needs. Organisations increasingly prioritise effective communication, professional etiquette, and clarity of expression alongside technical knowledge. Youth with inadequate communication skills often face slower career progression, missed leadership opportunities, and reduced visibility in professional settings. The study confirms that communication competence is not merely a technical skill but a combination of linguistic ability, interpersonal effectiveness, and confidence, all of which are essential for employability and career growth.

Based on the analysis, it is evident that a multi-dimensional approach is required to address these challenges. Educational institutions, workplaces, and individual youth must collaboratively engage in interventions such as curriculum reforms, language training programs, mentoring, workshops, and confidence-building exercises. By adopting these strategies, youth can enhance their communication competence, meet professional expectations, and secure better career outcomes. In conclusion, the study underscores the pivotal role of communication skills in shaping career trajectories and provides actionable recommendations for bridging the gap between academic preparation and professional demands.

11. Limitations and Scope for Further Research

11.1 Limitations of the Study

While the study provides significant insights, it is subject to certain limitations. First, the research is geographically limited to urban and semi-urban areas of India, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other regions, particularly rural areas where access to English education may differ. Second, the sample size, though representative of multiple sectors, is limited due to resource and time constraints, which may affect the robustness of statistical analyses. Third, data collection relied primarily on self-reported questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions, which may be influenced by respondents' personal perceptions, biases, or social desirability. Fourth, the study focused on youth aged 18–30 years, limiting applicability to older professionals or mid-career employees. Finally, observational data were applied selectively and not uniformly across all sectors, which may restrict the understanding of actual workplace behaviour.

11.2 Scope for Further Research

The study opens several avenues for further investigation. Future research can expand geographically to include multiple regions of India or compare rural and urban youth to provide a more comprehensive national perspective. Sector-specific studies can focus on industries such as IT, healthcare, banking, and hospitality to identify tailored communication requirements and challenges. Longitudinal research can track the development of communication skills over time and assess the

long-term impact of training interventions on career growth. Experimental studies can evaluate the effectiveness of digital learning tools, workplace communication programs, and mentorship initiatives in enhancing communication competence. Additionally, further research can explore psychological and socio-cultural factors, including self-efficacy, motivation, and workplace culture, that influence communication skill development and professional success.

By addressing these areas, future studies can provide deeper insights into bridging the communication gap among youth, enhancing employability, and creating a skilled workforce capable of thriving in India's competitive job market.

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