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# Academia Open



*By Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo*

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# Academia Open

Vol. 11 No. 1 (2026): June  
DOI: 10.21070/acopen.11.2026.13774

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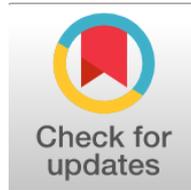
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# Academia Open

Vol. 11 No. 1 (2026): June  
DOI: 10.21070/acopen.11.2026.13774

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## Contributions of Educational Institutions in Enhancing Job Skills

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### Abstract

**General Background:** Rapid technological change and complex global development challenges require education systems capable of preparing human resources with competencies aligned to sustainable development and evolving labor market demands. **Specific Background:** Educational institutions are expected to provide academic programs, training systems, and knowledge transfer mechanisms that equip students with employability skills, intellectual capital, and professional readiness. **Knowledge Gap:** Despite expanding higher education systems, many graduates experience unemployment due to mismatches between institutional educational outputs and labor market requirements, indicating insufficient alignment of curricula, training programs, and stakeholder collaboration. **Aims:** This study aims to identify the contributions of educational institutions in developing functional skills and supporting graduate employability through educational systems, training mechanisms, and institutional practices. **Results:** Using a descriptive literature-based methodology, the study finds that educational institutions contribute through human capital development, diversification of educational programs, partnerships with employers, community service initiatives, and knowledge incubator roles; however, outdated curricula, weak communication with labor market stakeholders, and limited focus on personal skills remain significant challenges. **Novelty:** The study integrates institutional educational functions, employability skills development, and sustainable human resource perspectives into a comprehensive conceptual framework emphasizing coordinated institutional and labor market collaboration. **Implications:** The findings highlight the necessity for curriculum restructuring, strengthened industry partnerships, continuous graduate engagement, and balanced development of academic and personal competencies to support employment opportunities and sustainable socio-economic development.

### Highlights:

- Educational Systems Require Restructuring to Match Evolving Workforce Competency Expectations.
- Institutional Collaboration With Employers Remains Limited Despite Growing Graduate Output.
- Knowledge Incubators and Community Programs Support Human Capital Formation Pathways.

**Keywords:** Educational Institutions, Employability Skills, Human Capital Development, Labor Market Alignment, Sustainable Development.

Published date: 2026-02-27

## Introduction

The world faces many complex and interconnected challenges that directly impact development and lifestyles. These complex challenges require advanced measures, knowledge, technologies, and skills to achieve sustainable development in the present and future. One of the most important means of addressing these challenges is education. Investing in education, based on the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies, is one of the most important ways to ensure sustainable development. Through sustainable development, economic and social justice and decent livelihoods can be achieved across various sectors.

The changes in the personal and public needs brought about by technological advancements have resulted in the changing of job skill requirements by the employers in order to enhance employee performance. In this regard, the definition of employability skills differs as per the needs of the labor markets of one country to the other and one city to another. Thus, the future expectations and requirements of the employers should be considered when defining the employability skills, the aspirations of the students, and the willingness of the universities to implement the strategies of employability skills development. Institutions and scientific incubators provide quality education and training and development programs, which would develop skills of the students, motivate them as well as inculcate the spirit of innovation. On the other hand, failure to take into consideration the demands of the labor market in terms of skills, knowledge and abilities exacerbates the difference between what the market demands and what the graduates offer. Thus the mismatch of job skills, which is the employability skills, and the needs in the labor market is a genuine menace to any society. The large number of graduates who lack jobs illustrates this menace because it has a negative effect on the gross national products and the local economy.

Our current research focuses on the essential and pioneering role played by educational institutions, through their academic and professional contributions focused on enhancing job skills that help students prepare for careers, in terms of the skills, knowledge, and personal attributes required to secure a suitable job that achieves a certain level of decent living and financial well-being. This role can be achieved by universities and the educational programs and professional techniques they offer, through the employment programs offered by employers and the jobs provided by government institutions, which can raise the level of economic growth and achieve sustainable human development.

## Research Methodology

### 2.1. Problem Statement

According to official reports issued by the Iraqi Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, hundreds of thousands of university students graduate annually, yet the majority of them cannot find employment opportunities commensurate with their academic qualifications. Conversely, some find employment opportunities that do not match their aspirations and desires. Despite this, educational institutions continue to establish academic departments and offer postgraduate studies in some specializations. Therefore, the issue of sustainable development of intellectual capital faces several challenges. Among these challenges is the diversity of labor market requirements related to employability skills, which vary depending on job requirements. Based on the above, the current research attempts to answer the following question:

What role do educational institutions play in enhancing job skills?

### 2.2. Research Objectives

The current research aims to identify the contributions educational institutions make to developing human resources, particularly the functional skills of current students and graduates, in order to support graduates' career readiness. This objective can be achieved through:

1. Shedding light on the reality of educational institutions in Iraq, particularly the current educational systems, and how to benefit from them,
2. Examining the reality of functional skills in Iraqi university education and identifying their shortcomings,
3. Presenting proposals to enhance educational aspects and training programs related to functional skills, in light of the findings of some experiments and research in this field

### 2.3. Importance of the Research

The importance of the current research lies in its ability to:

1. Shed light on the skills required by the labor market for the purpose of achieving sustainable development,
2. Provide suggestions and insights for educational institutions when planning educational and training systems and programs in light of sustainable development regarding the required skills and qualifications,
3. Help provide employability skills that contribute to raising the quality of education, which positively impacts the job readiness of graduates,

4. Decision-makers involved in the recruitment process can benefit from the results of the current research regarding the skills, qualifications, and job specifications that job applicants should possess when hiring.

## 2.4. Research Methodology

The study used a descriptive design, relying on a literature review of academic reports, experimental research, and research papers that addressed the importance and contributions of educational institutions in meeting labor market requirements.

## 3. Contributions of Educational Institutions

### 3.1. Contributions of Educational Institutions to Human Skills Development

Higher education institutions play a prominent and important role in developing human skills in various scientific disciplines and across various societal strata. Higher education, with its practices, knowledge, and programs, provides the skills necessary to find appropriate solutions to complex problems in society. This is achieved through several fundamental and integrated aspects, some of which can be summarized as follows:

#### 3.1.1. Building Intellectual Capital

Human capital represents the knowledge, qualifications, and characteristics of an educated individual that enable them to secure a suitable job opportunity. Therefore, by surveying the labor market and identifying its human resource requirements and the types of skills and competencies required, educational and training programs can be directed to meet these requirements. Educational institutions can develop intellectual capital through a variety of means, whether these specialized programs are offered during the study period or outside of it (during the summer vacation) [1]. We mention the following:

A. Establishing summer camps: Establishing summer camps is one of the means and methods that help current students and graduates acquire knowledge and skills that develop their ideas and cognitive abilities. The reason for this is that the trainee joins these training programs based on his desire and as a result of his daily need for such skills, knowledge and experiences. In this case, opening a window of effective communication with current students and graduates, standing by their needs and fulfilling their desires for training programs is one of the most important factors that lead to the formation of educated capital.

B. Academic travel: One of the resources that develop intellectual capital is academic travel to the workplace. In advanced institutions, educational institutions design their academic programs to a large extent based on practical work and real-life observations of scientific experiments in the workplace. These trips aim to embody a practical understanding of theoretical aspects in real life and to identify the various and diverse challenges that occur in real work environments. They also broaden students' horizons and cultural diversity, which develops their capacity for creative thinking and critical analysis. In general, academic travel effectively contributes to the formation of cadres and elites with experience, skill, and scientific knowledge. These elites can utilize their intellectual and mental capabilities to serve the educational institution and society alike.

C. Scientific conferences, seminars and training workshops: Scientific conferences and seminars provide a real opportunity for students and researchers to exchange opinions, practical ideas and the flow of information that would form perceptions and visions that help develop mental skills, open new horizons of knowledge and gain insight into the cultures, customs and traditions enjoyed by students and researchers who have diverse scientific backgrounds from various educational institutions. Therefore, scientific conferences and seminars are considered important pillars in spreading knowledge and exchanging experiences that develop the skills and capabilities of educated human resources.

In brief, education is an investment in human capital formation, as it enhances individuals' abilities, skills, and functional capabilities, leading to increased productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness of their work. Furthermore, educated intellectual capital drives economic and social development, raises the standard of living, and improves the quality of life. This is achieved if it is invested appropriately and in accordance with modern mechanisms and trends that consider intellectual capital to be the core and axis of sustainable development [2].

#### 3.1.2. Guiding Education and Training Systems

Higher education institutions, through their academic and training programs and curricula, can play a significant role in developing functional skills, developing consistent plans and policies that address sustainability issues at the local and national levels to promote sustainable development. This is achieved through the following key aspects:

##### A. Theoretical Knowledge:

The acquisition of theoretical knowledge and other related aspects by students depends on the ability of educational institutions to provide graduates with a knowledge base that establishes a comprehensive and in-depth understanding that meets the requirements of the labor market in various fields.

##### B. Education and Training Systems:

Structured education and training systems provide an opportunity for comprehensive and gradual learning that helps build

coherent cognitive capabilities and skills, leading to increased employability among graduates.

## C. Non-Formal Education:

Academic institutions must play a significant role in refining and developing soft skills through non-formal training programs. These programs, such as teamwork, leadership and conflict resolution, work ethics and citizenship, etc., develop interpersonal skills and immersion with others, enhance leadership capabilities, skills, and knowledge, and reinforce ethical values, functional and professional principles that foster a sense of social responsibility, ethical leadership, and good citizenship among graduates [3].

### 3.1.3. Diversifying educational programs

The education and knowledge acquired through training programs and their various applications, as well as studies and research offered by higher education institutions, are among the most important factors influencing labor market requirements. This is achieved through the following principles:

#### A. Technical and Vocational Education:

Educational institutions are encouraged to offer specialized technical and vocational education programs alongside academic education. Currently, employers are seeking human capital with professional and technical expertise and skills. Practical and field-based applications allow students to apply the theoretical knowledge provided through academic programs in real-world settings and gain experience. These practical and technical skills help meet the needs of the labor market and reduce the gap between industry requirements and educational institutions' outputs (the Skills Guide for the Labor Market).

#### B. Partnership with the Labor Market:

In light of the growing needs and varying requirements resulting from differing desires, employers are faced with a myriad of challenges. This requires them to conduct a comprehensive and accurate survey of the labor market to identify the required human resource needs and determine the skills, knowledge, and capabilities required in various sectors. From this perspective, the contribution of educational institutions has an effective impact and a pioneering role in developing human skills. This is achieved by developing concepts and offering high-quality training programs and academic courses that meet the actual needs of the labor market and provide the required competencies. Furthermore, higher education institutions, in cooperation with employers, can provide field training opportunities that combine theoretical aspects with practical experience.

In short, educational institutions play a pivotal and comprehensive role in developing and building the skills and capabilities of intellectual capital, represented by current students and graduates. This is achieved by offering high-quality academic training programs characterized by modernity, rigor, effective curriculum, and a focus on practical application. This contributes to the creation of qualified human capital capable of meeting the growing needs of the labor market and contributing effectively to comprehensive sustainable development.

### 3.2. The Educational Institution's Contribution to Community Service

Educational institutions, from schools to technical institutes to universities of all kinds, are a fundamental and vital factor in building and developing societies. The role of educational institutions is not limited to providing academic education, but extends beyond that to include effective contributions to identifying societal problems and needs at various levels. The importance of this essence lies in several aspects, including human capital development, university education, solving societal problems, spreading awareness and culture, and enhancing community participation [4].

When reviewing the areas of contribution of educational institutions to community service, there are multiple aspects to the contribution of educational institutions, the most prominent of which are:

1. Organizing specialized courses and workshops for selected segments of society in various fields to equip them with the required skills and knowledge and to eliminate alphabetical and digital illiteracy, which could help them secure employment opportunities commensurate with their available capabilities,
2. Providing academic and technical consultations and proposing innovative solutions that address societal issues and problems, which would alleviate the suffering and fears of society,
3. Providing free medical and therapeutic consultations and services by medical and health colleges, as well as organizing health awareness campaigns on healthy foods and infectious diseases through field visits to needy families, especially in remote areas,
4. Organizing cultural and artistic events that contribute to enriching cultural life and preserving the unity of the social fabric and the cultural depth of society through theatrical performances, seminars, poetry festivals, and other activities,
5. Holding seminars and workshops that contribute to raising environmental awareness through conducting research that raises awareness of the importance of preserving natural resources and providing sustainable solutions

In general, the requirements for preparing an elite and educated cadre of educated and aware individuals and cadres require a university environment, educational systems, and development programs based on partnership and openness to civil society institutions. The quality of the educational system and the rehabilitation and training programs adopted by educational institutions are among the most important pillars upon which scientific progress and economic and social renaissance are built, leading to the achievement of sustainable development. Educational institutions are considered the bright gateway to society through their graduates, who possess the experience, knowledge, and skills sufficient to lift them out of the cycle of poverty and deprivation and into prosperity and stability.

### 3.3. The educational institution's contribution to building knowledge incubators

Academic institutions are the cornerstone of the growth, development, and advancement of societies. They are places for the exchange of knowledge and expertise and the transfer of theoretical knowledge to interested parties. Each academic institution has a vision, mission, and goals. Among the most important of these goals is the transfer of knowledge and skills to students according to academic structures and curricula. Since universities are the broadest space through which knowledge and skills can be transferred and new creative ideas accepted, investing in higher education at these universities is one of the most important means of transferring skills, knowledge, capabilities, expertise, and sustainable practices to students. This skill transfer process is carried out according to well-studied scientific policies and plans, as educational institutions serve as incubators for skill development and talent refinement [5]. However, providing students with knowledge, facts, experiences, and skills is achieved through several foundations, including:

3.3.1. Building a knowledge base: Educational institutions must take it upon themselves to provide an organized knowledge database. This knowledge database helps students understand and interpret phenomena and developments occurring in their environment and society in a manner consistent with the requirements of the internal and external environment linked to the labor market. This knowledge database should be comprehensive of cognitive skills such as creativity and innovation, problem-solving and team-building, self-management, and decision-making.

3.3.2. Developing self-esteem: Due to technological advancements, the proliferation of knowledge tools, and the diversity of information sources available, many educational institutions have become indifferent to the opinions expressed by some students. This negatively impacts students' personalities, making them unable to express or defend their ideas and opinions. Therefore, adopting self-esteem, based on logical analysis and a deep understanding of a given situation, has become one of the most important foundations and pillars that educational institutions must work to instill in students. They must also train students on how to form their own convictions, rather than accepting the opinions of others without analyzing and assessing their credibility. Hence, the importance of educational institutions emerges as a source for developing individuals who possess the ability to think creatively and critically, solve problems, manage conflicts, innovate, adapt, and manage change.

3.3.3. Developing the leadership spirit: The task of preparing administrative leaders to assume responsibility at various administrative levels is no less important than other cognitive aspects. Educational institutions are currently the most prominent among other institutions that must provide students with the knowledge and skills to enable them to hone their personal and professional talents to develop the leadership spirit through which their subordinates are motivated and directed to assume responsibility to achieve the desired goals. For educational institutions to be effective technology incubators, they must continue to keep pace with technological developments and innovation, and adopt a comprehensive vision focused on preparing professionals who possess the skills, experience, deep knowledge, and tools and resources necessary to succeed in an ever-changing world.

## Result and discussion

### 4. Functional Skills/Employability Skills

#### 4.1. What are Employability Skills?

Educated human resources represent the fundamental and pivotal pillar in building, developing, and providing life's necessities. This has led educational institutions and knowledge incubators to assume full responsibility for designing advanced academic education systems and training programs capable of developing and building human capital capabilities in line with labor market needs. Given the multitude of methods and approaches that educational institutions must adopt to build and develop intellectual capital, this research can focus on employability skills, the outcome of academic programs and educational systems that develop employability skills and build capacity among current students and graduates. Before embarking on clarifying employability skills, it is necessary to define employability.

##### 4.1.1. Defining Employability

There are many definitions of employability, as this concept has evolved through multiple stages to date. Pool et Sewell defined employability as the personal qualities, competencies, and knowledge that an individual possesses to obtain, succeed, and advance in a specific job. It was defined by the Canadian Labor Force as the relative ability of human capital to obtain a satisfactory job opportunity that aligns with the requirements of the labor market. Ibrahim defined it as "the acquisition by university students of a set of skills, abilities, and personal qualities that support their academic learning through their university studies and enable them, after graduation, to obtain and succeed in a suitable job, benefiting themselves first and foremost and society secondarily [4].

## 4.1.2. The Concept of Employability Skills

The concept, scope, definition, and significance of employability skills vary from one country to another. As labor market requirements change over time, this leads to changes and updates in the skills required to obtain a job opportunity. Therefore, there is no specific definition of employability skills. Oro & Kadhila-Shiv defined them as a set of personal characteristics and academic and cognitive qualifications that an individual acquires through learning and training. These skills are aligned with labor market requirements. They are also defined as the competencies and qualifications possessed by graduates that align with job descriptions in terms of the suitability of these skills to perform those jobs [6]

Employability skills are also defined as the basic and general skills that are indispensable to an individual seeking a job, the basic skills needed to obtain, retain, and perform well in a job, the general competencies or abilities applicable “across a wide range of occupations and thus enabling mobility from one job to another”, the essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are transferable for success in the 21st-century workplace, and the general transferable skills that employers in government organizations prefer and value when searching for applicants for entry-level jobs [7][8][9].

The researcher defines employability skills as the dynamic skills, knowledge, and abilities found in academic curricula, educational systems, and university training programs that students acquire to enable them to fulfill the requirements and duties of the jobs required to obtain the positions offered through the selection process, achieving success and advancement in these jobs according to the requirements of the labor market.

## 4.1.3. The Importance of Employability Skills

Education is a right guaranteed by divine religions and positive legislation. It is a means of achieving human dignity and enhancing one's value, social, and cultural standing. Since employability skills are one of the most important strategies included in the curricula of higher education institutions, increasing the number of graduates who possess the necessary skills to enable them to secure suitable employment opportunities and bridging the gap between the employability skills provided by academic institutions and the skills required by the labor market is one of the most important goals of university education. This goal—the goal of education—aligns with one of the United Nations Development Program's goals for sustainable development, namely "Quality Education" [10]. Hence, the importance of employability skills is highlighted, as a lack of employability skills leads to a lack of decent work, resulting in high unemployment rates among graduates. This negatively impacts economic growth and social conditions, thus preventing sustainable development.

## 4.1.4. Objectives of Employability Skills

Researchers and thinkers have focused on the topic of employability skills over the past and current years, as these skills are the basis upon which new employees are selected. Employability skills have become more clearly defined and focused in the curricula of higher education institutions.

Employability skills aim to: Establish a general framework or curriculum for qualifications, knowledge, and abilities (technical and non-technical) in academic programs and courses that provide students with the skills, qualifications, and experience the labor market requires to meet the aspirations of employers; Support and develop graduates' training and professional capabilities in line with changes occurring in the labor market; and Enable graduates to obtain employment and achieve success and advancement within it.

## 4.1.5. Types of employability skills

In light of rapid technological developments and the resulting complexities in labor market requirements, in terms of identifying jobs and required skills that meet employers' desires and needs, it has become necessary to search for employability skills and competencies that offer a competitive advantage and support and enhance students' ability to secure suitable employment opportunities. Employability skills have become the primary criterion and basis for selecting applicants for the available positions. It is noteworthy that employability skills are divided into two types: academic skills and non-academic skills (personal skills). Academic skills are those skills that students acquire through educational programs, training courses, and co-curricular activities at higher education institutions. Personal skills, on the other hand, are those skills or personal traits that relate to an individual's/student's personality and are independent of the technical skills they acquire at universities.

There have been numerous and diverse models and proposals addressing the characteristics and nature of the necessary professional skills and knowledge graduates must possess to enhance their employability. In their study, Tibby & Cole focused on four key elements that directly impact employability. They also focused on a set of skills and capabilities that support students' abilities to improve their employability and obtain, succeed, and advance in suitable employment opportunities. These elements include: academic knowledge related to and affecting a specific job; personal characteristics and specifications; legally mandated work management; and self-presentation skills.

Among the employability skills sought by public stakeholders and which students should acquire throughout their academic career at university are: the ability to use information technology, decipher codes, and digital transactions; business knowledge; effective communication skills in the workplace; the ability to lead teamwork and work as a team; critical thinking skills; the ability to analyze and solve problems using optimal choices; self-control and self-management skills; initiative and project management skills; and decision-making skills; technological skills; learning skills; self-management skills; and planning and organizing skills [4]. Meanwhile, Abas & Imam in their proposed model in 2016, classified

employability skills into three main types, which are consistent with most of the skills mentioned by [9]. These types are: basic skills, which include (the ability to communicate effectively, information management skills, the ability to optimally use numbers and linear software, and the ability to resolve occupational conflicts); Self-management skills, such as (taking responsibility, continuous development and learning, adapting to new developments, and positive attitude and behavior); and teamwork skills, such as (interacting with others, volunteering, and active participation in various fields). Therefore, acquiring these skills is considered one of the most important strategic foundations that academic institutions must work on, as these skills enable graduates to succeed, excel, and distinguish themselves.

In general, the skills acquired by students or graduates do not come all at once. Some of them are linked to the student's personality and the environment in which he was raised and which shaped his personal structure. They increase gradually day after day and do not have a specific time or type. Some of them are provided through academic and professional institutions within study programs, curricula, and scientific courses, which may take a specific period depending on the type and duration of study, as well as the type of specialization and its courses.

## 4.2. Supporting and Measuring Employability Skills

### 4.2.1. Areas of Employability Skills Support

#### 1. Academic Guidance

It is essential that all educational and pedagogical institutions have distinct departments or divisions dedicated to academic guidance and counseling to raise students' awareness of the resources, facilities, and services available to them. This task is one of the most important responsibilities of academic advisors at universities. In this case, a clear academic guidance policy must be in place that provides the necessary information to raise students' awareness of the importance of the academic guidance and counseling process, thus enhancing the importance of academic guidance in supporting students' employability

#### 2. The Quality and Modernity of Academic and Training Programs

A survey and personal interviews with some public sector employers in the labor market revealed that Iraqi universities still maintain majors and branches of study that are not appropriate for the requirements of the labor market, resulting in an increase in the unemployment rate among graduates. Furthermore, most higher education institutions in Iraq do not incorporate the skills and capabilities required by employers in their academic and training programs, and there is a lack of coordination between these institutions and employers. This is despite the current need for advanced, modern programs that meet the demands of the labor market. Therefore, the quality and modernity of academic programs, which keep pace with the changes taking place in our world today, are among the most important factors that help support and enhance graduates' employability.

#### 3. Strengthening the relationship with public stakeholders in the labor market

Through field visits to some industrial and service facilities and studies examining the relationship between businesspeople and higher education institutions, it was found that there is a lack of effective communication between public stakeholders and higher education institutions. The current market, which receives support from the central government regarding employment, is the health sector, while employment in other specialties has become almost non-existent or is considered unemployed. This has led businesspeople to refrain from communicating with academic institutions whose educational programs do not serve their private interests. This lack of communication widens the gap between the outputs of educational institutions and the needs of businesspeople for human resources with the skills and capabilities that meet their ambitions and goals. Therefore, strengthening the relationship between businesspeople and academic institutions is one of the most important factors leading to the development of skills and expertise commensurate with the requirements of the job and the needs of the labor market [11][12][13][14][15][16].

#### 4. Continuous communication with graduate students

Most graduates struggle with continuous communication with their universities. This hinders students' ability to benefit from post-graduation training programs and resources that could help them choose a suitable job opportunity whose terms and conditions match their skills and qualifications. Therefore, effective and continuous communication between graduates and their universities helps provide a shared database of data and information that supports and enhances graduates' employability. This communication process also increases the chances of these graduates finding a specific job that matches their academic and professional abilities and qualification.

### 4.2.2. Assessing and Measuring Employability Skills

There are many ways to measure and evaluate employability skills, and these methods must be implemented on an ongoing basis to ensure the validation and effectiveness of students' existing skills. Ibrahim identified a set of measurement and evaluation methods, including (the method of judging skill achievement, measuring skill proficiency levels, evaluating the student's personal record, descriptive report, general assessment, integrated assessment, graded assessment, and unified assessment) [4]. Some of these methods are explained below:

#### 1. Method of Judging Skill Achievement

According to this method, there are a set of obligations and duties that the student must fulfill to verify the extent to which they have acquired the required skill. This type of assessment attempts to verify whether the skill is present or not, and does not focus on the student's mastery of the skill.

## 2. Measuring Skill Proficiency Levels

There are several levels for each employment skill, and each level has a specific performance. This type of assessment is concerned with determining the performance level for each skill, thus measuring the extent to which the student has mastered the skill targeted by the training programs.

## 3. Evaluating the Student's Personal Record

The abilities, qualifications, and skills acquired by students during the training phase are among the primary evidence upon which the assessment is based, as these evidences reflect the acquired experience and targeted skills

## Conclusions and Recommendations

### 5.1. Conclusions

1. Most Iraqi educational institutions have academic and professional systems and programs that do not meet the desires and requirements of the current labor market, leading to increased unemployment among graduates from these institutions,
2. The method of updating curricula and educational and training systems desired by the labor market does not match the volume of demand for employability skills,
3. Most educational institutions lack effective communication with graduates, which deprives them of job opportunities offered by these institutions and prevents them from accessing new programs and technical resources,
4. The lack of interest in extracurricular programs and activities by some educational institutions, especially during the summer vacation and summer training, has negatively impacted students' ability to acquire the skills and knowledge required by the labor market,
5. Educational institutions focus their educational and professional programs on academic skills and neglect students' personal skills.

### 5.2. Recommendations

By implementing the recommendations below, Iraqi educational incubators can play a significant and essential role in preparing a generation of qualified graduates capable of effectively participating in the labor market, thereby contributing to reducing unemployment rates and driving economic development in the country.

1. The need to restructure educational programs and curricula to align with labor market requirements, identifying the skills and knowledge required in various disciplines and sectors,
2. In addition to modernizing educational systems and development and training programs, educational institutions must provide the necessary resources to implement practical and applied projects, enabling students to apply theoretical knowledge in a real and practical way. This may require partnership with the private sector,
3. Establishing an effective communication network with graduates and employers by opening recruitment and career guidance offices, as well as creating effective digital platforms throughout the week to showcase emerging skills, knowledge, and technologies,
4. Educational institutions must place utmost importance on extracurricular programs and activities that have the potential to develop students' skills, knowledge, and abilities, and enhance their leadership and entrepreneurial skills in line with labor market requirements,
5. It is essential for educational and academic incubators to strategically plan to integrate personal and academic skills into their curricula and training and development programs to enable graduates to secure suitable jobs in a competitive labor market.

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# Academia Open

Vol. 11 No. 1 (2026): June

DOI: 10.21070/acopen.11.2026.13774

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