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## **Empowering Students from Low Socio-economic background with Graduate Employability Skills**

Jayan Chirayath Kurian

*University of Technology Sydney, jayanchirayathkurian@uts.edu.au*

Amara Atif

*University of Technology Sydney, amara.atif@uts.edu.au*

Nimish Bioria

*Nimish.Bioria@uts.edu.au*

Ghassan Beydoun

*University of Technology Sydney, Ghassan.Beydoun@uts.edu.au*

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## Empowering Students from Low Socio-economic background with Graduate Employability Skills.

Jayan Chirayath Kurian, jayanchirayathkurian@uts.edu.au; Amara Atif, amara.atif@uts.edu.au; Nimish Bilorla, Nimish.Bilorla@uts.edu.au; Ghassan Beydoun, ghassan.beydoun@uts.edu.au

In the educational ecosystem, problem-solving, critical thinking, and teamwork skills play a critical role and remain as main concerns in graduate employability (Bhatti et al., 2023). The purpose of this study is to examine the employability skills perceived by students across UTS and increase the employability skills of students from low-socioeconomic (LSE) background studying at UTS. To accomplish this objective, we will use the UTS Social Impact Dashboard (2023) which represents the opinion of students from LSE background on course learning outcomes with respect to problem-solving, critical thinking, and teamwork skills. According to the Dashboard, over 73% of students from LSE background in a graduate school at UTS perceive that they acquired a more developed and advanced set of skills (Problem solving – 73%, Critical thinking – 73% and Teamwork skills – 80%) useful in future employability opportunities. Furthermore, comparing all faculties, minimum scores recorded for problem solving (44%), critical thinking (54%), and teamwork skills (59%) require further investigation. The UTS Social Impact Dashboard indicates that a 3% increase from the previous year in attrition rates and 1.7% decrease in student success, for students from an LSE background. With respect to graduate outcomes, the gap between UTS domestic students from high-socioeconomic (HSE) background and those from low-socioeconomic (LSE) background is 6.7%. This clear gap requires an urgent examination of factors that could influence the perception of graduate employability skills of UTS students compared to those of an LSE background. This will likely benefit UTS students from an LSE background to gain employment. Furthermore, we can reduce the gap between Australians from the lowest socio-economic backgrounds and highest socio-economic backgrounds who are not in employment (Strawa, 2022), which is the targeted social change that this study intends to address.

### References

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