# Evaluating Employability Skills Integration in a Citizenship Education Textbook

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**Abstract**

The International Labour Organization (ILO) generated a strategic plan for skills and lifelong learning from 2022 to 2030, aiming to improve students' access to future jobs. One of the target goals of the ILO's plan was to ensure that educational programs meet the changing needs of labour markets. Therefore, there is a rising need to assess whether teaching programmes can prepare learners for the requirements of future jobs. In this study, we investigate how employability skills are integrated in teaching resources. For this purpose, 54 learning activities from a Grade 6 Citizenship Education textbook in Bahrain were analysed using 56 predefined codes elaborated by the Conference Board of Canada in a document that was developed by the Corporate Council on Education, a program of the National Business and Education Centre since 2000. This study employs quantitative analysis, including Pearson correlation coefficients and regression analysis to evaluate the integration of employability skills in the learning activities using three major factors: Fundamental Skills (FS), Personal Management Skills (PMS) and Teamwork Skills (TS). The results show that Fundamental Skills (Mean = 3.87, Standard Deviation = 1.26) are well integrated, whereas Personal Management Skills (Mean= 3.17, Standard Deviation = 1.54) demonstrate moderate integration with notable variations. In contrast, Teamwork Skills display a low level of integration (Mean = 1.02 Standard Deviation = 1.88). The correlation analysis confirms a relationship ($r = 0.615$, $p < 0.01$) between FS and PMS but shows insignificant correlations between TS and the other skill sets. These findings highlight a critical gap in teamwork skill integration and suggest a need for increased focus on teamwork in educational materials, while recommending further research to focus on expanding the sample size, incorporating more qualitative analyses, and exploring effective strategies for integrating employability skills into educational resources.

**Keywords:** employability skills, textbook analysis, fundamental skills, personal management skills, teamwork skills

## 1. Introduction

### *1.1 Background*

There is a growing concern that education curricula and employability skills lack alignment (Oraison et al., 2019; Anastasiu et al., 2017). The notion of employability skills was defined by Hillage & Pollard (1998, p. 2) as "the capability to move self-sufficiently within the labour market to realise potential through sustainable employment." An increasing interest in defining employability assets has since then emerged with some researchers calling for exploring ways to support people in realising their on-job needs. In Bahrain, generating job opportunities have been sustained by strategic plans by the Supreme Council for the Development of Education and Training, which has initiated a project to synchronize education with labor market needs (LMRA, 2024). This project includes supervising educational institutions and creating a post-secondary education plan that targets Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030. According to LMRA, the focus is on modernizing education, collaborating with stakeholders, and overseeing the Employment Skills Platform for labor market data. From an educational perspective, these plans are achievable through creating resources and strategies that invest in human capital and in a knowledge-based economy. El Saharty et al. (2020) argue that the key factors that might contribute to ensuring this vision include supporting a high-quality teaching force, ensuring skills development, and benchmarking against global competitors in education. Mahfoudh & Hashim (2021) explore how employability skills are integrated into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curricula, highlighting the role of the 21st century skills in teaching writing and speaking. They argue for

providing students with skills that can be applied across professional settings. The incorporation of skills into teaching materials, such as teaching aids and textbooks plays a role in acquiring job related competencies. However, there is limited research on textbook analysis of how employability skills are integrated into learning activities at the primary level. This study aims to address this gap by assessing the inclusion of job-related skills in Bahrain's Grade 6 Citizenship textbook. The choice of this textbook was driven by two factors; firstly, the citizenship curriculum explicitly touches upon work related topics and employees' rights and duties; secondly, some studies argue for the importance of early age career awareness (Colston et al., 2017). Therefore, by investigating how grade 6 learners engage with employability skills through the textbook activities at the primary education level, this research uses textbook analysis to offer insights to stakeholders and educators in Bahrain on the career skills that can be acquired from materials. Similarly, aligning education with the real-world is in line with the current focus on knowledge-based economy that highlights a shift towards valuing knowledge, information and skilled workforce. Aparicio et al. (2021) emphasize the impact of the Knowledge Based Economy (KBE) on today's job market arguing for the implications of teamwork abilities and expertise for improving achievement. These findings are essential for grasping how modern educational frameworks should adapt to meet the needs of employment in a KBE dominated setting, where job skills are increasingly crucial for advancement and organizational competitiveness.

### *1.2 Rationale*

The incorporation of employability skills in teaching materials is a significant topic that needs more investigation. While previous research has highlighted the importance of blending language abilities (listening, speaking, reading, writing) to offer communication experiences and enhance communicative proficiency at the tertiary level (Hinkel, 2010), there is a noticeable gap in the literature regarding the inclusion of job-related competencies at the elementary level. Most current studies on elementary school learning materials have concentrated on the integration of cultural values or adherence to logical reasoning and scientific methods (Lena et al., 2019; Arifah et al., 2018). Nonetheless, research consistently shows discrepancies between the skills taught in curricula and those sought after by employers. Graduates often lack employability skills such as communication, personal management, and teamwork abilities indicating a lack of connection between academic training and workplace requirements. This study aims to bridge this gap by assessing how employability skills are integrated into teaching materials at the primary level. The research is based on theories advocating for the incorporation of skills in materials to reflect real world needs and better equip students for professional challenges.

### *1.3 Literature Review*

#### 1.3.1 Theoretical Underpinning

The rising link between education and economic development impacts achievements across levels from early childhood education to higher education and vocational training programs. In a time characterized by progress, the global demand for skilled workers is on the rise (World Bank Group, 2015). However, numerous regions struggle to align educational outcomes with the requirements of the labor market. Since the 1990s, there has been a focus on employability skills in both research and policy initiatives. The goal of this trend is to connect learning outcomes with the demands of the job market (Hillage & Pollard, 1998; Harvey, 2001). Employability skills refer to the capacity to secure, retain and advance in employment opportunities (Hillage & Pollard, 1998) covering advanced competencies that are crucial for professional advancement. The idea of employability has evolved over time moving from a view of 'dichotomic employability' to a complex understanding known as 'interactive employability.' This newer perspective acknowledges the importance of external impact on individuals' skills and qualities for employment (McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005).

The movement of competency-based curriculum has been put forth as an alternative to traditional education. The advocates of the Competency Based Education (CBE) argued that education should prioritize demonstrating mastery of specific competencies. Gruppen et al. (2012) explore the idea of competency-based education (CBE) and how it impacts the training of healthcare professionals, especially in areas with limited resources. They highlight the significance of aligning educational curricula with healthcare system goals and catering to the specific requirements of communities. Outlining learning objectives and evaluating student performance accordingly was a major shift in most of the world educational systems. The shift towards competency-based curricula has been fueled partly by the necessity to align education closely with the skills and knowledge demanded by the workforce. Employers have increasingly emphasized the need for graduates to exhibit job competencies beyond just academic qualifications. As a result, there have been efforts to incorporate employability skills and workforce relevant competencies into programs and curricula. A good illustration of this is how the Ministry of Education in Bahrain in 2016 advocated for competency-based education to enhance student performance and readiness for the requirements of future jobs.

Numerous frameworks and guidelines have been created to assist in incorporating competencies into curricula like the Employability Skills 2000+ framework developed by the Conference Board of Canada. These frameworks typically outline skill sets, including Fundamental Skills, personal management abilities and Teamwork Skills that should be integrated into programs.

It is argued that "developing employability skills in elementary, secondary and post-secondary students will help prepare them for life after school, increasing their chances of success at finding and keeping a job, and strengthening employers' sense of connection with new graduates who enter their workplaces" (Bloom & Kitagawa, 1999, p. 24). Governments, around the world, like in the UK and Australia, focus on adapting programs to match the changing demands of the job market. Reports, like the Dearing Report from 1997, and policies from the UK government in 2004 highlight this approach. They stress how essential it is to incorporate skills that make individuals employable at all stages aiming to improve preparedness for work and boost competitiveness as advocated by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Curtis & McKenzie, 2002). Economic policymakers assert that knowledge economies favor those who can critically and independently adjust their knowledge and skills according to changing labor market conditions (Dickson & Harmon, 2011; OECD, 1996). From this perspective, educational reform efforts in the Gulf Cooperation Council focus on nurturing skills and knowledge that are sought after by employers with the aim of enhancing employment prospects for people in the region (Wiseman et al., 2016).

### 1.3.2 Institutional and Policy Perspectives

In the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, there is a shift towards developing knowledge-based economies. Tamkeen, for example, is a leading initiative in Bahrain in the context of aligning employment skills with knowledge-based economies. It is a labor fund that has been actively involved in facilitating the integration of graduates and job seekers into the workforce. By building on the success of its employment programs, the organization continues to play a role in supporting the development of Bahrain's workforce. Tamkeen's emphasis on employability skills reflects an increasing acknowledgment in literature that a successful transition from education to employment necessitates both proficiency and broader competencies. The Regional Center for Quality and Excellence in Education (RCQE) represents another leading initiative in the Gulf that proposed, since 2014, a plan for improving university education programs based on skills and professions. Policymakers often encounter discrepancies between the skills needed and the idea of employability, which are intricately tied to the current and future job market dynamics. Drawing from these principles, educational institutions are striving to integrate employability into their strategies by emphasizing career-oriented learning that equips their alumni with the ability to secure jobs aligned with their backgrounds. For instance, the University of Essex has tried to differentiate between employability and career development learning (CDL), where CDL specifically addresses graduation employment trends and facilitates informed career decisions. The Confederation of British Industry (2024) has described employability as having the skills and abilities needed to adapt to the evolving demands of employers and customers while also supporting individuals in achieving their career goals and unlocking their potential. Baxter & Young (1980) highlighted 16 skill categories spanning job roles, such as basic competencies, communication skills, and being dependable. The World Bank Group (WBG) has backed projects such as the Lifelong Learning and Training Project in Argentina and the Africa Centers of Excellence program aiming to enhance knowledge and education in developing economic fields. In Australia, the Employability Skills Framework was created by the Australian National Training Authority and Commonwealth Department of Education. It includes eight skill categories, like communication, teamwork, problem solving and technology proficiency.

### 1.3.3 Integration of Employability Skills into the Curricula

Research shows that there is not enough inclusion of job-related skills in school programs, underscoring the mismatch between education and the workforce. Mahfoodh and Hashim (2021) argue that it is essential to incorporate these skills into the curriculum to equip students with abilities such as thinking, effective communication and technical know-how required for future employment opportunities. Most studies exploring the lack of alignment between curricula and employability skills were conducted on higher education populations. For example, in a study investigating the alignment between graduate attributes with accreditation outcomes and industry employability criteria in nursing, psychology, and education courses, Oraison et al. (2019) conclude that while attempts are made to engage industry in the curriculum and graduate attribute development, there is a significant gap between academic outcomes and industry needs. In their study, they articulate gaps identified in European countries that show the graduates' dissatisfaction with their tertiary education training. Another study by Anastasiu et al. (2017) suggest a collaborative approach between universities and construction companies to offer a curriculum along with internship opportunities to enhance the key employability skills which encompass communication, teamwork, leadership and

entrepreneurship. This partnership ensures that graduates develop employability skills and enhances their preparedness for their careers. The study discusses six points, one of which is the mismatch between the skills expected of civil engineering graduates and those they acquire during their studies. It is reported that employers give precedence to expertise in project management problem solving and technical abilities over understanding.

Amini et al (2023) investigate students' perceptions of various components of their academic ecosystem in the context of the transition to Industry 4.0. They specifically look at the teaching methods students prefer, the skills they value, and the academic areas that universities should focus on. The research was carried out using a survey involving 97 students from Hassan 2 University in Morocco, highlighting an inclination towards blended learning strategies. Students have highlighted the importance of initiatives that improve both managerial and employability skills. The results offer insights into the ways in which college students engage with their environment and offer insights for policymakers and education leaders looking to integrate employability skills into the University 4.0 framework. Conducting more research that explores the alignment of curricula at the primary levels and job skills could contribute to a better understanding of the solutions that need to be implemented to meet the major preferences that are observed at the tertiary level.

Alaoui (2017) emphasizes the importance of being proficient in languages for securing employment specifically focusing on engineers at ENSAM. The study suggests improving language abilities to align with the needs of the job market and encourages collaboration between educators and policymakers. It underscores the value of language acquisition and cross-cultural understanding for thriving in work environments. Alaoui's research uses textbook analysis to investigate how these learning materials influence communication and job-related skills, highlighting their role in nurturing capabilities needed by engineering students in today's workforce. O'Lawrence (2017) discusses the need for institutions to remain competitive in the job market by continuously evaluating curricula to stay on track with the needs of the rapid economic changes. Adjusting the programs should lead to equipping students with the knowledge and skills needed for today's knowledge driven economy. Educational programs should incorporate elements such as career development, leadership training and hands-on projects that promote sustainability and employability. They should focus on developing skills like teamwork problem solving, time management, creativity and innovation (Simpson et al., 2019).

### *1.4 The Research Problem*

The topic at hand holds significance for two main reasons. First, the importance of investigating what is taught in schools and what employers seek. In fact, numerous studies have pointed out a gap between the skills emphasized in educational settings and those sought after by employers resulting in graduates often lacking crucial employability skills. Bridging this divide is essential to prepare students for the workforce.

Second, there is limited research on integrating employability skills at the primary level; while recognizing the significance of incorporating employability skills into education current literature predominantly focuses on higher education leaving a gap in understanding how these skills are integrated into primary level materials and curricula. The main idea of this study is that including employability skills in textbooks helps students develop job related competencies. The key objectives are;

- Evaluating how employability skills are incorporated into the Grade 6 Citizenship textbook in Bahrain by using textbook analysis.
- Offering insights to stakeholders and educators in Bahrain on the employability skills that can be integrated in the teaching resources.

These objectives are examined in the Grade 6 Citizenship textbook in Bahrain through a content analysis that specifically investigates the learning activities to assess how they facilitate the introduction and balanced integration of employability skills. This approach is influenced by frameworks that gauge the efficiency of skills teaching. The study aims to expand the existing knowledge base on the alignment of teaching materials with employability skills. The results could influence the development of curricula and teaching materials at the primary level. By examining how primary school young learners are introduced to employability skills, the study broadens efforts to integrate skills into education focusing on employability skills which fill a gap in existing literature.

## 2. Method

### *2.1 Research Design*

#### 2.1.1 Conceptual Definitions

This study examines the integration of three key employability skills within a Grade 6 textbook: Fundamental Skills, Personal Management Skills, and Teamwork Skills. To ensure consistency and reliability in the coding process, the researchers used five major steps. First, coding guidelines were adapted from Canada's Employability Skills 2000+. Second, a coding manual that outlines a description of each code was developed, including definition of each code to ensure coders share a common understanding of the codes. Then, three training sessions were conducted to ensure that the coding guidelines were reviewed. During these sessions, ambiguities were clarified to avoid misunderstandings. After finalizing the coding scheme, the coders practised coding a small set of sample data independently using the coding scheme. Then, another practice session was used to refine the coding guidelines based on the comparison of coding results and the discussions about the discrepancies. Throughout these steps, consensus discussions, calibration of answers, and repetition of the coding process contributed to refining the coding guidelines and ensuring consistency.

#### 2.1.2 Sampling Procedure

A detailed examination was conducted on 54 activities extracted from the grade 6 Citizenship textbook. Two coders independently assessed each activity to determine the extent to which employability skills were incorporated. The evaluation process included an examination of the content and objectives of each activity drawing on guidelines tailored for this study. Any discrepancies between the coders were addressed through discussion until an agreement was reached. To ensure the validity and consistency of the coding process, the authors employed inter-rater reliability (IRR). Both authors independently coded the data according to a predefined coding scheme composed of 56 items that are elaborated by the Conference Board of Canada in a document that was developed by the Corporate Council on Education, a program of the National Business and Education Centre since 2000. The gap between coders was controlled by refining the definitions of the codes. Initially, some codes lacked clarity or specificity, which led to varied interpretations between raters. By collaboratively reviewing and refining the definitions, clear and precise criteria were established for each code, ensuring that both coders had a shared understanding of what each code represented. As a result, a more consistent application of the codes occurred, which improved the inter-rater reliability. After using the coding, the results were compared to assess the level of agreement and Cohen's Kappa was used to measure the ratings of both coders. During this iterative process, a Kappa value of 0.85 was reached, indicating a substantial level of agreement between the coders.

To refine the codes, the researchers elaborated on the scheme by aligning the code with potential learning outcomes given that the data consists of learning activities. For example, for the code (1) 'Communicate by reading and understanding information in a variety of forms', the coders targeted activities that aim at understanding/ applying/ analysing/ evaluating/ creating meaning by synthesising information from multiple sources (texts, graphs, visual representations, etc.). Table 1 presents three examples from the three sets of skills that were used to code the data.

**Table 1.** Samples of the Coding Scheme Which Adapted the Predefined Codes Elaborated by the Conference Board of Canada 2000+

| | Fundamental skills | Definition |
|---|---|---|
| a. | Communicate by reading and understanding information in a variety of forms. | -Understanding/ applying/ analysing/ evaluating/ creating meaning by synthesising information from multiple sources (texts, graphs, visual representations, etc.) |
| | Personal management skills | Definition |
| b. | Being responsible by assessing, weighing, and managing risk | - Analyzing and reducing the potential risks and benefits of different situations and decisions |
| | Teamwork Skills | Definition |
| c. | Participate in Projects & Tasks: continuously monitor the success of a project or task and identify ways to improve | -Understanding the importance of monitoring the progress and success of a project or task, and identifying areas for improvement |

#### 2.1.3 Data Analysis

A comparative analysis of the integration of three clusters of employability skills was carried out. In this study a combination of research methods was used to examine how 56 employability codes, constituting the three clusters (Fundamental Skills, Personal Management Skills, and Teamwork Skills) were integrated into 54 activities found in Grade 6 citizenship textbook in Bahrain. The research approach involved both univariate, bivariate, and multivariate

analyses to assess the level of integration of these employability codes within the data. Statistical data processing was performed using SPSS Version 26 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

2.1.4 Research Method

The present study uses quantitative analysis to explore the integration of three macro- employability skills across 54 activities included in Grade 6 citizenship textbook. The research describes and explores the correlation between the three macro employability skills: Fundamental Skills, Personal Management Skills and Teamwork Skills. Then, regression analyses are conducted to examine the following hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 1: It is hypothesized that the integration of Fundamental Skills has a significant positive influence on the integration of Personal Management Skills in learning activities.
- Hypothesis 2: It is hypothesized that the integration of Teamwork Skills has a significant positive influence on the integration of Fundamental Skills in learning activities.
- Hypothesis 3: It is hypothesized that the integration of Personal Management Skills has a significant positive influence on the integration of Teamwork Skills in learning activities.

To examine these hypotheses, the researchers used multivariate linear regression analysis simultaneously. This approach aims to determine the strength of the relationships between the employability skill sets. Another aim of this approach is to evaluate if these relationships hold significance. The main steps involved include gathering data that measure each activity's inclusion of fundamental, personal management and Teamwork Skills. Then, a regression analysis is conducted with Fundamental Skills as the variable and Personal Management Skills as the independent variable to validate hypothesis 1. Another regression analysis is conducted with Teamwork Skills as the variable and Fundamental Skills as the independent variable to investigate hypothesis 2. Finally, another regression analysis is conducted with Personal Management Skills as the variable and Teamwork Skills as the independent variable to investigate hypothesis 3. These analyses aim at evaluating the significance of the regression coefficients to examine any mediation effects. By adopting this method, the researchers can study how the three types of skills interact with each other simultaneously in the textbook activities.

## 3. Results

### *3.1 Descriptive Statistics*

The average score for Fundamental Skills (FS) in textbook activities is 3.87, with a standard deviation of 1.26. This indicates that Fundamental Skills are reasonably integrated into the content and exercises found in the analyzed textbook activities (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Descriptive Analysis of the Integration of Employability Skills in the Textbook

| | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FS | 54 | 3.87 | 1.26 | 2 | 8 |
| PMS | 54 | 3.17 | 1.539 | 1 | 8 |
| TS | 54 | 1.02 | 1.878 | 0 | 8 |

For Personal Management Skills (PMS), the mean score is 3.17 with a standard deviation of 1.54 suggesting that Personal Management Skills are also integrated, though slightly lower compared to Fundamental Skills and displaying more variability across different textbook activities (Table 2).

Teamwork has average score of 1.02 and a wide standard deviation of 1.88 indicating that Teamwork Skills are not very well incorporated into textbook activities.

On the other hand, Fundamental Skills (FS) has a higher average score of 3.87 showing that FS are covered more extensively compared to PMS and TS. In textbook activities, the teamwork aspect shows a mean score of 1.02 with a high standard deviation, indicating limited incorporation of Teamwork Skills.

### *3.2 Correlations*

Additional correlation analysis is used to evaluate the extent of skill integration in textbook activities. Table 3 offers further insights into how the variables (Fundamental Skills, Personal Management Skills, Teamwork Skills) are correlated.

**Table 3.** Correlation of Fundamental Skills, Personal Management Skills, and Teamwork in Textbook Activities

| | | FS | PMS | Teamwork |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FS | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .615** | .009 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 | .948 |
| | N | 54 | 54 | 54 |
| PMS | Pearson Correlation | .615** | 1 | .123 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | | .376 |
| | N | 54 | 54 | 54 |
| TS | Pearson Correlation | .009 | .123 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .948 | .376 | |
| | N | 54 | 54 | 54 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

3.2.1 Correlation between Fundamental Skills and Personal Management Skills

The Pearson correlation coefficient between Fundamental Skills and Personal Management Skills stands at 0.615 (statistically significant at the 0.01 level), indicating a significant positive relationship in textbook activities. The noteworthy positive correlation validates Hypothesis 1, suggesting that activities integrating Fundamental Skills also tend to incorporate Personal Management Skills. This implies that efforts to improve FS may enhance the integration of PMS.

3.2.2 Correlation between Teamwork Skills and Fundamental Skills

The correlation coefficient between Teamwork Skills and Fundamental Skills is 0.009, which is not statistically significant ($p = 0.948$). There seems to be no significant correlation between incorporating Fundamental Skills and Teamwork Skills in textbook activities. The absence of a significant correlation between FS and TS challenges Hypothesis 2, indicating that the textbook may not effectively blend Teamwork Skills with Fundamental Skills. This finding points to an area where educational materials could be improved to better foster the development of Teamwork Skills.

3.2.3 Correlation between Personal Management Skills and Teamwork Skills

The correlation coefficient between PMS and TS is 0.123, which is not statistically significant ($p = 0.376$). This suggests that there is no notable correlation between merging PMS and TS in textbook activities. Comparable to Hypothesis 2, the lack of a significant relationship between PMS and Teamwork implies that the textbook might not effectively connect PMS with TS. This finding highlights a potential opportunity to enhance the integration of personal management aptitudes for better supporting team dynamics in the learning environment.

While there is a robust positive link between merging Fundamental Skills and Personal Management Skills in textbook activities, supporting Hypothesis 1, it seems that the correlation data does not back up Hypotheses 2 and 3, indicating that there might not be a significant connection between Teamwork Skills, Personal Management Skills and Fundamental Skills in the current educational materials. To confirm these results, regression analysis could be used to offer a more in-depth understanding of how skills are combined and highlight areas where educational practices could be enhanced.

*3.3 Regression*

Regression coefficients, t values and significance levels for each dependent variable (Fundamental Skills, Personal Management Skills, Teamwork) can provide a deeper understanding of the relationships discussed in the hypotheses (Table 4). Based on regression 1, the link between FS, PMS, and TS shows that there is a significant coefficient (0.51) for Personal Management Skills (PMS) linked with Fundamental Skills (FS) at $p = 0.000$ indicating that a one unit increase in PMS leads to an expected increase of 0.51 units in FS. Similarly, the significant coefficient (0.75) for FS associated with PMS at $p = 0.000$ implies that a one unit rise in FS results in a predicted increase of 0.75 units in PMS. These results support Hypothesis 1 by demonstrating a reciprocal positive correlation between the integration of Fundamental Skills and Personal Management Skills within textbook activities.

**Table 4.** Regression Analysis of Skill Integration in Textbook Activities: Fundamental Skills, Personal Management Skills, and Teamwork

| | Dependent Variable: FS | | | Dependent Variable: PMS | | | Dependent Variable: Teamwork | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Coeff | t | Sig. | Coeff | t | Sig. | Coeff | t | Sig. |
| PMS | 0.51 | 5.62 | 0.000* | | | | 0.23 | 1.08 | 0.287 |
| FS | | | | 0.75 | 5.621 | 0.000* | -0.16 | -0.61 | 0.545 |
| TS | -0.045 | -0.61 | 0.545 | 0.096 | 1.075 | 0.287 | | | |
| (Constant) | 2.301 | 7.21 | 0.000* | 0.166 | 0.303 | 0.763 | 0.91 | 1.08 | 0.286 |
| Fisher's F-test | 31.611 | 0.000* | | 16.431 | 0.000* | | 0.580 | 0.563 | |
| $R^2$ | 0.383 | | | 0.392 | | | 0.022 | | |

Table 4 provides further evidence that the learning activities that effectively incorporate one type of skill are likely to integrate the other as well. The regression between TS (0.045) and FS is not deemed significant ($p = 0.545$), implying that there is no notable impact of TS on FS integration. Similarly, the correlation between FS (0.23) and TS is also not considered significant ($p = 0.287$), indicating that there is no significant influence of FS on TS integration. These outcomes do not back Hypothesis 2, suggesting that there is no substantial connection between the incorporation of Teamwork Skills and Fundamental Skills in textbook activities as indicated by the regression analysis. As for the regression representing TS and PMS, it is noted that the link between Teamwork (0.096) with PMS is statistically insignificant ($p = 0.287$), implying no significant effect of Teamwork on PMS integration. Likewise, the correlation for PMS (0.16) with Teamwork is also not considered significant ($p = 0.545$), signifying no notable impact of PMS on Teamwork integration. These results do not align with Hypothesis 3, indicating a lack of significant relationship between PMS and TS in textbook activities based on regression findings.

The numerical values of regression coefficients offer concrete evidence that backs up Hypothesis 1, pointing towards a significant two-way connection between the merging of FS and PMS in textbook activities. On the other hand, the analysis does not back up Hypotheses 2 and 3, indicating no notable link between the incorporation of Teamwork Skills with either Fundamental Skills or Personal Management Skills in the textbook.

These results imply that even though textbooks effectively blend certain skills like FS and PMS, there might be room for enhancing the inclusion of Teamwork Skills in educational materials to enhance collaborative learning experiences. To solidify these conclusions further, upcoming studies could explore the qualitative aspects of how skills are combined in textbooks or consider additional factors that could impact skill integration within educational environments.

## 4. Discussion

In examining the activities in Grade 6 Citizenship textbook in Bahrain, the researchers observed clear trends in how different skills are incorporated in 54 activities. Fundamental Skills (FS) show a mean of 3.87 with a standard deviation of 1.26, indicating a significant level of integration within the textbook material. Personal Management Skills (PMS) have a mean of 3.17 and a standard deviation of 1.54, showing a moderate level of integration but with noticeable variation. Teamwork Skills exhibit a low mean of 1.02 and a high standard deviation of 1.88, suggesting limited inclusion in the activities. The significant positive relationship between Fundamental Skills (FS) and Personal Management Skills (PMS) with a correlation coefficient of 0.615 and p value less than 0.01 supports the first hypothesis. This implies that textbook activities that cover Fundamental Skills also tend to include Personal Management Skills, suggesting that enhancing fundamental skill coverage could positively impact the enhancement of Personal Management Skills. On the other hand, the correlations between Fundamental Skills (FS) and Teamwork Skills ($r = 0.009$, $p = 0.948$) as well as Personal Management Skills (PMS) and Teamwork Skills ($r = 0.123$, $p = 0.376$) do not provide support for Hypotheses 2 and 3. These results suggest a lack of significant connections between teamwork abilities and both Fundamental and Personal Management Skills, indicating that textbooks may not adequately address Teamwork Skills.

These results align with some studies in educational research that emphasize the importance of a robust integration of employability skills with other competencies. For example, Soproni (2023) examines the importance of skills needed for employment, such as employability skills, soft skills and 21st century skills, in the context of digital advancements and rise of Artificial Intelligence, underlining the significance of combining expertise in a subject with

skill development to ensure sustained employability in today's changing workforce environment. The study also discusses how employers value employability skills and how educational institutions are adapting their programs to nurture these essential capabilities in students. There are limited resources available examining the importance of a balanced integration of employability skills in teaching and learning activities. This study highlights a potential gap in current content analysis of integration of job skills in textbooks, which warrants that textbook analysis needs further exploration.

Aligning teaching materials with employability skills is highlighted in this study. This is also found in Jyothi and Kumar (2022) who investigated the key factors contributing to the lack of employability among 280 final year students of conventional courses from various degree colleges in the Hyderabad region. The results indicated a link between teaching methods, academic and curriculum concerns, institutional aspects and personal preferences in relation to student's employability skills. Numerous students face difficulties with communication abilities, crafting resumes, delivering presentations and solving problems, which can impede their success in job interviews and career advancement. Jackson (2012) argues that the employers in the US, UK, and Australia state major lacks of skills in areas such as team working and communication among graduates, which aligns with the gap in teamwork skills that was identified in the primary school learning activities under study. The interest in focusing on cooperative learning effects at the primary level is highlighted in a study by Veldman et al. (2020) which indicates the significant link between cooperative learning and group work behavior among young pupils aged 6-7 years. This highlights the potential benefits of introducing organized group tasks to enhance both social interactions and academic achievements, within primary school settings.

Textbook designers should offer support by guiding teachers on how to integrate employability skills into their teaching methods for it to be impactful. Ahgar and Efterkhari (2016) analyzed grade 8's social sciences textbook to assess how it addresses citizenship education. They focused on evaluating how the textbook presents knowledge, attitudes and skills related to citizenship. The study found that there was attention given to these aspects with an emphasis on citizenship skills. The researchers highlighted the importance of ensuring coverage of all components of citizenship education. They suggested incorporating text formats and visual aids to help students better grasp the concepts and stay engaged. In summary their research emphasized the necessity of including citizenship education in the curriculum to equip students with the skills for their future roles. It is recommended in this study that encouraging teachers to implement job-related skills in the activities is likely to facilitate the engagement of learners with real-world societal roles and responsibilities.

The importance of fostering teamwork skills is emphasized in numerous studies. For example, Breeze et al (2016) examined how an online employment tool called the UseMyAbility (UMA) tool was utilized by two sets of sports students, at a university in the UK. One group consisted of students enrolled in a Physical Education (PE) module during their year; the other group comprised students who were engaged in internships, across sports related settings The results show the importance of allowing students to self-evaluate and monitor the growth of their job skills, like teamwork, during their college education years. Including a method to support this practice and encouraging students to reflect on and recognize their abilities at the primary level could prepare them for a more engaging college experience.

The significant link between Fundamental Skills (FS) and Personal Management Skills (PMS) suggests that textbooks that blend these skills well could also boost the development of job skills leading to better employability of students in the future. On the hand the absence of connections with Teamwork Skills highlights a need for educational materials to be updated to integrate teamwork training more effectively. This is essential for promoting collaborative learning and real-world applications.

## 5. Conclusion

To sum up, the study investigates how Fundamental Skills, Personal Management Skills and Teamwork Skills are incorporated into the activities of a Grade 6 Citizenship Education textbook in Bahrain. The results indicate that Fundamental Skills are well integrated as shown by their rating. Personal Management Skills also show a fair level of integration although there is variation among activities. On the other hand, Teamwork Skills are notably underrepresented. This study highlights the importance of updating curricula to keep up with the changing economy and job market and recommends balancing employability skills in the textbook activities.

The study shows a positive correlation between Fundamental Skills and Personal Management Skills, suggesting that the Grade 6 citizenship textbook in Bahrain effectively includes Fundamental Skills and Personal Management Skills. However, correlations between Teamwork Skills and both Fundamental and Personal Management Skills are not

supported by the data. This indicates a notable gap in the integration of Teamwork Skills within the examined textbook. The study highly recommends the integration of Teamwork Skills to better support collaborative learning environments. To sum up, while the integration of Fundamental Skills and Personal Management Skills is commendable, it is essential to focus on improving the integration of Teamwork Skills. Enhancing these aspects could greatly improve the efficiency of resources in equipping students for the jobs of the future.

## 6. Recommendations

The main recommendations to stakeholders and educators in Bahrain are based on the researchers' evaluation of the textbook which identified that improving the close connection between Fundamental Skills (FS) and Personal Management Skills (PMS) may enhance the employability skills awareness and practice. Conversely, the lack of links with Teamwork Skills (TS) highlights the importance of updating resources to incorporate more teamwork activities.

- The researchers recommend that textbook designers ensure a balanced integration of the three types of employability skills: Fundamental Skills, Personal Management Skills, and Teamwork Skills. The latter can greatly improve their readiness for the workforce.
- The researchers recommend a thorough integration of Teamwork and collaborative skills. For example, more group-based or collaborative learning activities could be integrated in the textbook, such as project-based learning, case studies, role-playing simulations, peer teaching, collaborative inquiry etc.
- The researchers recommend that co-curricular activities could be added to complement learning that reinforces Teamwork Skills, such as debate and public speaking, career exploration programs, or community service programs.
- The researchers recommend that textbook activities explicitly outline learning outcomes that target employability skills such as teamwork, communication, and critical thinking, ensuring alignment with the job market expectations.
- Based on the study results, the researchers recommend using qualitative methodologies that include conducting in-depth interviews with curriculum designers and educators regarding the integration of employability skills in the textbooks.
- Future research may also include textbooks from a broad range of subjects and encompass various grade levels.

While this study offers valuable insights, the main limitation of the study is that it is based on a limited sample size and data from a set of activities in only one subject, which may not capture the diversity of educational materials available. Besides, the differences in how skills are integrated could reflect broader issues which were not explored in the study. Further research should focus on both qualitative and quantitative analysis to investigate how stakeholders should integrate employability skills in teaching resources. It would be beneficial for researchers to examine the integration of job skills in various subjects and textbooks across different grades and countries. A broader sample size encompassing a variety of textbooks may offer a holistic perspective and assess consistency in integration. Moreover, investigating the impact of teaching strategies on fostering employability skill integration could greatly improve educational methods and enhance the learners' employability skills.

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