



# Employability Skills of Senior Students

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## Abstract

Unemployment of university graduates negatively affects the economy and causes both financial and psychological problems for individuals. In order to get employed, it is of great importance to have technical knowledge about the discipline of graduation as well as non-technical skills which are called employability skills. Employability skills are skills that are common to all areas of business that are necessary for people to get employed, be successful in their work life, make progress and improve themselves. Employability skills include basic skills, thinking skills, personal skills, resource usage skills, interpersonal skills, system and technology usage skills, foreign language skills and information literacy skills. This study aims to determine the competencies of senior students at Hacettepe University in terms of employability skills. Within the scope of the study, a questionnaire was applied to both senior students and faculty members to determine their perceptions about the importance of employability skills and the competence of the students in these skills. Research findings indicate different competence level of the students' employability skills. The findings also indicate that there is a difference between the importance given to employability skills and competency levels.

## Subject Areas

Social Science & Humanities, Higher Education

## Keywords

Employability, Employability Skills, Senior Students, Employer

## 1. Introduction

According to OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), unemployment is persons above a specific age (usually 15) not being in paid employment or self-employment but currently available for work during

the reference period [1]. The impact of unemployment can be felt by both the workers and the national economy and can create ripple effect. Unemployment causes workers to suffer financial difficulties that may lead to emotional destruction. When it happens, consumer spending, which is one of an economy's key drivers of growth, goes down, leading to a recession or even a depression. Unemployment results in lowered purchasing power, which, in turn, causes lowered profits for businesses and leads to budget cuts and workforce reductions. It creates a cycle that goes on [2].

The global youth unemployment rate in 2019 (13.6%) was well above the pre-global financial crisis rate in 2007 (12.3%). More than three-quarters of young workers in 2019 were in informal jobs which render them vulnerable to economic crises and shocks [3]. According to the Turkish Employment Organization (İŞKUR) the number of registered unemployed people in Turkey has increased 10 times in the last 15 years. As of August 2020, there are 4.044.000 registered unemployed and 1.034.000 of them are university graduates. In other words, 1 out of every 3 university graduates is unemployed (Turkish Employment Organization) [4].

The main sources of unemployment are as follows [1]:

- New technologies and inventions;
- The status of the economy, which can be influenced by a recession;
- Competition caused by globalization and international trade;
- Policies of the government;
- Regulation and market.

Today, more skills are needed in the workplace, in addition to the employability skills sought by the employer in the 1990s. The development of technology and the increasing importance of the production and service sector led to a more professional business management approach that requires experienced specialists. These skills, also known as 21st-century skills, are expected to be in today's workforce, but also determine the career options of the employee. As with many studies on this subject, 21st-century skills were listed under three headings by Partnership for 21st Century Skills in 2014: Learning skills (being creative and innovative, problem-solving and critical thinking, communication and collaboration); information, technology and media skills (information literacy, media literacy, information media and communication technologies literacy), lifelong learning and professional skills (flexibility and compliance, entrepreneurship and self-efficacy, social and cultural skills, productivity, responsibility, leadership skills) [5].

In order to develop employability skills steps should be taken. For this purpose, first of all, the level of employability skills and competencies of senior students should be determined. Only in this way, deficits and deficiencies can be identified and steps to be taken towards improvement can be decided. It is possible for organizations to compete both nationally and internationally by adapting to the rapid developments occurring in the business world. There is no

doubt that those who will follow these developments and integrate them into the organization are qualified workforce.

## 2. Literature Review

Employability skills have been defined by different researchers or organizations over time. Although there are some differences, it is seen that there is consensus on employability skills [6] [7] [8] [9] [10]. Especially; the emphasis on the efficient use of resources, interpersonal skills, the acquisition and use of information, the ability to understand organizational systems and the ability to work with different technologies appears to be similar. Learning to learn; reading, writing, computing skills; communication and problem-solving skills; motivation; self-development, leadership are other skills that are significantly agreed upon.

When both employability skills and 21st century skills are examined closely, it is seen that they both include similar skills. Although there are many studies on employability skills in the literature, there are few studies about senior students' employability skills. Detailed studies in this area are needed. The studies that are the most cited in the literature which form the basis of similar studies will be briefly mentioned below.

Kent University career service carries out studies to determine the employability skill levels of students, to learn the expectations of the business world from them and to help them develop these skills [11]. As a result of the research, students' problem solving, organization and time management skills are at a medium level. It has been revealed that creativity, adaptation to change, innovation, stress resistance and learning skills are high and very little development is needed [12].

HEGESCO (Higher Education as a Generator of Strategic Competences) Project was carried out by Hacettepe University European Union Office with the support of the European Commission and 6 countries. Within the scope of the study, it was aimed to examine the employability skills of university students from education periods to employment level. It was also revealed the effects of educational infrastructure on labour, administrators, educators and higher education institutions by examining the competencies gained through university education [13]. Within the scope of the project, the competencies that senior students should have for a successful transition to the business world were determined. How much they use their knowledge and skills gained through university education in business life, the opinions of universities and the business world on this subject were examined. A total of 19 competencies were given in the survey. According to the findings obtained from the graduates, the five competencies that the graduates find most inadequate are as follows: Specialization in their own field and discipline, being able to work under pressure, using time efficiently, effective negotiation, establishing their own authority. It was also found that some of the graduates are overeducated according to the job they work, and most

graduates are satisfied with their current job.

There are also some tests developed by universities and career centers. “Wheebox Employability Skill Test” is an official organization implemented in India which enables measuring the employability skill level of the person who wants to get a job, determines the skills that need to be developed and makes recommendations for the development of these skills [14]. AMCAT employability test is also used in India to measure employability skills of new graduates. The test is used by more than 2000 organizations to recruit people. The test has a multi-module structure consisting of language skills, logic and mathematical skills. The result of AMCAT Test is accepted as an employability certificate in platforms like LinkedIn, Monster.com [15].

As a result of examining the studies on employability skills it is possible to gather the sub-skills forming the mentioned skill set under eight headings (Table 1) [6] [7] [8] [9] [10] [12].

**Table 1.** Employability skills.

Employability Skills	
Basic skills	Reading, writing, fluent and clear speaking, listening, calculating, interpreting a table
Thinking skills	Making decisions, finding alternative solutions, respecting the ideas of others, problem solving, critical thinking, using imagination and intellectual intelligence
Personal skills	Taking responsibility, taking initiative, planning without panic, following innovations in the field, working with people of different religions, languages and races, respecting others’ thoughts, beliefs and rights
Resource usage skills	Prioritizing the work and finishing on time, using the tools in the most efficient way and treating teammates fairly in the distribution of duties
Interpersonal skills	Leading teammates when necessary, taking the ideas of colleagues and sharing their own experiences with them, fulfilling their responsibilities within the team and communicating and persuading with an angry person
System and technology usage skills	System performance evaluation and development, using office software effectively, using social media outside of personal life and using e-mail applications effectively
Foreign languages skills	Understanding user manuals prepared in foreign languages, understanding tables and manuals, communicating orally and in writing, applying for jobs to institutions abroad
Information literacy skills	Identifying information needed, choosing a resource appropriate for information needs, using printed sources, finding what they are looking for in the library, using the library catalog, evaluating the information accessed, using/communicating information in accordance with the rules, associating the information with the information known, preparing a presentation, bibliography, quoting and sending information, organizing and storing information, using the computer effectively while processing information, criticize written and oral presentations

### 3. The Aim and the Methodology

The main aim of this study is to determine the status of senior students at Hacettepe University in terms of employability skills. The following questions have been tried to be answered:

- How do senior students evaluate themselves in terms of employability skills?
- How do faculty members evaluate senior students in terms of employability skills?
- Is there a difference between student self-evaluations and faculty members' opinions/evaluations regarding the competence of students in terms of employability skills?
- Does competence level vary according to sub-skills under employability skills?
- Is there a difference between the importance given by the students to employability skills and the faculty members' thoughts about these skills?
- Do their opinions on the importance given to skills change according to the sub-skills that compose the employability skills?

Therefore, deficiencies of senior students in terms of employability skills including sub-skills were tried to be determined. It is thought that the findings will contribute to the review of the current curriculum and inter-unit coordination can be formed in order to improve students' employability skills.

This study was carried out on the senior students and the faculty members who teach them in 2017-2018 academic years at Hacettepe University. Hacettepe University has 13 faculties that offer bachelor's degree. The size of population consists of 6272 senior students and 1443 faculty members who teach senior students. This study is a quantitative research and questionnaire was used as data collection technique. Within the scope of the research, two questionnaires were prepared. One questionnaire was applied to 362 senior students to determine the importance given to employability skills, and their self-evaluations of the aforementioned skills. Other questionnaire was applied to 168 faculty members to measure the importance level assigned to employability skills by them and to get their thoughts about senior students' competencies on these skills.

The sample size that will represent the population was calculated according to the formulas below [16]. Equation (1) was used to yield a representative sample for proportions. The sample size was calculated by using Equation (2).

$$n_0 = \frac{z^2 pq}{e^2} \quad (1)$$

$$n = \frac{n_0}{1 + \frac{n_0 - 1}{N}} \quad (2)$$

$N$ : Size of population.

$n_0$ : Sample size.

$n$ : Adjusted sample size.

$z$ : The value found in statistical table which contain the area under the normal curve.

$p$ : Estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population.

$q$ : Estimated proportion of an attribute that is not present in the population ( $q = 1 - p$ ).

$e$ : Level of precision.

The confidence level was assumed 95% ( $e = 0.05$ ). Other values that depend on it are as follows:  $z = 1.96$ ,  $p = 0.5$ , ( $q = 1 - p$ ),  $q = 0.5$ . [17].

Two-stage stratified sampling method was used. Since the number of departments in faculties is distributed unevenly, the number of samples are determined according to the faculties in the first stage. The numbers of samples to be taken from each department were calculated according to the number of departments in each faculty, at the second stage.

The questionnaires used in the study were developed based on the literature. The questionnaire designed for students consists of three parts and a total of 20 questions. The first part of the survey covers demographic features such as gender, department, academic average (GPA, Grade Point Average), graduated high school, number of siblings. The second part is employability skills; self-assessment and the importance of these skills for professional careers. The third section consists of 10 main and 60 sub-questions prepared for employability skills. The questionnaire, which was organized for academic staff, was composed of three parts and a total of 14 questions. The first part of the questionnaire consists of two questions prepared to collect demographic information. The second part deals with employability skills and vocational skills of graduate students. It consists of 10 main and 60 sub-questions prepared on the importance of these skills in terms of career. The third part is related to employability skills of graduate students.

The data collected through the survey were analyzed with SPSS (Statistical Programming for Social Sciences 23). The Pearson Correlation Test was used when the data was normally distributed and the Spearman Correlation Test was used when the data was not normally distributed to determine the relationship between the importance given to the skill and the self-evaluations of the students for each of the sub-skills that constitute the employability skills. The same tests were applied to determine the relationship between the importance given by faculty members to the sub-skills that compose the employability skills and student evaluations. In order to determine the importance level assigned to employability skills by students and faculty members and also to determine the relationship between students' self-evaluations and student evaluations by faculty members, two independent sample T tests were applied when the data was normally distributed and the Mann-Whitney U Test was used when the data was not normally distributed.

#### 4. Findings and Discussion

The students and faculty members participating in the research were selected by two-stage stratified sampling method, first according to faculties and then de-

partments. Of the 362 students participating in the study, 274 were female and 88 were male. Education periods at Hacettepe University vary according to disciplines. After four years of theoretical education (course period) in some disciplines related to health, students are subjected to one or two years of compulsory field education. All of the students included in this study are students who are in the course period. Therefore, the normal education period is four years (eight semesters).

60% of the students participating in the study had an academic average (GPA) over 3.00, 39% of the students had an average between 2.99 - 2.01 and only 1% had a grade point average of 2.00 or less than 2.00 (**Table 2**).

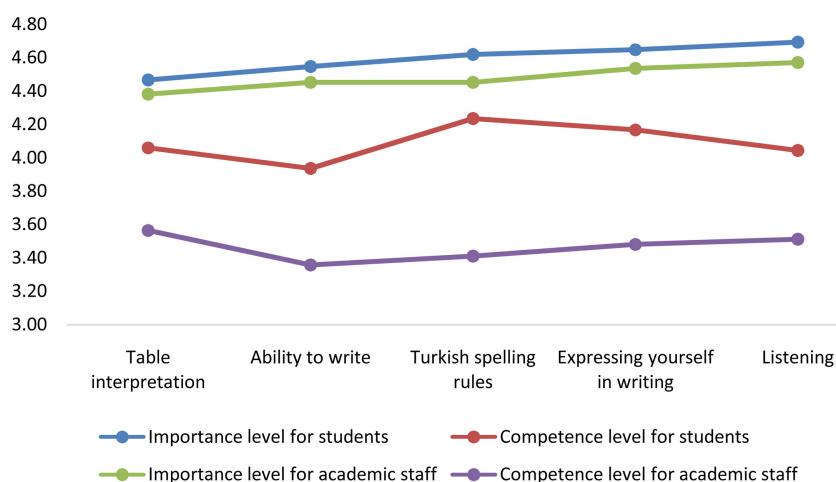
Faculty members were grouped on the basis of the year they teach. Most of them are faculty members who teach for 15 years or less (52%). While 19% of faculty members teach more than 15 years, 29% of them teach between 11 - 15 years.

In this section, the importance given by the students and faculty members to the eight sub-skills that constitute employability skills and the findings on the competency of the students will be discussed. Each sub-skill is evaluated separately. It was also tested whether the differences between students' and faculty members' perceptions on sub-skills and student self-evaluations on these skills and student success evaluations according to faculty members were statistically significant. For this purpose, mean values based on Likert Scale were calculated for all sub-skills and the distribution of the data was examined for each skill separately. It was concluded that the significance and competency averages (95% confidence level) of both students and faculty members were not normally distributed for all skills. Therefore, by applying Spearman correlation test, which is a non-parametric test, the relationship between the importance that students give to skills and the self-evaluation of these skills and the relationship between the importance that faculty members give to skills and the student success assessments are determined. Mann-Whitney U test was applied in order to test the relationship between the importance level of both groups and the success (competency level) evaluations.

It is observed that both students and faculty members assign a high level of importance to the sub-skills that compose basic skills. The importance evaluations for both groups are higher than the success evaluations. The importance and success evaluations of the students are higher than the faculty members' evaluations (**Figure 1**). Both students and faculty members think that the most important basic skill is *listening*. Although students find themselves the most

**Table 2.** Employability Academic Average (GPA) of senior students.

Number of Students	Grade Point Average (GPA)
217	$\geq 3.00$
141	2.99 - 2.01
4	$\leq 2.00$



**Figure 1.** Comparison of importance and competence level for basic skills.

successful at *Turkish spelling rules*, faculty members don't agree and they think the students are better on *table interpretation* among other basic skills. When it was tested whether the differences between the importance given to basic skills and the success evaluations on this skill was statistically significant; the difference between the importance given to basic skills and achievement evaluations of both students and faculty members were found statistically significant ( $r = 0.308$ ,  $p = 0$ ;  $r = 0.109$   $p = 0.017$ ). When comparing the difference between the importance levels that students and faculty members give to basic skills ( $U = 26,092$ ;  $z = -2.683$ ;  $p = 0.007$ ) and the difference between success evaluations were found statistically significant ( $U = 15,108.500$ ;  $z = -9.384$ ;  $p = 0$ ). The effect size calculated as 0.408 at the end of the test indicates that there is a statistically significant difference. Faculty members find students less adequate regarding basic skills compared to student self-evaluations.

When it comes to the thinking skills, both students and faculty members think that the skill in which the students are most successful is *respecting the opinions of others* and are more unsuccessful in *producing creative alternatives* among other sub-skills that compose the thinking skills. When the mean values are analyzed to test whether the differences between the importance given to thinking skills and the success evaluations on this skill is statistically significant, it is seen that the mean value averages for importance are higher than the mean value averages for competency level. As a matter of fact, the difference between the students ( $r = 0.338$ ;  $p = 0$ ) and faculty members ( $r = 0.227$ ;  $p = 0.02$ ) and the success evaluations on the thinking skills were found statistically significant. When the difference between the groups was analyzed, there was no statistically significant difference between the importance levels that students and faculty members gave to thinking skills ( $U = 28,657.500$ ;  $z = -1.100$ ;  $p = 0.271$ ). A statistically significant difference was found between the success evaluations of students and faculty members on thinking skills ( $U = 12,016$ ;  $z = -11.277$ ;  $p = 0$ ). The effect size calculated as 0.493 which indicates a statistically significant difference. While both groups assign high importance to thinking skills, faculty

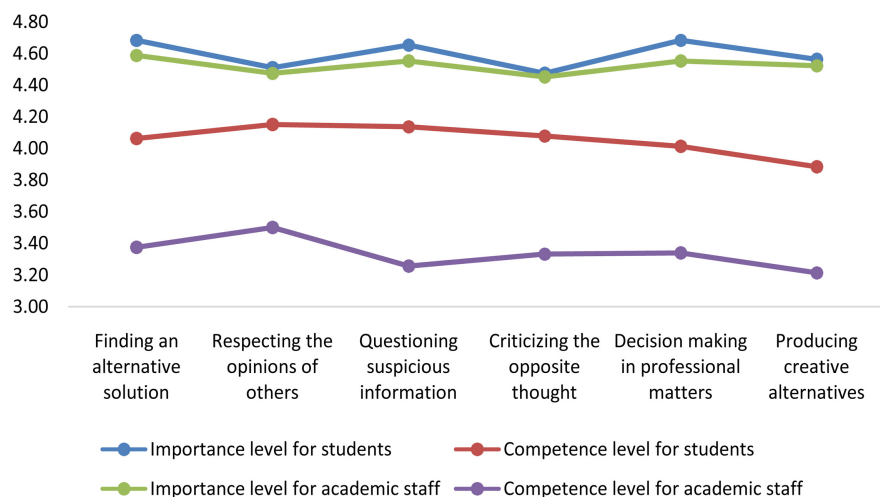


members find their students less adequate in these skills than students think **Figure 2**.

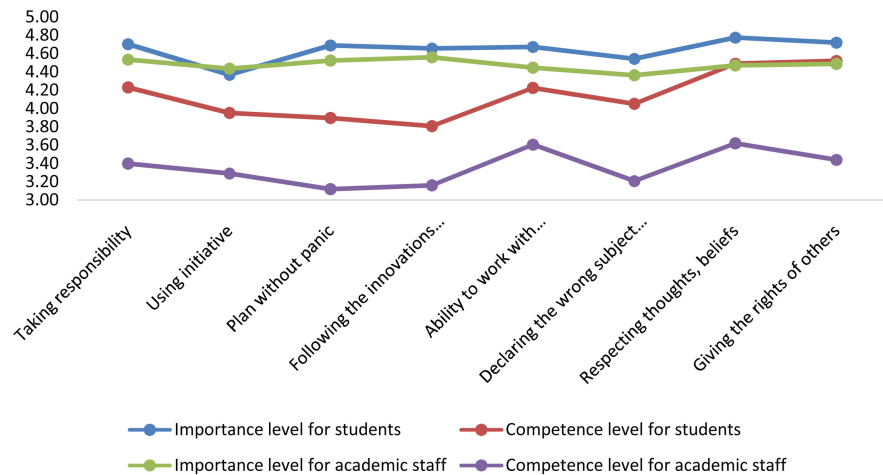
For personal skills, while students assign a high level of importance to personal skills, they do not find themselves successful at the same level. The importance evaluations of both groups are close to each other. Student self-evaluations are higher than faculty members' evaluations when it comes to the evaluation of competency levels. While students think that they are most successful at *giving the rights of others*, faculty members don't agree. They think that the students are successful at *the ability to work with teammates with different language, religion and race* the most. According to the participants' evaluations, students are not good at *following the innovations about the field* and *planning without being panic*.

When the relationship between the importance given to personal skills and success evaluations about personal skills was tested, the results were indicated statistically significant for students ( $r = 0.284$ ;  $p = 0$ ) and for faculty members ( $r = 0.163$ ;  $p = 0.035$ ). A significant difference was found between two groups' significance evaluations for importance ( $U = 26,791.500$ ;  $z = -2.248$ ;  $p = 0.025$ ). Likewise, the findings indicate a significant difference between the success evaluations of the groups ( $U = 8,506$ ;  $z = -13.403$ ;  $p = 0$ ). The effect size calculated as 0.5925 at the end of the test shows that there is a moderately significant difference statistically. When the sub-skills are examined, the average of student self-evaluation in *delivering the rights of others* is quite high compared to the evaluations of the faculty members (**Figure 3**).

As in other skills, it is observed that for resource usage skills the competency levels of the students are lower than the evaluations they make about the importance level. The importance evaluations of students and faculty members are close to each other. The difference between students and faculty members' evaluations increases for success evaluations. Students find themselves more successful in terms of resource usage skills than faculty members think. Both groups



**Figure 2.** Comparison of importance and competence level for thinking skills.

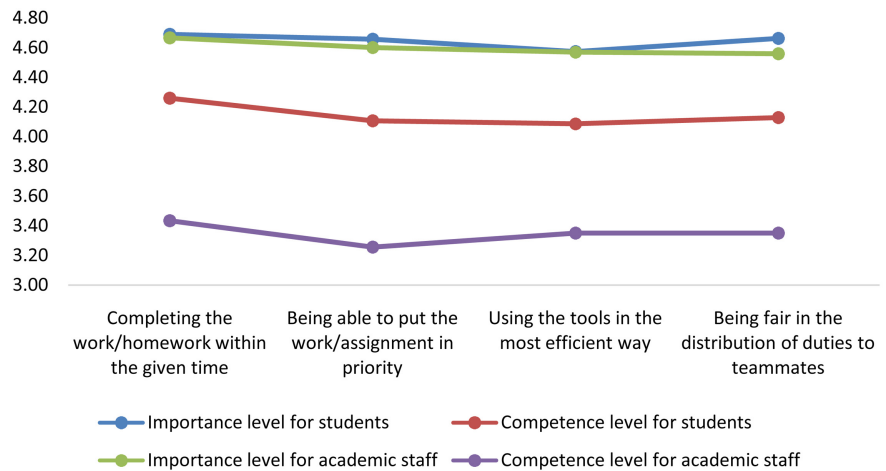


**Figure 3.** Comparison of importance and competence level for personal skills.

think that the ability *using the tools in the most efficient way* is the least important among the skills that compose resource usage skills, *completing the work/homework within the given time* is the skill that students are most successful in, and *being able to put the work assignment in priority* is the skill they are least successful in.

According to the results of the relationship tests, there was a statistically significant relationship between the importance they give to resource usage skills and success evaluations regarding these skills in terms of both students ( $r = 0.267$ ;  $p = 0$ ) and faculty members ( $r = 0.243$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ). Between two groups (students and faculty members), there is no statistically significant difference between the level of importance they give to resource usage skills ( $U = 29,469.500$ ;  $z = -0.611$ ;  $p = 0.541$ ); but there is a statistically significant difference between success/competence evaluations ( $U = 10,785.500$ ;  $z = -12.056$ ;  $p = 0$ ). The effect size calculated as 0.524 at the end of the test shows that there is a moderately significant difference statistically. Faculty members find their students inadequate in resource usage skills than students think (Figure 4).

For interpersonal skills, it is observed that the average values are close to each other. With a very small margin, students assign more importance to these skills than faculty members and consider themselves more successful than faculty members think. Both groups think that *fulfilling responsibility within the team* is the most important skill among and *implement team decisions while opposing* is the least important skill among interpersonal skills. Students think that they are good at *fulfilling responsibility within the team* and *sharing knowledge and skills with teammates*, faculty members think their students are successful the most in *communicating easily with different cultures*. Both groups think students are least successful in *communicating with an angry person* and *persuading* among sub-skills that compose interpersonal skills. A statistically significant difference was found between the importance given by students ( $r = 0.336$ ;  $p = 0$ ) and faculty members ( $r = 0.232$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ) to the interpersonal skills and their



**Figure 4.** Comparison of importance and competence level for resource usage skills.

success evaluations about these skills. It is seen that there is a statistically significant difference between the level of importance that students and faculty members give to interpersonal skills (95% confidence level) ( $U = 25,660.500$ ;  $z = -2.976$ ;  $p = 0.003$ ). Students assign more importance to interpersonal skills than faculty members. A statistically significant difference was found between the assessments of students and faculty members on interpersonal skills ( $U = 11,003.500$ ;  $z = -11.884$ ;  $p = 0$ ). The effect size calculated as 0.5167 at the end of the test indicates that there is a moderately significant difference statistically. Students find themselves more competent in these skills than the faculty members think (Figure 5).

According to the results on sub-skills which built up system and technology usage skills, the ability *improving system performance* is the skill that students find the least important and they think they are the most inadequate at this skill. Faculty members also think that the skill that the students are most inadequate is the ability *improving system performance*. As with other skills, students do not find themselves successful at the same level while giving high importance to the sub-skills of system and technology usage skills (Figure 6).

The students' average of self-evaluation is higher than the faculty members' evaluations. It is seen that there is a statistically significant relationship between the importance given by students and faculty members to system and technology usage skills and their success evaluations ( $r = 0.537$ ;  $p = 0$  for students,  $r = 0.377$ ;  $p = 0$  for faculty members). As a result of the test applied, although there is no statistically significant difference between the level of importance that students and faculty members give to system and technology usage skills ( $U = 27,522$ ;  $z = -1.787$ ;  $p = 0.074$ ), a significant difference was found between competence evaluations of students and faculty members ( $U = 20,657$ ;  $z = -5.972$ ;  $p = 0$ ). It can be said that faculty members find their students inadequate in system and technology usage skills (Figure 6).

Foreign language skill is the skill that students are considered to be the weakest

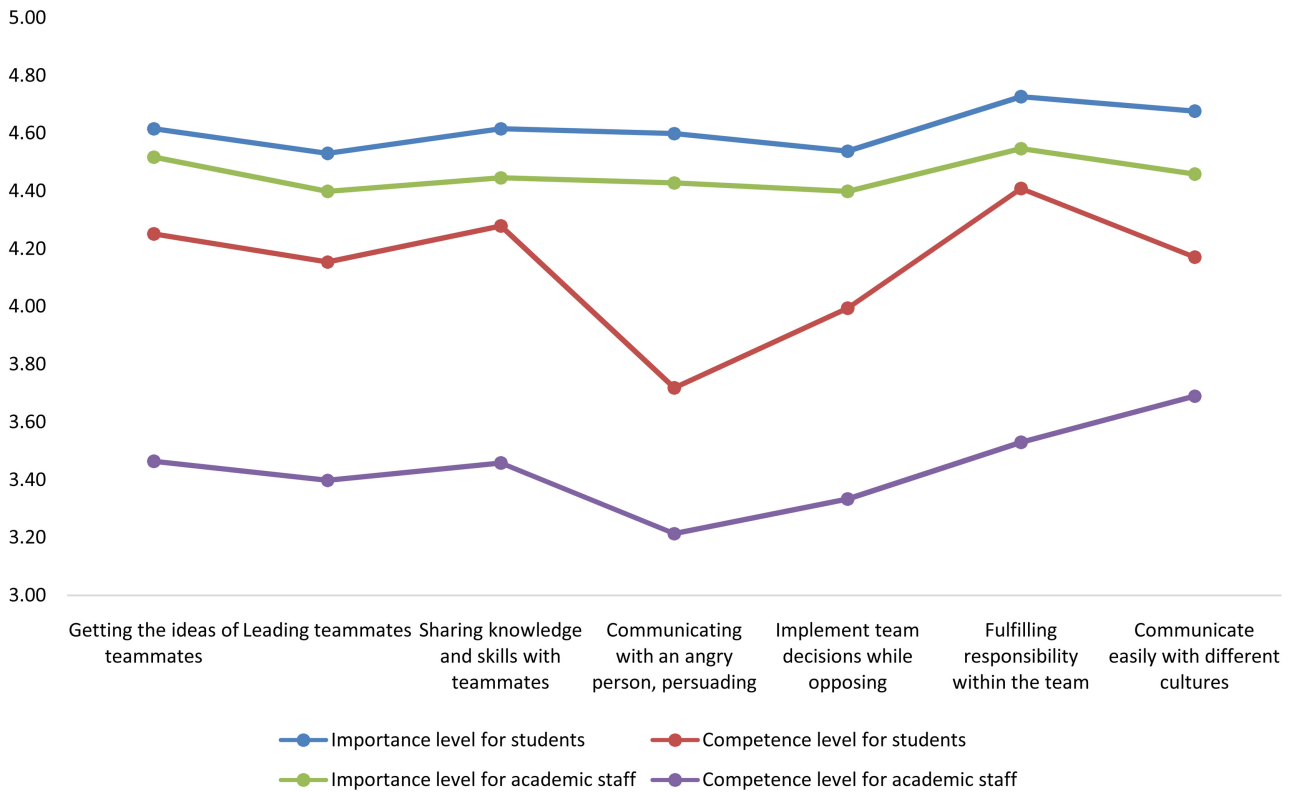


Figure 5. Comparison of importance and competence level for interpersonal skills.

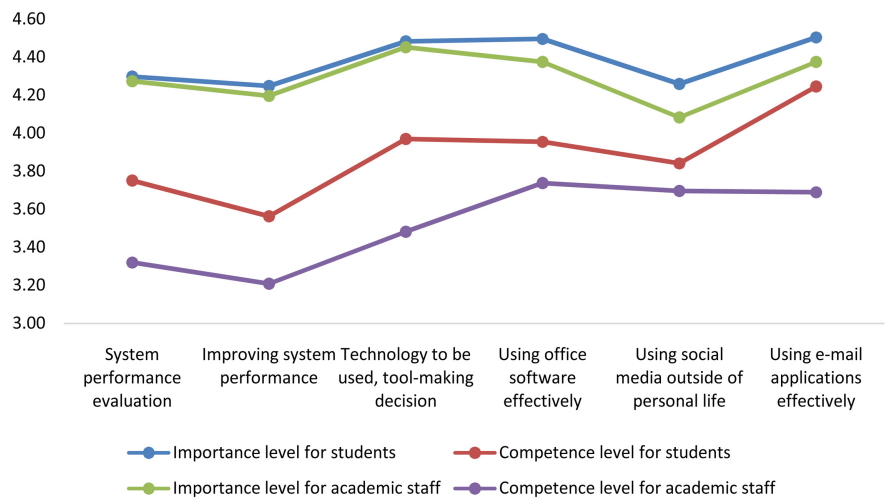


Figure 6. Comparison of importance and competence level for technology usage skills.

among other employability skills. When the importance and success evaluations of foreign language skills are examined, it is seen that both faculty members and students think that language skill is very important. Both groups think while students are better at *understanding user manuals and tables*, they are least successful at *applying for jobs abroad*. It is also found that students' *writing ability* is better than *speaking ability* in a foreign language. There is a statistically significant relationship between the importance given to foreign language skills and

success evaluations ( $r = 0.130$ ;  $p = 0.007$  for students,  $r = 0.296$ ;  $p = 0$  for faculty members). In addition, it is found that there is a significant difference between the importance levels that students and faculty members assign to foreign language skills ( $U = 24,921$ ;  $z = -3,500$ ;  $p = 0$ ). Similarly, a significant difference was found between the assessments of students and faculty members ( $U = 22,516$ ;  $z = -4.831$ ;  $p = 0$ ) (Figure 7).

When the average values for information literacy skills are examined, more than half of the students think that *the ability to criticize written or oral presentations* is crucial while *the ability using the library catalog* is the least important. It is observed that the evaluations made by students about their success levels are lower than the evaluations made by students about their level of importance. The biggest difference between assessments is *the ability to prepare impressions for different types of resources*. Students assign more importance to information literacy skills than faculty members. As in all other skills, students find themselves more successful in the information literacy skills compared to the evaluations of the faculty members. When the sub-skills of information literacy skills are examined, it is seen that the students' least successful skill is *the ability to find the source in the catalog in the library*. According to faculty members, even *criticizing written or oral presentations* is the most important skill among other information literacy skills, they think their students are least successful at this sub-skill (Figure 8).

There is a statistically significant relationship between the importance the students and faculty members gave to the information literacy skills and the

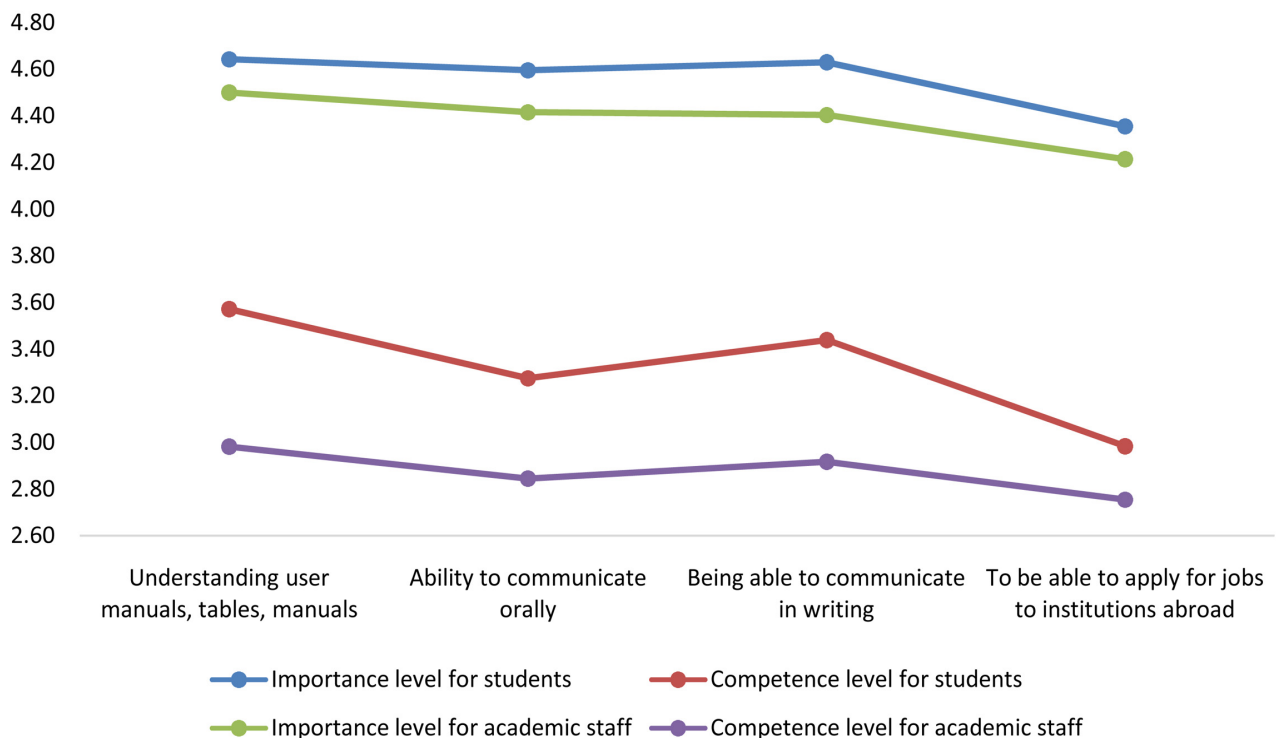
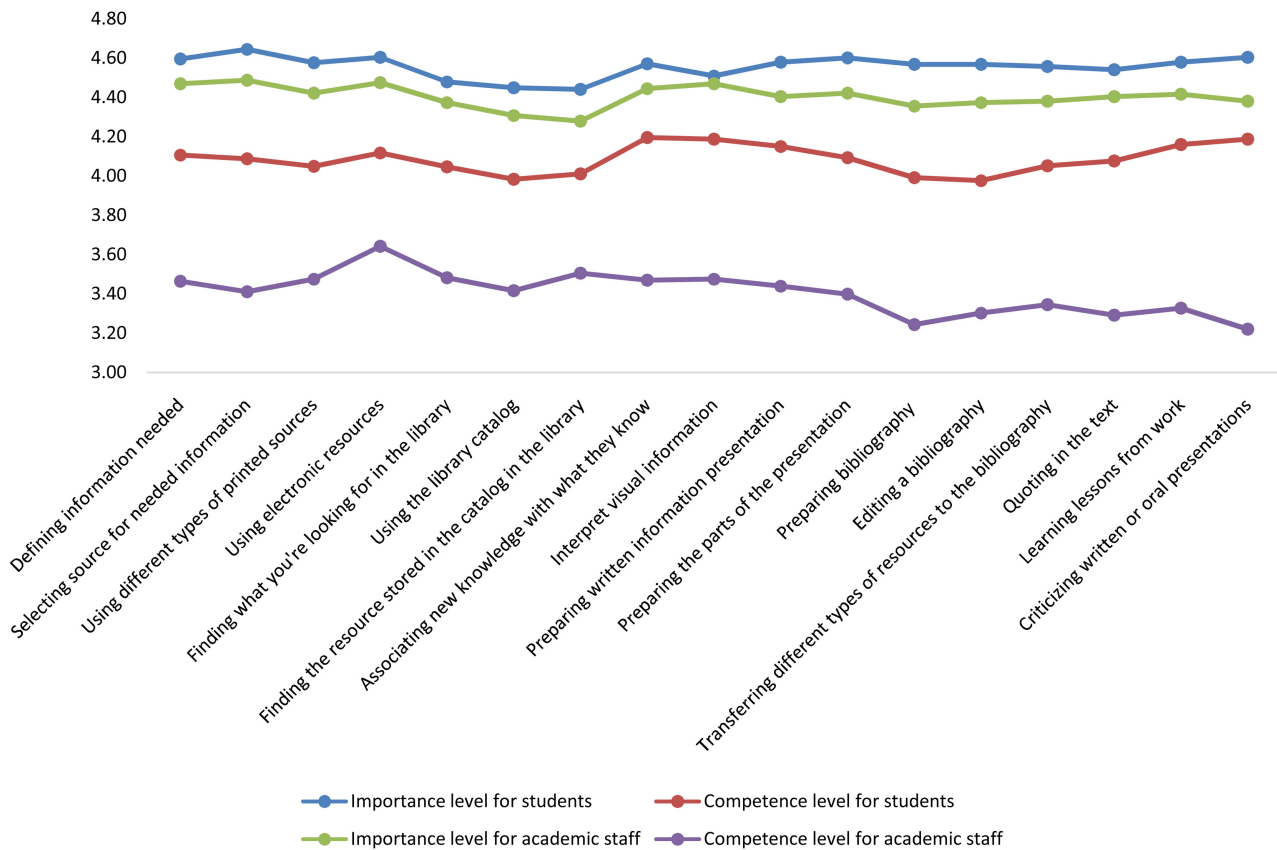


Figure 7. Comparison of importance and competence level for foreign language skills.



**Figure 8.** Comparison of importance and competence level for information literacy skills.

success evaluations of students ( $r = 0.418$ ;  $p = 0$ ) and faculty members ( $r = 0.254$ ;  $p = 0$ ). The importance given to skills in both groups is higher than the success evaluations. It can be said that there is a statistically significant relationship between the level of importance that students and faculty members give to information literacy skills ( $U = 25,220.500$ ;  $z = -3.224$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ). Although information literacy skills are more important for students, the difference is not very large. A statistically significant difference was found between the success assessments of the groups on information literacy skills ( $U = 12,166$ ;  $z = -11,140$ ;  $p = 0$ ). The effect size calculated as 0.4843 indicates that there is a moderately significant difference statistically. Competency evaluations of faculty members are lower than students' self-evaluations (Figure 8).

## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

A general evaluation has been made by looking at the average values of the sub-skills that compose the employability skills. When the general averages are analyzed, it can be seen that the importance given by students and faculty members to employability skills is above 4 in all eight skills and close to each other despite some differences. In all skills, student averages for the importance of the skills are slightly higher than faculty members' averages. The biggest difference is seen in information literacy skills. When it comes to success/competence

evaluations, it is seen that student self-evaluations in all skills are higher than faculty members' evaluations. This can be explained by the fact that self-efficacy assessments can be more subjective. In the evaluations of faculty members, only the skills of *using system and technology usage skills* exceed 3.5, while in the student evaluations, only the foreign language skill drops below 3.5. In the evaluations made by both students (3.3) and faculty members (2.9), the lowest mean value and highest standard deviation belong to foreign language skills. This situation shows that the foreign language competency level of the students is lower than the other skills. When looking at the general averages of employability skills, it is seen that there is a difference between the importance given to these skills and the evaluation of the student competency levels. The degree of importance for both students and faculty members is higher than competency level of students in all skills. The biggest difference in terms of importance given and competency level is seen in foreign language skills. The findings show that there is room for improvement for each and every employability skill at different levels, but the biggest deficit is in foreign language skills (Figure 9).

Within the scope of this study, a structure (model) has been proposed for Hacettepe University to increase students' employability skills (Figure 10). The mentioned model proposal can be adapted and can be used in other universities. With this model, students' employability skills can be determined and poor skills can be improved during education period. For this, a measurement system such as employability skill test can be used when they start their university education. In this way, deficiencies can be identified and the path to be followed by each student can be decided (such as lessons to be taken, programs to attend) at the

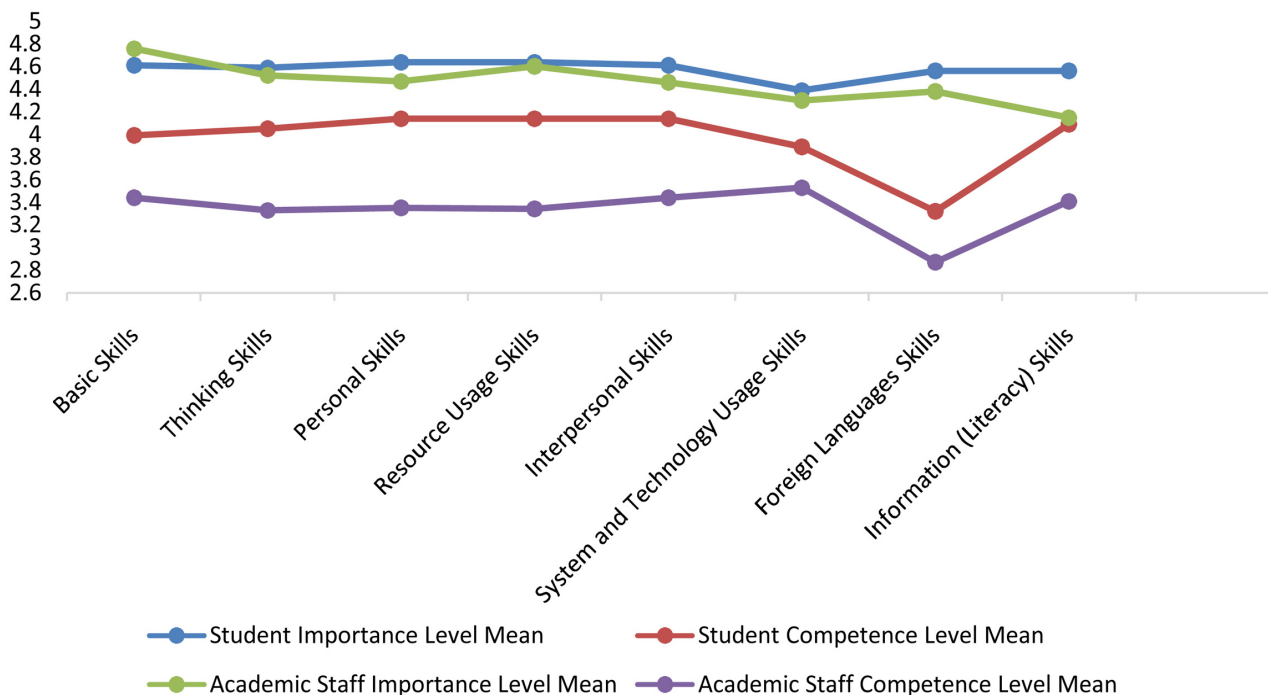
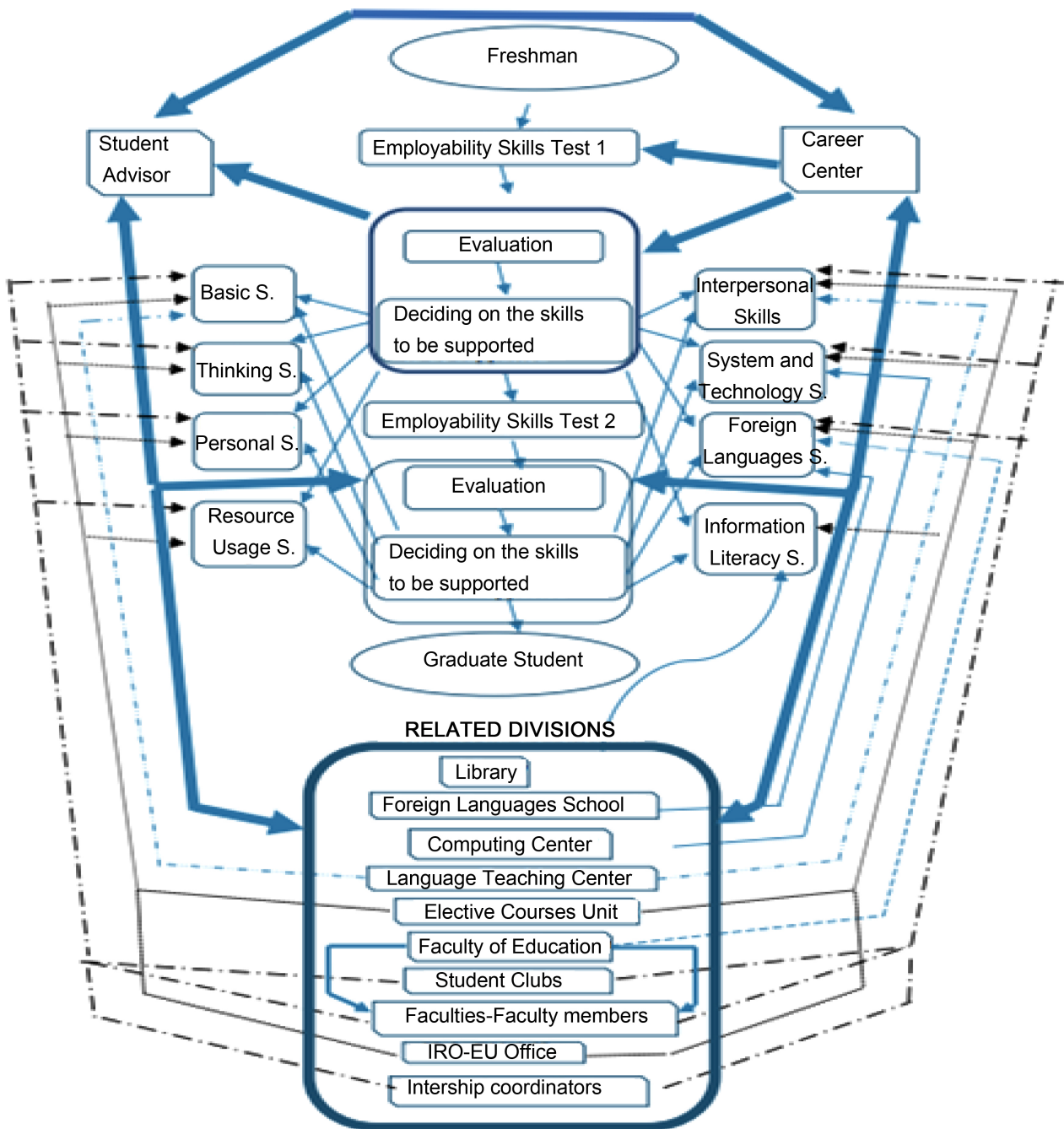


Figure 9. Employability skills general comparison.



**Figure 10.** Model proposal to increase students' employability skills.

very beginning. Which units within the university can contribute to the development of related employability skills can be determined, and also how students can be guided accordingly and coordination between units can be decided.

For this purpose, a proficiency test can be applied to every student entering the university. This test can be developed by the Career Center or external tests can be used. The test results can be evaluated by the student advisor and Career Center experts and the skills (deficiencies) that the student must develop are determined. Guidelines are given regarding what kind of support can be obtained



from the units for the development of these skills. For example, students with insufficient information literacy skills may be directed to Library instruction programs. For the students with weak foreign languages skills, personal skills, interpersonal skills, and resource usage skills may get help from Elective Courses Unit and also from Student Clubs. There are 156 student groups at Hacettepe University. It is thought that social activities may contribute to the development of all skills.

In **Figure 10**, the units of the University which can contribute to developing the employability skills of the students are shown. It will be useful to measure the level of employability skills of the student at least one more time before graduation in order to monitor the development of the student throughout the education period. Repeating the test is suggested to trace the improvement of poor skills in order to take precautions before graduation. The number of units and individuals who can contribute to the university can be increased. The important thing is coordination between divisions. Contribution of all faculties and teaching staff to the skill development process should be expected. Training of staff members may also be considered, especially in subjects such as active training methods. It is possible to receive contributions from the Faculty of Education at this stage.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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