

Career support for Undergraduates' Engagement with Services (CUES) Study

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Research Questions

- Q1: How do students of all year groups engage with the career resources offered?
- Q2: What do students believe are the important factors contributing to employability?
- Q3: What do students expect from the career services provided by the university?

Introduction

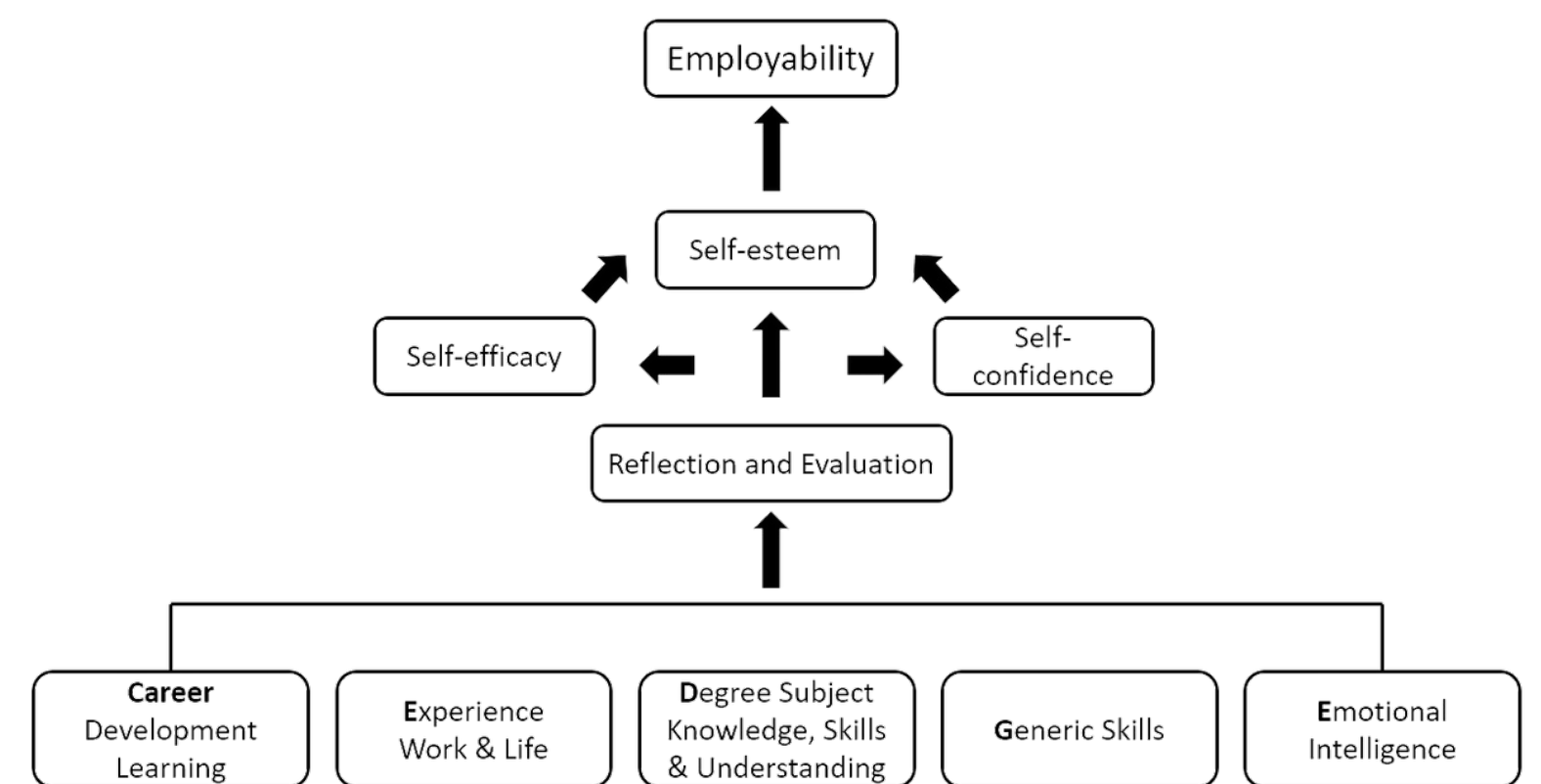
Why is there low career services engagement in BSc Psychology with Education?

- Few employability studies have focused on students in Psychology
- Low career event engagement rate for students in relevant subjects [1]
- Prior research focusing on low engagement rate are mostly quantitative
 - Students are unaware of the events [2]
 - High Perceived Employability - Age's effect [3]
 - Lack of proactive personality [4]
 - Self-efficacy [5]

Timely solutions are needed to enhance access to services:

- The definition of employability
 - Skills, knowledge, and personal characteristics to gain a job and succeed in career paths [6]
 - Adapt to uncertainty, overcome external challenges, and apply attributes and skills in life [7]
- The CareerEDGE Model [8] maybe helpful (**See Figure 1**)
 - Strengths: Simple to understand and useful to structure career events
 - Limitations: No year group difference, frequent re-evaluation

Figure 1 The CareerEDGE Model of Graduate Employability [8]



Methodology

Design: 10 semi-structured online focus groups

Participants: 28 BSc Psychology with Education students from Year 1, 2, 3.

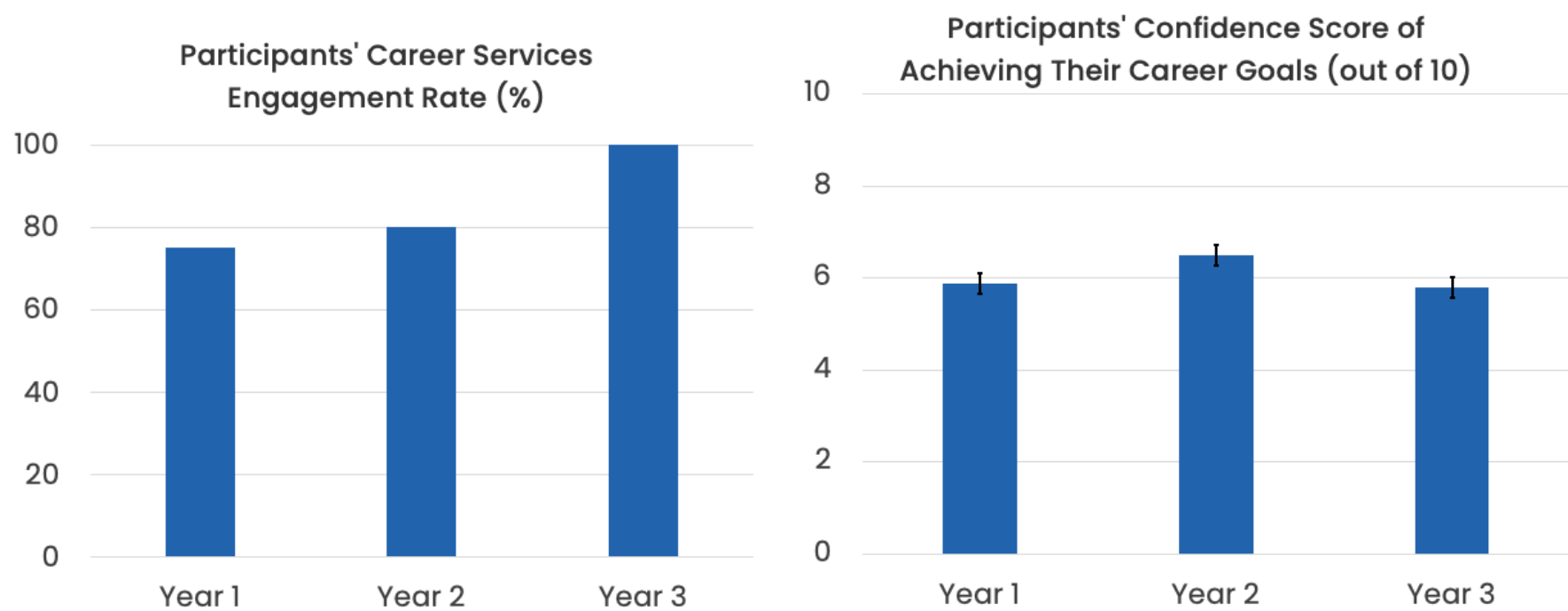
Measures: 2-part focus group schedule

Part A (Q1): 7 open-ended & 2 close-ended questions

Part B (Q2&3): 13 open-ended & 1 close-ended questions

Data analysis: Nvivo Thematic analysis

Results



Figures 2 & 3

Part A close-ended questions

Six themes were identified about students' low engagement:

1. Professionalism (event quality/promotion)
2. Stage of Life (personal interests; alternative resources; course work)
3. Interpersonal Factors (trustworthiness; peer pressure)
4. Cultural Factors (career destinations; language/cultural barriers)
5. Personality (lazy; proactive)
6. Self-efficacy

Table 1

Top Five Employability Factors that Students think are important.

Rank	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
1	Communication skill	Communication skill	Communication skill
2	Career development learning	Work experience	Career development learning
3	Subject-relevant knowledge	Subject-relevant knowledge	Subject-relevant knowledge
4	Self-confidence	Collaboration skill	Collaboration skill
5	Empathy	Career development learning	Work experience

Table 2

Top Five University Career Services that Students expect to see.

Rank	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
1	Alumni events	Events with lecturers and researchers	Integrating career support with module learning
2	Interactive workshops	Longer one-to-one service with more guidance	Customising career support for international students
3	More career support from personal tutors	Integrating career support with module learning	Interactive workshops
4	Departmental encouragement on attending career events	Alumni events	Moodle page to introducing career support
5	Moodle page for the career support	Different branches of psychology	More career support from personal tutors

Employability factors and career services that students regard as important and expect to see between year groups (see **Tables 1 and 2**).

- Code distinguished by colours.
- 'White' blocks are codes unique code to the year group.

Discussion

• Evaluation:

- Strengths: contributing additional perspectives to the employability field, using focus groups as an efficient approach
- Limitations: a single method for data collection, a thematic analysis rarely analysed group interactions

• Future research direction:

- Considering group biases, using the mixed-method approach, and other data analytic approaches such as a conversation analysis

• Implications:

- Theoretically, it tested and re-evaluated the Model and confirmed its application in Psychology with Education undergraduates.
- Practically, it suggested that universities should design tailored career events based on students' career interests, cultural backgrounds, and existing knowledge and skills.

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