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Career Readiness through Generation Z Narratives: A Framework on Knowledge-to- Capability Translation

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Abstract

Management education faces increased pressure to prepare students for workplaces characterised by technological disruption, changing skill requirements, and heightened expectations of immediate job readiness. While existing research has examined Generation Z's employability, digital competencies, and expectations from higher education, less is known about how management students themselves perceive the process through which classroom knowledge becomes career-relevant capability. This study explores how Generation Z postgraduate management students conceptualise career readiness, identify perceived gaps between management education and workplace expectations, and describe the learning experiences they believe facilitate the transition from knowing to doing. Guided by an interpretivist paradigm, the study adopts a participatory netnographic design to explore how Generation Z postgraduate management students construct meanings of career readiness through online community interactions. Data is collected through student discussions, reflective posts, polls, and researcher-facilitated conversations within a dedicated digital community and analysed using reflexive thematic analysis. The study aims to develop a Knowledge-to-Capability Translation Framework that explains how students perceive the movement from conceptual learning to workplace readiness through experiential learning, digital competence, AI literacy, professional confidence, and capability development.

Background

Management education is today immersed in an environment of fluctuating constraints, engendering a major contradiction between its traditional empirical priorities and the practical needs of contemporary workplaces. Management programs were conceived as a means for imparting students' conceptual knowledge, analytical thinking, theoretical understanding, and discipline-related expertise. These aims were in line with academic ideals based on the norms of academic model which require a strong grasp of all aspects of the latter, including its ideas, systems, and theories. However, new graduates of management programs are entering the type of organizational environments in which employers expect workers not only to be knowledgeable but also capable of executing that knowledge effectively, solving complicated problems, cooperating with coworkers, adjusting to alterations in working conditions, employing various digital tools, maneuvering in the digital world, and making informed decisions. Research undertaken with Gen Z management students has shown that all the above-mentioned expectations bring about new expectations regarding the use of digital learning environments ensuring students' adaptability and employability-related digital skills (Bridgstock, 2009; Osmani et al., 2015).

A second tension is the growing expectation from employers for some tangible proof of capability instead of merely having qualifications or theoretical knowledge. The problem is not with the universities teaching theory, but rather with how blurry the transition from theory learned in classrooms to competence in the workplace can be. The question then is how the information learned within management classrooms is transformed into a form of know-how that is recognized, applied, and valuable in real-life environments. Empirical research conducted on Generation Z employability within

Indian higher education has pointed out that insufficient skills development and lack of sufficient work experience have been identified as barriers to placement readiness (Mandal et al., 2026; Bhatnagar, 2021). The empirical evidence makes the research very relevant and brings some element of novelty to it, as claiming that there is a universally recognized “skill gap” does not add much to the discussion. What is missing in the literature on the skill gap is how students experience the process of turning their management knowledge into competence they can really use at work, and this is where the contribution of the current research is located.

Then, the third issue is the representation of student voice in the realm of employability research. The existing literature has, to a great extent, treated students as mere respondents and competency raters, with research focusing on that of their own employability, the skills possessed by students, or the skills which they consider important. The studies conducted in this way have simplified complex realities into numbers and ignored the meaning behind the concept of the notion of “being ready for a career” for students. The qualitative research approach, however, makes it possible to ask different questions: What does “career ready” mean for a Generation Z management student? How do students express their readiness to start a career, apart from the skills which they possess?

The findings of this research signify the importance of personal narratives in understanding notions of career readiness. Career readiness for students does not solely encompass having certain skills; it may also entail having the ability to tolerate uncertainty, knowing how to apply AI in reasonable ways, having real-world experience in working with clients and stakeholders, understanding how to apply theoretical knowledge in practice, obtaining higher levels of professional communication skills in various environments, mastering interpersonal and intercultural relations, and being committed to learning throughout one’s life. Research studies about postgraduate management students from Generation Z show that even though they appreciate the importance of career-oriented education and opportunities to gain experience, they may not necessarily value practical learning (Xu, Mansor, & Amat, 2025).

In this respect, exploring Generation Z students' views about their degrees' employability creates both a theoretical and applied relevance. Theoretical relevance is based on the contribution to the understanding of how employability is defined and perceived by the generation that has been affected by digitalization, artificial intelligence and unstable job markets (World Economic Forum, 2025). The applied significance emerges from the possibility to shape management education prospects and pedagogical techniques in a way that favors better integration of theoretical knowledge with real skills necessary for the job. By investigating the ways the students themselves explain the link between their education and career readiness, this study intends to overcome the problem of "skill gap" and to provide a more profound insight into the importance of learning institutions for students to become effective and competent professionals.

Literature Review

Career Readiness and Employability in Higher Education

Graduate employability is becoming one of the important aspects of every higher education. The role moves beyond just academics to mould them with appropriate skills and make them employability ready. However, this employability extends beyond just a set of technical skills or the qualities required for that particular job. Yorke (2006) emphasised that employability is the combination of attributes personally and understanding that enhance the sustainability and long-term commitment towards the job. Furthermore, this even does not guarantee employability, which are influenced by more external factors. The conceptualisation is more based on the broader aspect that education is a combination of self-awareness, knowledge, skills and the ability to apply them to whatever professional situations. Bridgstock (2009) states that employability is more of a generic skill and gives more importance to skill management and active involvement in building up constructs and getting a roadmap to careers. Holmes (2013) further argues that employability is better understood not merely as a possession of skills but as an ongoing process through which graduates position and reposition themselves within the labour market. This is more relevant in the labour markets, where the students are more exposed to changes in employment structures, disruption in major technology and different non linear pathways. The features such as readiness in career is not limited to achievement in academics alone but it involves the ability to transfer the learning into the workplace atmosphere and change according to the need of the organisation (Osmani et al,2015). Research studies demonstrated that the factor employability is more of knowledge, skills, competencies and digital abilities along with the career management dispositions (Fugate, Kinicki, & Ashforth, 2004; Tomlinson, 2017).

Management Education and the Development of Career-Ready Graduates

Education and creating career-focused graduates

In the development of the graduates, education plays a very important role in balancing the knowledge and competencies in the place of work. Employers want graduates to excel in their leadership, problem-solving capability, skills and technical knowledge. Major research studies emphasise the gap between the expectations from the industry and the education (Bhatnagar, 2021). In order to strengthen employability, it is highly essential to inculcate the industry activities and learning (Jackson, 2015; Jackson & Bridgstock, 2021)

Education in management towards readiness to work and expectations among the students

Readiness to work shows how students are prepared to visit the work and do the task efficiently in a work environment. Students expect the higher education to give exposure to them practically, to form professional networks and career related experiences.(Jackson & Bridgstock,2021)employability criteria factor gets inculcated throughout their educational journey and influenced by various academic experiences and other work factors.

Generation Z and Changing Expectations of Higher Education

Generation Z represents a digitally connected student cohort whose educational and career expectations have developed within rapidly changing technological and employment environments (Prensky, 2001; Twenge, 2017). However, Generation Z should not be treated as a homogeneous group. Recent research indicates that Gen Z students experience several behavioural, motivational and institutional barriers to employability and placement preparedness (Mandal et al., 2026). Understanding their own experiences is therefore important for designing relevant career-ready education.

Digital competence is an important criterion for these student groups. They not only require the knowledge but also the ability to apply these digital tools for communication, collaboration and for taking other important decisions. (Osmani et al,2015) Competencies such as teamwork, communication and creativity, along with digital skills are very important for any type of workplace (Long & Magerko, 2020; Almatrafi, Johri, & Lee, 2024). Recent industry survey data indicate that the overwhelming majority of Indian Gen Z professionals already use AI tools in their day-to-day work, underscoring the growing salience of AI literacy for this cohort (Deloitte, 2026).

Career readiness and exposure in Industry

Experiential learning enables the students to apply the theoretical knowledge in their real life situation and to connect them to the various opportunities (Kolb, 1984). The live projects, Case Studies, industry related interactions enhances the confidence in their career and competencies in the workplace. Moreover, the evidences indicate that curriculum and its related activities contribute to the development of individual employability (Jackson & Bridgstock, 2021).

Problem Statement

Higher education institutions are increasingly expected to prepare management students not only with disciplinary knowledge but also with the capabilities required to navigate rapidly changing professional environments. Although previous research has examined employability, skill gaps, digital competencies, and experiential learning among Generation Z students, the process through which management students perceive classroom knowledge as being transformed—or failing to be transformed into workplace capability remains insufficiently understood. Existing studies have majorly measured employability as a set of predetermined competencies, providing less insight into how students themselves conceptualise career readiness and experience the transition from academic knowing to professional doing. This gap is particularly important for postgraduate management education, where students expect a direct connection between educational investment and career outcomes. The present study therefore explores Generation Z management students' narratives regarding career readiness, perceived gaps between classroom learning and workplace expectations, essential competencies, and the learning experiences they believe enable the translation of knowledge into employable capability. Figure 1 depicts this translation gap, which the present study addresses.

Research Gap

While a number of streams of literature provide some pieces of the puzzle, the underexplored question concerns how management students of Generation Z understand and describe the process of becoming career-capable.

First, employability research has confirmed a link between specific skills and competencies and employability outcomes, yet most studies focus on measures of skills or employability without providing much insight into how students make sense of being “career-ready” in their special context. Second, the emerging literature on Generation Z shows that they are used to working with technology and demand flexible learning opportunities, yet it does not shed light on how the preferences of Generation Z affect the perceptions of management students about the relevance and effectiveness of their management education. Third, the skill-gap literature shows that there are deficiencies in soft and hard skills among graduates; however, the focus is on the presence or absence of gaps rather than students’ own experience of the skill development process in terms of their achievements and challenges. Fourth, the literature on experiential learning shows that projects, internships, and other types of experiential learning enhance student engagement, but it still does not provide insight into what practices students consider to transforming abstract management knowledge into usable career capabilities, and why some experiences are seen as meaningful while others are not.

Fifthly, digital competency research shows that digital environments, the ability to adapt, and more widely, AI literacy already play an important role in employability (Almatrafi, Johri, & Lee, 2024; Testa, Apuzzo, & Pittaway, 2026). Nevertheless, digital/AI readiness is not fully integrated with human and professional competencies such as judgement, ethical awareness, and communication, and the process has not been investigated extensively from the standpoint of students. At last, although management education research also states that curricula have to consider the changes in the needs of the workplace, it still perceives the connection between classroom and career in terms of curriculum design, teaching styles, and institutional changes, leaving fewer studies that examine how students view the process of transitioning from learning to application of concepts and from being a novice to being an accomplished professional.

Recent studies on digital employability competencies of Gen Z business students and barriers to employability in India provide relevant contextual information, yet they tend to view employability as a set of skills or barriers rather than as a developmental process (Xu, Mansor, & Amat, 2025; Mandal et al., 2026).

Methodology

Consistent with an interpretivist paradigm, which holds that social reality is subjectively constructed and is best understood through the meanings participants themselves attach to their experiences (Creswell,

2013), the study focuses on Generation Z students enrolled in postgraduate management education programmes in India. The target population comprises students pursuing:

- Master of Business Administration (14)
- Master of Management Studies (12)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Management (14)

These programs were chosen for their value as the main educational pathways for students getting ready to go into business and management jobs in India. These students belong to the so-called Generation Z and are known to use digital platforms, enabling important research on career readiness and employability issues. The research employs purposive sampling to determine the participants who would be able to provide valuable information associating management education and career capability (Patton, 2002). Instead of conveying statistical representation, the research emphasizes obtaining meaningful information from the participants involved in discussions related to management education and career development.

A special online community on a social media platform (e.g. LinkedIn, private academic discussion platform) is created to ensure the interaction between management students from various institutions of India (Kozinets, 2010). Students will be invited to participate in discussions and opinion exchange activities.

When people enter the community, they will be informed about the purpose of the research and the rules to be followed within the community. The main task of the community will be to find out the role of postgraduate management education in the formation of career capability, employability skills, professional confidence, and readiness for work among students. The community members will be encouraged to share their experiences, reflections, struggles, and suggestions based on evidence.

The researcher will assume a participatory netnographic role, extending beyond passive observation by initiating discussions, posting questions, moderating interactions, and creating polls related to key themes such as (Kozinets, 2010; Costello, McDermott, & Wallace, 2017):

- Career readiness and employability
- Industry-relevant competencies and skill development
- Internships and experiential learning
- Digital and technological competencies
- Leadership and professional development
- Expectations regarding future careers and workplace success

This approach supports knowledge co-creation between researchers and participants while reducing the limitations associated with structured survey instruments (Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013).

Reflexive thematic analysis of participant-generated content will be conducted, following the approach of Braun and Clarke (2006, 2019, 2021), to address the following research questions:

1. How do Generation Z management students define and construct the meaning of career readiness?
2. How do students perceive the relationship between management education and workplace capability?
3. Which educational experiences are perceived as facilitating the translation of knowledge into professional competence?
4. How do digital and AI-related competencies shape perceptions of career readiness?

This netnographic approach enables the study of naturally occurring online interactions and collaborative knowledge creation among Generation Z management students, providing a deeper understanding of how they perceive the connection between management education and career capability (Kozinets, 2010). Figure 2 summarises the research design adopted in this study.

The Knowledge-to-Capability Translation Lens

Knowledge-to-Capability Translation Lens considers that management education can serve as a system ensuring the translation into capabilities. The system includes five major components:

Knowledge Resources

The management programmes provide students with the theoretical foundations which enable them to create their own capabilities but do not provide them with ready-made capabilities per se.

Translation Opportunities

Translation takes place (wherever it happens) via cases, simulations, real projects, internships, discussions with industry representatives, and problem-solving. This thus shifts the focus from the question of “theory vs. practice” to whether students have enough and good experiences of applying theory.

Capability Development

As a result of effective translation opportunities provided to students, they discover that they are able to obtain such capabilities as communication, analytical thinking, decision making, digital/AI literacy, teamwork, and adaptability.

Professional Self-Confidence and Agency

The more competencies accumulate, the more students tend to say to themselves “I can manage this” and “I can utilize what I have learnt”. This refers to their professional agency – understanding that they are meaningful players in a workplace and not only learners. This aspect considers how different

experiences, feedback, and issues enhance or weaken this confidence (Bandura, 1997; Rothwell, Herbert, & Rothwell, 2008).

Subjective Perception of Career Readiness

The last aspect of this framework is that the students develop their understanding of career readiness, i.e., whether they are in a position to enter and travel through the labour market, learn in the process, and cope with uncertainty. The framework views this understanding as a subjective notion that stems from students' connecting their awareness of knowledge, opportunities, skills, and confidence.

The common aspect of these components is that translation connects them all. The contribution of this framework is that it conceptualizes employability gaps as the problems associated not with the mismatch between theory and practice but with the lack or ineffectiveness of translation opportunities in management education. In analytical terms, this lens will allow organizing materials of students' accounts according to:

- the knowledge they obtain,
- the knowledge they see as translation moments,
- the points they identify as competence development,
- when and how confidence appears,
- how all of this influences students' perception of their readiness for work.

The framework is intentionally flexible: it will be refined in light of empirical findings, including alternative sequences, feedback loops, or sources of capability and confidence outside formal programme structures. In this way, the Knowledge-to-Capability Translation Lens offers a concise, student-centred, process-oriented way of conceptualising how management education is or is not experienced as translating into career capability.

The Knowledge-to-Capability Translation Lens serves as an initial sensitizing framework guiding inquiry and interpretation rather than a definitive explanatory model.

Thematic Analysis

Table 1
Themes, key categories, indicative codes and participant mentions

Theme	Key Categories	Indicative Codes	Interpretation	Participants Mentioning
1. Career Readiness as Demonstrable Capability	Workplace competence; confidence; independent performance	"Being career-ready means I can solve actual business problems independently rather than simply recalling concepts." (P17) "A degree may get me an interview, but capability helps me succeed in the workplace." (P11)	Students conceptualise career readiness less as possessing academic qualifications and more as being able to perform effectively in workplace situations.	31
2. Skills Over Knowledge: The Need for Knowledge-to-Action Translation	Practical application; employability skills; contextual use of theory	"I understood strategies better when I applied them during my internship." (P01) "Theory becomes meaningful only when it is used to solve real business problems." (P09)	Students continue to recognise the value of theoretical knowledge but place greater emphasis on the ability to translate knowledge into practical action.	34
3. Experiential Learning as the Bridge to Employability	Internships; live projects; simulations; competitions; industry interaction	The internship taught me more about workplace realities than any textbook." (P38) "Live projects helped me understand how decisions affect actual businesses." (P13)	Authentic and experiential learning experiences are perceived as more effective in developing workplace confidence and practical capabilities than conventional classroom instruction alone.	37
4. The Employability Gap and Employer Expectations	Technical skills; interpersonal skills; professional behaviour	Most exams test knowledge, but employers assess communication and teamwork." (P04) "Technical knowledge alone is not enough during recruitment interviews." (P16)	Students perceive a gap between what is assessed academically and what employers expect, particularly regarding human, technical and professional capabilities.	33

Theme	Key Categories	Indicative Codes	Interpretation	Participants Mentioning
5. AI-Augmented Career Readiness	AI literacy; digital capability; human–AI complementarity	"AI helps me generate ideas quickly, but judgement still depends on me." (P08) "Knowing how to use AI tools is becoming an essential employability skill." (P19)	Students perceive AI and digital competence as increasingly important, while recognising that critical thinking, judgement, creativity and interpersonal capabilities should not be completely outsourced to technology.	28
6. From Academic Graduate to Adaptive Professional	Continuous learning; adaptability; self-directed development	Graduation is only the beginning; learning never stops." (P21) "The most employable professionals are those who can adapt quickly to change." (P34)	Career readiness is viewed as an ongoing capability rather than a fixed outcome of completing a management degree.	30

Table 1 presents the six themes identified from participants' contributions. Participants predominantly conceptualised career readiness as demonstrable workplace capability rather than the possession of formal qualifications. Most students argued that management education provided valuable conceptual knowledge, but that the development of employable capability depended upon opportunities to apply knowledge in authentic contexts. Internships, live projects, industry interactions, and simulation-based learning were repeatedly identified as critical mechanisms through which theoretical understanding was translated into professional competence. Furthermore, students viewed AI literacy as an increasingly important component of employability, although they emphasised that skills such as judgement, communication, adaptability, and stakeholder management remained uniquely human capabilities (Testa, Apuzzo, & Pittaway, 2026; Cengage Group, 2024). Collectively, these findings suggest that career readiness is experienced as a dynamic process of knowledge-to-capability translation, culminating in greater professional confidence and perceived workplace preparedness. Figure 3 shows the number of participants who mentioned each theme.

Proposed Framework

The findings suggest that career readiness is not merely a consequence of knowledge acquisition or skill possession. Rather, it reflects a developmental process through which students translate disciplinary knowledge into workplace-relevant capability. Building upon the thematic findings, the Knowledge-to-

Capability Translation (K-TAC) Framework is proposed to explain how experiential learning, capability development, confidence, and professional agency contribute to perceived career readiness.

The K-TAC Framework consists of five major factors such as (1) Knowledge Resources, (2) Translation Opportunities, (3) Capability Development, (4) Professional Confidence and Agency, and (5) Perceived Career Readiness. Employability is not a fixed factor but this is a process that shapes the students to apply their knowledge into experience and how they can connect the same into the learning process with professional application.

The K-TAC Framework

Knowledge Resources

The K-TAC framework's first component is “Knowledge Resources “which means the theoretical knowledge, concepts and conceptual information gained through education. It moreover includes the models and specific knowledge .Under this theoretical concept the knowledge is considered as the basic resource foundation which needs the best translation, before it’s been applied to the workplace atmosphere. Thus, this component make a difference between what is known and how that that can be applied practically in an professional work culture.

Translation Opportunities

It represents the experiences made available to the students in the form of opportunities so that they can connect with the situations in a more practical and professional manner. It includes different case studies, interactions with the industry, indulging in competitions and other various problem-solving activities. The argument of this statement centrally is that this transition from knowledge to applicability and capability does not occur automatically; appropriate situations should be provided, and the students should be made to apply and reflect the knowledge they have learned. But it requires the quality and importance of these opportunities, and how do they influence the capability of students in perceiving whether they were genuine or not in terms of career orientation?

Capability Development

It represents the components practically that emerge when students engage with the opportunities during the translation phase. It includes communication, AI literacy and other teamworks. The framework, moreover, is outcomes rather than the attributes possessed by students. In other terms, the efficiency of these capabilities gets increased due to the repeated application and engagement. Furthermore, this component captures the knowledge into stronger competencies in a more professional manner.

Agency and Confidence in Profession

Any capability development need not mean that students can do the work efficiently and confidently. A confidence can be generated through a feedback system, exposure to work-life balance and situations

and practical experiences. This, moreover, enables them to inculcate confidence and perception in developing a professional way to handle unfamiliar situations and enables them to make the right decision with the application of knowledge. This framework takes into consideration confidence and assistance as important variables which connect the capability development with readiness to take up any challenge in a career.

Perceived career readiness

It represents the overall assessment of a student to enter and start the work. It also includes the confidence and perception in the ability to perform the task and how efficiently they can adapt in changing environments and respond to obstacles in a professional way. Moreover, readiness in a career is conceptualised as a perceived outcome rather than a permanent state of mind. It is the link between the resources, opportunities and the way of development of confidence professionally.

This framework never states that a strict line should be followed. Students can follow front and back based on the situations, new challenges and what type of decision needs to be taken. The proposed framework is presented in Fig. 4.

Source: Developed Conceptual Model, 2026

The thematic findings suggest that career readiness cannot be adequately explained as the accumulation of disciplinary knowledge, technical competencies, or employability skills alone. Rather, participants consistently described career readiness as a developmental process through which educational experiences enable the transformation of academic knowledge into workplace-relevant capability. Building on these findings, the Knowledge-to-Capability Translation (K-TAC) Framework is proposed as a student-centred conceptual model that explains how management education contributes to perceived career readiness.

The framework extends existing employability research by shifting attention from employability as an outcome to employability as a process. Traditional employability models typically focus on the possession of skills, competencies, or graduate attributes. While such perspectives remain important, the narratives of Generation Z management students indicate that the mere possession of knowledge does not automatically lead to feelings of professional preparedness. Instead, students emphasised the importance of opportunities that allow them to translate theoretical understanding into practice, develop confidence through experience, and construct a professional identity capable of responding to workplace challenges.

Knowledge Resources is a component that encompasses the theoretical grounding offered by management education which consists of various theories, frameworks, models, and discipline-based knowledge. Participants' posts and discussions revealed that they recognized the value of the theoretical aspect but rarely perceived knowledge as an end in itself. Knowledge was rather understood as a basic resource which is to be put into practice. This finding contradicts the views that solely academic success is an adequate measurement of career preparedness.

Translation Opportunities were discovered as the main mechanism of the framework. The students identified internships, live projects, simulations, case method, communication with the industry, competitions, and group work as the effective ways of making the academic knowledge applicable. The findings show that the effectiveness of management education depends upon what is taught and how much opportunities are provided to the students to test their knowledge (Jackson, 2015; Kolb, 1984).

The third part, Capability Development, refers to the skills gained through activities related to translation work. Participants mentioned Communication, Critical thinking, Teamwork, Decision Making, Adaptability, Digital competence, and AI literacy as results of practical experience rather than as gifted abilities and the results of specific isolated instruction. The framework therefore sees capability as a dynamic and developmental process resulting from systematic practice, reflection, and realization.

The fourth part, Professional Confidence and Agency, brings in an important psychological dimension to employability capacity building (Bandura, 1997; Rothwell, Herbert, & Rothwell, 2008). It is provided by the results showing that competence does not mean effective work in a professional environment if students do not have confidence in their ability to perform well. The students discussed how they connected internships, presentations, projects, and feedback with confidence in the possibilities of their contribution to the organization. Thus, the framework states that confidence and agency are understood as mediators of the process of converting acquired abilities into readiness.

The last element, Perceived Career Readiness, is the students' own judgement of their readiness to launch and work in the field. Interestingly, students' understanding of career readiness does not rest on the idea that it is something they achieve once they graduate. On the contrary, they consider career readiness to be a dynamic concept characterised by lifelong learning, flexibility, resilience, and readiness to deal with challenges.

Conclusion

K-TAC Framework gives its own unique interpretation of the relationship between workplace experience and career readiness since, unlike other frameworks, it suggests an iterative way of comprehension of career readiness. It means that over time and in response to various career situations students' capabilities can become stronger, reveal gaps in students' abilities or bring about new learning requirements. Therefore, the students can switch between different stages of the framework as they actively work on their professional development and grow in their confidence in their employability.

Theoretically, this framework largely contributes towards the various literatures in the field of management education by a process-orientated explanation of learning how the transition takes place from the learning to building confidence in the workplace. Rather than always considering employability as a gap in curriculum, the central problem lies in the translation from knowledge to capability (Tomlinson, 2017; Jackson & Bridgstock, 2021). This reconceptualisation pinpoints out that even if graduates possess good theoretical knowledge, they lack its application in jobs.

Practically speaking, the above-mentioned principles suggest that institutions be set up so that they aim at achieving not only the learning goals represented in the curricula but also at creating quality of experience that will be integrated into education systems. The practical involvement in the industry, the internships, tasks, simulations and other activities make the process of turning knowledge into potential possibilities effective. The educational process helps students build the necessary confidence and positive attitude towards their chances to get a job.

To summarize, the K-TAC framework implies that career readiness is considered a process of converting developmental processes in which knowledge is transformed into potential applications in the career.

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Generation Z postgraduate management students taking part in an online community study involves only voluntary participations from humans through an interview method and they were informed before the participation and consent was also obtained.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Authors' information (optional)

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Author Contribution

Author contributions: All authors contributed to the study conception and design. Jisha Vijay developed the research design and the Knowledge-to-Capability Translation (K-TAC) Framework, facilitated the online community and collected the data. Priyanka U conducted the literature review and contributed to the thematic analysis. The data were analysed by Jisha Vijay and Priyanka U. The first draft of the

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Availability of data and materials

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no datasets were generated or analysed during the current study. [Confirm: anonymised data from the planned study will be available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.]

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Figures

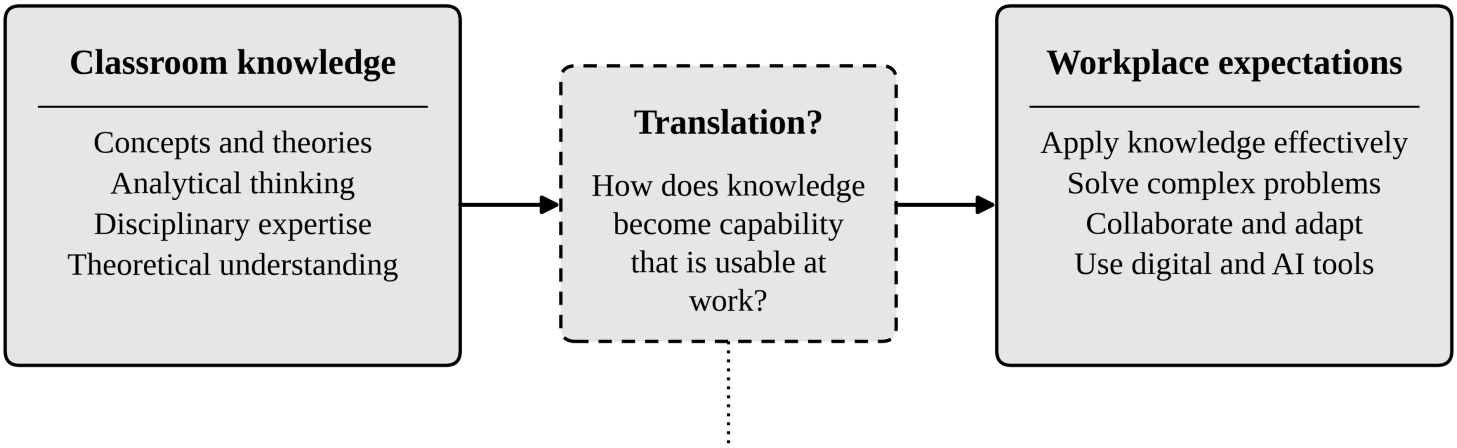


Figure 1

The knowledge-to-capability translation gap addressed in this study

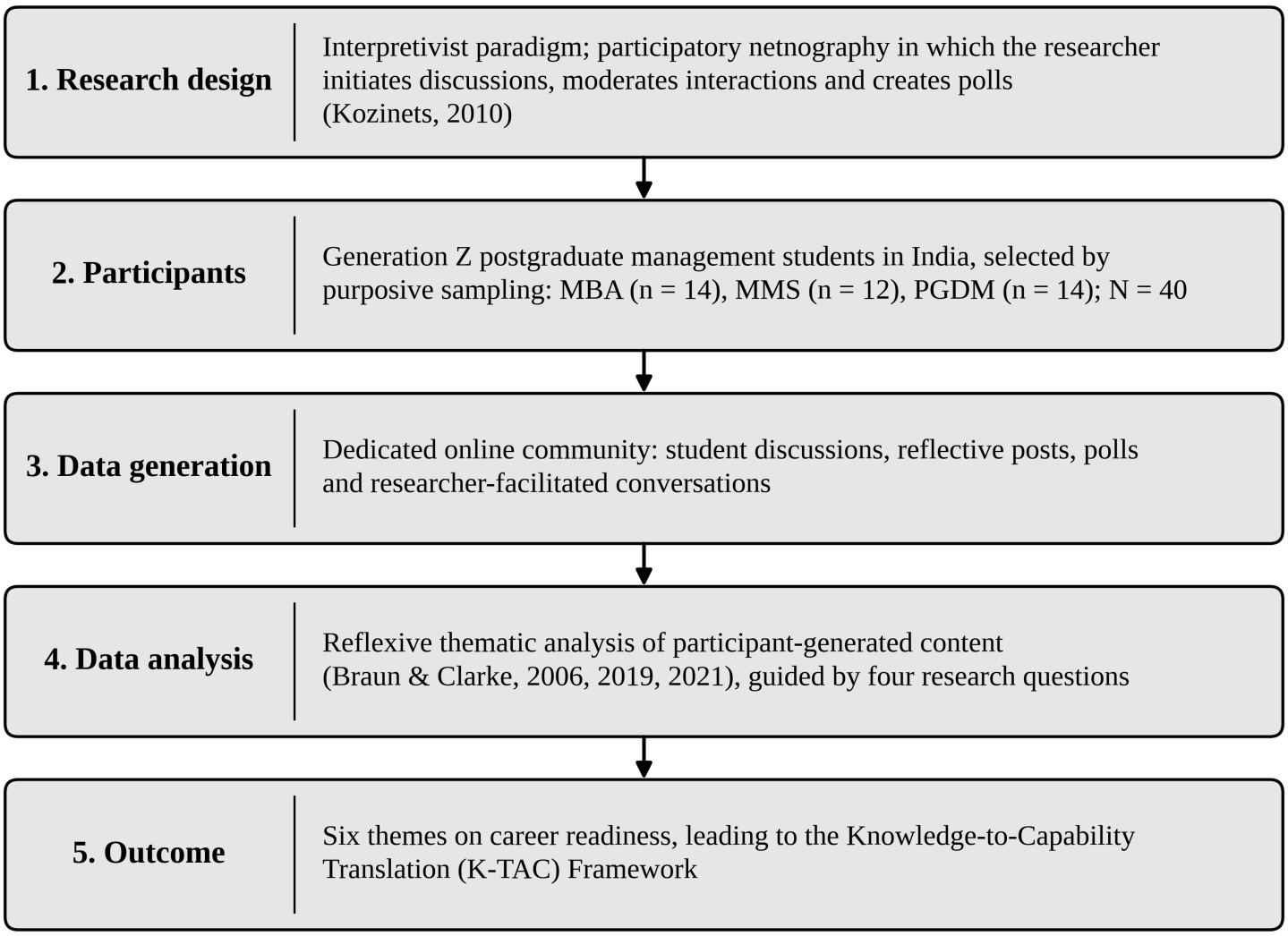


Figure 2

Research design of the study

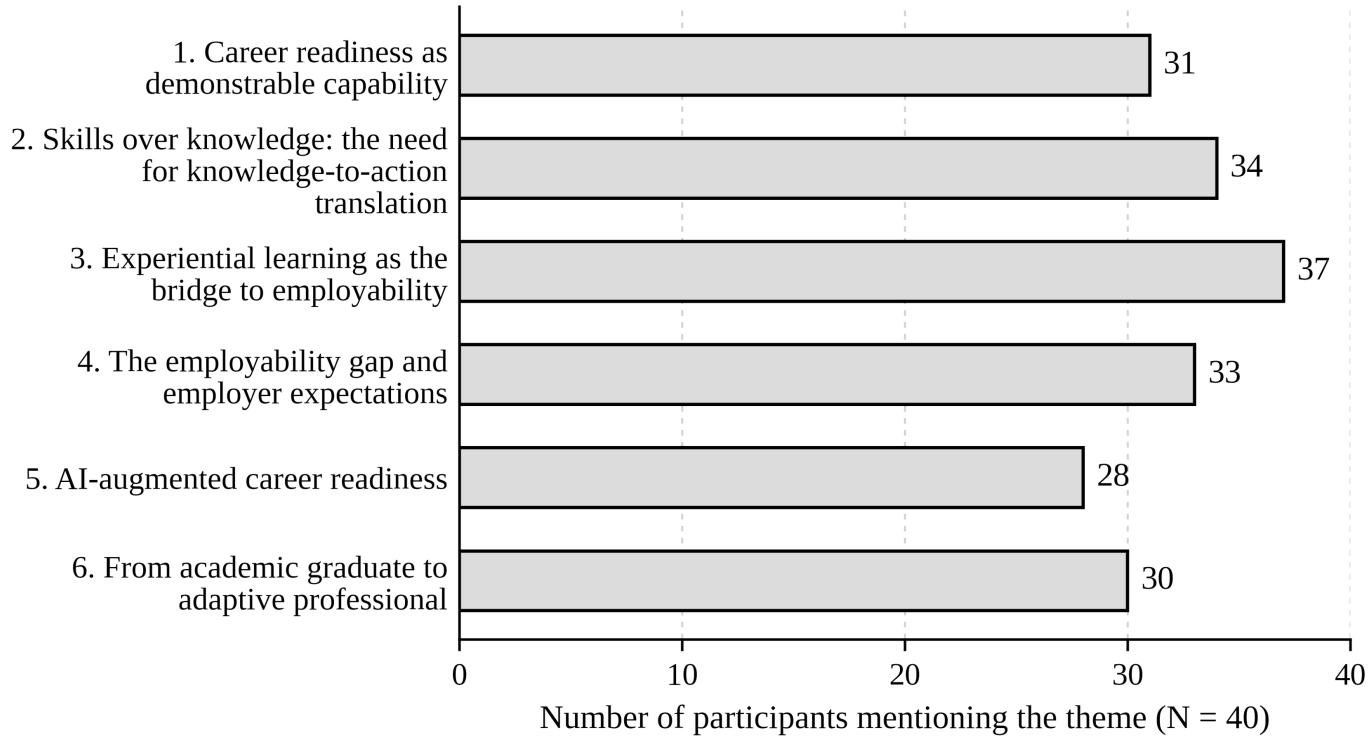


Figure 3

Number of participants mentioning each theme (N = 40)

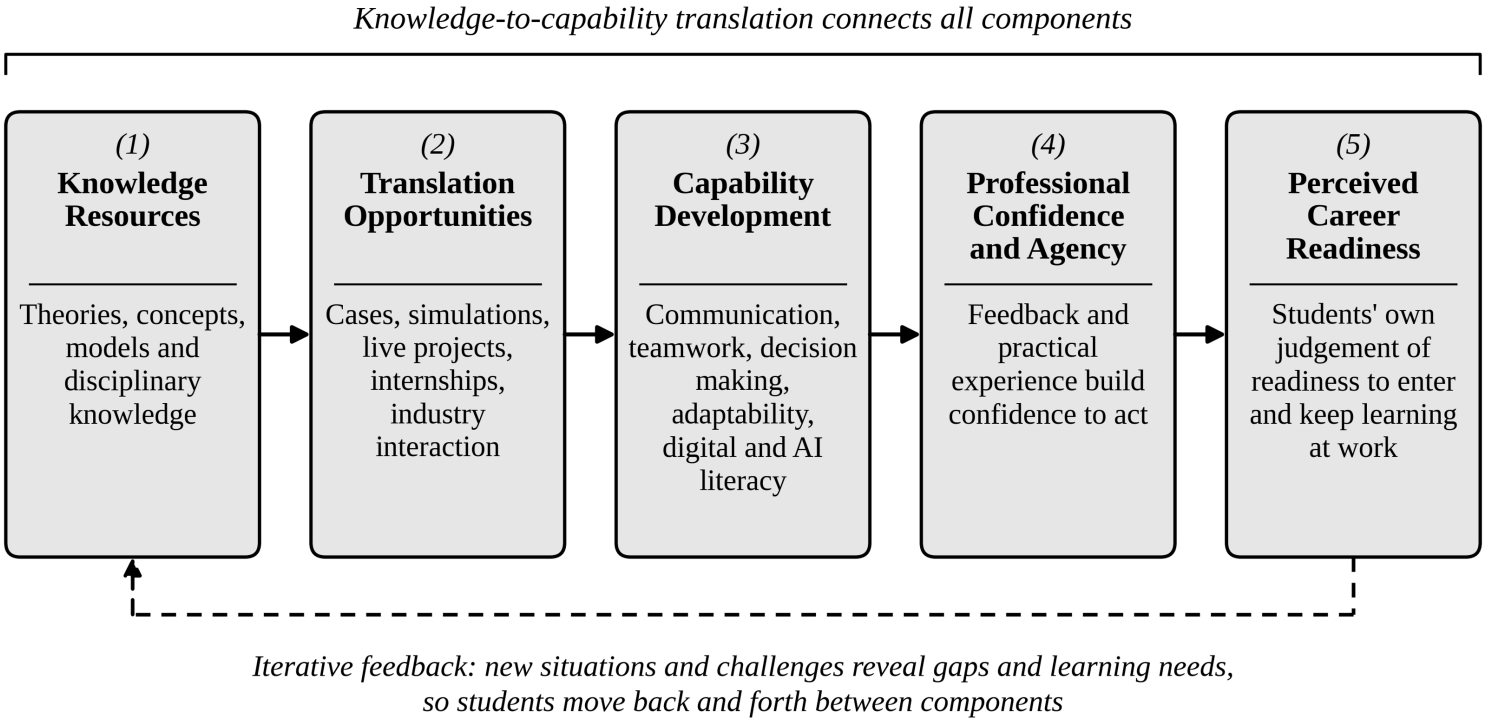


Figure 4

The Knowledge-to-Capability Translation (K-TAC) Framework

Source: Developed Conceptual Model, 2026