

**A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS
AND CAREER SUCCESS AMONG GEOLOGY GRADUATES OF
ABBOTTABAD UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY(AUST)**

THESIS

**In partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the Master of Management Degree**

FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS



Submitted by:

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**MASTER OF MANAGEMENT STUDY PROGRAM
UNIVERSITAS PEMBANGUNAN NASIONAL "VETERAN"**

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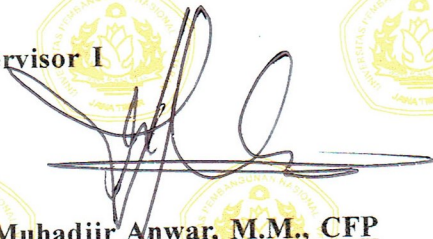
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FOREWORD

All praise and gratitude are due to **Allah SWT** for His endless blessings, mercy, and guidance, which have enabled the author to complete this master's thesis entitled "**A Phenomenological Study of Employability Skills and Career Success Among Geology Graduates of Abbottabad University of Science and Technology.**" Peace and blessings be upon **Prophet Muhammad ﷺ**, his family, his companions, and all those who follow his guidance until the Day of Judgment. This thesis is submitted as one of the requirements for obtaining the Master of Management degree at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional "Veteran" Jawa Timur.

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The author realizes that this thesis is not without limitations. It is hoped that this thesis will contribute to the development of knowledge in graduate employability, career development, and qualitative research, and provide practical insights for higher education institutions, employers, researchers, and future graduates.

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Ihtisam hussain

TABLE OF CONTENT

EXAMINER'S APPROVAL	ii
PLAGIARISM-FREE STATEMENT LETTER	iii
FOREWORD	iv
TABLE OF CONTENT	iv
LIST OF TABLE	vi
LIST OF FIGURE	vii
LIST OF APPENDIX	viii
ABSTRACT	ix
CHAPTER I	1
1.1 Problem Background	1
1.2 Research Question	9
1.3 Research Purpose.....	9
1.4 Benefits of Research	10
CHAPTER II	11
2.1 Review of Previous Research.....	11
2.2 Theoretical Review	17
2.1.1 Career Construction Theory (CCT).....	17
2.1.2 Concept of Employability Skills	20
2.1.3 Concept of Career Success.....	25
2.1.4 Integration of theory with previous research	29
2.3 Analysis Model.....	33
CHAPTER III	36
3.1 Research Approach.....	36
3.2 Research Constructs.....	38
3.2.1 Employability Skills	38
3.2.2 Career Success.....	40
3.3 Research Informants	43
3.4 Data Collection Method.....	47

3.5 Data Analysis Technique	50
3.6 Data Triangulation	52
CHAPTER IV	55
4.1 Description of the Research Object	55
4.1.1 Overview of Abbottabad University of Science and Technology (AUST) 55	
4.1.2 Overview of the Geology Program.....	58
4.1.3 Profile of Research Participants	60
4.1.4 Summary of Participants’ Demographic Characteristics	64
4.2 Overview of Participants’ Experiences.....	66
4.3 Research findings	72
4.3.1 Employability Skills of Geology Graduates	72
4.3.2 Career Success among Geology Graduates.....	112
4.3.3 Contribution of Employability Skills to Career Success Among Geology Graduates.....	118
4.4 Discussion	126
4.4.1 Analysis Using Career Construction Theory (CCT)	126
CHAPTER V.....	150
5.1 Conclusions	150
5.2 Recommendations.....	152
5.2.1 Implications.....	152
5.2.2 Recommendations	155
5.2.3 Research Limitations	161
5.2.4 Suggestions for Further Research.....	163
REFERENCES	164
APPENDIX	169

LIST OF TABLE

Table 3. 2 Career Overview of Informants 47

Table 4. 1 Profile of Research Participants 63

LIST OF FIGURE

Figure 2.1 Research Framework.....	35
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LIST OF APPENDIX

Appendix 1. Interview Guide 169

Appendix 2 Informant Consent Form 172

Appendix 3 Photos of Interviews Session 179

Appendix 4 Interview Transcripts 181

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ABSTRACT

Geology graduates in Pakistan face significant challenges in transitioning from higher education to the workforce. The disparity between university curricula, which primarily emphasize theoretical knowledge, and the practical competency demands of the labor market has resulted in substantial skill gaps, particularly in communication, teamwork, adaptability, problem-solving, and professional discipline. This situation is further exacerbated by limited employment opportunities within the geology sector, forcing many graduates to pursue alternative career paths outside their field of expertise. This phenomenon raises a fundamental question regarding how employability skills contribute to shaping the career success of geology graduates within a competitive and dynamic labor market.

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of seven geology graduates from the 2021 cohort at Abbottabad University of Science and Technology (AUST) through semi-structured interviews. Participants were purposively selected from diverse career backgrounds, including the mining, oil and gas, banking, education, and occupational health and safety sectors.

The thematic analysis revealed six major findings: (1) communication skills as the foundation of career development; (2) technical and practical competencies as key determinants of employability; (3) teamwork and collaborative learning as drivers of professional development; (4) adaptability and lifelong learning in career development; (5) problem-solving, professional discipline, and responsibility as the basis of career success; and (6) career success being perceived as professional growth, recognition, and personal fulfillment. The findings indicate that employability skills are transferable across sectors and serve as a bridge between academic education and labor market demands. The integration of Career Construction Theory (CCT) provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how employability skills are translated into sustainable career outcomes. The implications of this study recommend strengthening practical training, industry collaboration, and the development of soft skills within higher education curricula, particularly in the field of geology.

Keywords: employability skills, career success, geology graduates, phenomenology, Career Construction Theory.