RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PROFILE AND EMPLOYABILITY OF POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARS

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ABSTRACT

Technically qualified manpower provided the base for the radical metamorphosis of agriculture-what William Doug of USA called Green Revolution. Employability refers to a person's capability of gaining initial employment, maintaining employment and obtaining new employment if required. In simple terms employability is about capability of getting and keeping fulfilling work. Employers seek to recruit new graduates that can instantly become involved in delivering value to the company without having to make use of extended induction programmes. Such expectations require graduate to display qualities that will enable them to "hit the ground running" and stay abreast of the latest developments in a changing work environment. To this effect, the attributes needed to make agricultural graduates employable in the new world of work need to be investigated. The study was undertaken using purposively sampling of 120 postgraduate research scholars studying in any semester and subjects at College of Agriculture, Junagadh Agricultural University. In this research the data for the relationship between the profile and employability of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University were collected, data were classified, tabulated, analyzed and interpreted in order to make the findings meaningful. The statistical measures such as frequency, percentage, arithmetic mean and co-efficient of correlation were used in the study. The level of employability was observed significantly higher among those postgraduate scholars, who had better academic performance, highly educated father and mother, higher degree of library exposure and increased level of job preference. Majority (72.5 per cent) of the postgraduate scholars associated with employability had above average of employability, 10.83 per cent had high level while only 16.67 per cent had average level of overall employability.

Keywords : *Relationship, profile, employability, postgraduate, scholars*

INTRODUCTION

Individuals enter higher education mainly to improve their future employment opportunities, but a degree no longer secures employment. Companies expect apart from academic capabilities, additional qualities and competencies of the individual that will facilitate the most successful and speedy transition from higher education to workplace (Holmes and Miller, 2000). In fact, employers seek to recruit new graduates that can instantly become involved in delivering value to the company without having to make use of extended induction programmes (Barthorpe and Hall, 2000). Such expectations require graduate to display qualities that will enable them to "hit the ground running" and stay abreast of the latest developments in a changing work environment. To this effect, the attributes needed to make graduates employable in the new world of work need to be investigated.

Employability refers to a person's capability of gaining initial employment, maintaining employment and obtaining new employment if required (Hillage and pollard, 1998). In simple terms employability is about capability of getting and keeping fulfilling work. More comprehensively, employability is the capability to move self-sufficient within the labour market to realize potential through sustainable employment. For individuals, employability depends on the knowledge, skills and abilities they possess, the way they use those assets and present them to the employers and the context in which they seek work. Employability is not just about vocational and academic skills. Individuals need relevant and usable labour market information available to them. The factors that help people to be employable include the knowledge and abilities relating to a particular job, the ability to identify suitable job opportunities, self-presentation on applications and interviews and external factors such as the job market and personal circumstances (Sasidharan, 2013).

India has been a major seat of learning for thousands

of years. The present format of higher education in India was started in 1857 with the inception of universities in the three presidency towns. At present, India possesses a highly developed higher education system which offers facility of education and training in almost all aspects of human creative and intellectual endeavors such as arts and humanities, natural, mathematical and social sciences, engineering; medicine, dentistry, agriculture, education, law, commerce and management, music and performing arts, national and foreign languages, culture, communications etc. (Mishra, 2013).

Technically qualified manpower provided the base for the radical metamorphosis of agriculture - what William Doug of USA called Green Revolution. A study by IFPRI on linkages between government spending, growth in productivity and poverty in rural India showed that investment in education was among the major contributors for both poverty reduction and productivity enhancement (Anonymous, 2009). Right since independence, the country laid maximum emphasis on the development of its human resource through education. In support of that slowly and steadily a comprehensive system of higher agricultural education has been evolved and developed. The system consist of 59 State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) and their constituent/affiliated colleges, 5 Deemed to be Universities (DUs), 4 Central Universities (CUs) having agricultural faculties, one Central Agricultural University (CAU) and a number of public and private funded Agricultural Colleges. Among the Deemed Universities, India Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) was established a century ago and was given the status of Deemed University in 1958. The other Deemed Universities viz., Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI), Izzatnagar (U.P.), National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI), Karnal and Central Institute of Fisheries Education (CIFE) Mumbai, caters for quality education in animal science, dairy and fishery sectors respectively. The SAUs are spread over the entire country and cater for human resource development in agriculture and allied fields in different agro climatic regions. At present, undergraduate programmes are offered in eleven major disciplines such as Agriculture, Horticulture, Fisheries, Forestry, Home Science, Sericulture, Agricultural Engineering, Dairy Technology, Food Science and Technology, Agricultural Marketing, Banking and Cooperation and Veterinary Science. At Postgraduate level, programmes are offered in as many as 65 different disciplines. All Universities also offer Ph.D. programmes in these subjects. Compared to a total intake capacity of about 1,500 students per year at the time of independence currently, about 30,000 agricultural graduates and postgraduates are produced every year (Sasidharan, 2013).

The agricultural graduate and postgraduates should be enabled with some marketable professional abilities and employability skills to be successful and economic unit in the competitive technology driven world. Those specific attributes and skills that enable effective and wise use of knowledge, experience and formal education includes written communication viz; ability to express clearly in writing, verbal communication like expressing ideas clearly and confidently in speech, critical thinking skills, flexibility to successfully adapt changing situations and environment, persuading ability to convince others to discuss and reach agreement, teamwork for working confidently within a group, leadership quality to be able to motivate and direct others, planning and organizing capacity to be capable to plan activities and carry them through effectively, investigating, analyzing and problem solving aptitude for gathering information systematically to establish facts and principles, numeracy to carry out arithmetic operations/understand data and computing skills as well as developing professionalism. Value and ethics like honesty and personal quality like responsibility, self-confidence and self-reliance are also very much essential for developing the employability for agricultural graduates.

To this effect, the attributes needed to make graduates employable in the new world of work need to be investigated in this study titled "Relationship between the profile and employability of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University"

METHODOLOGY

The study was undertaken using purposively sampling of 120 {forty females, seventy males and ten in-service} postgraduate research scholars studying in any semester and subjects at College of Agriculture, Junagadh Agricultural University, Junagadh. The basic information regarding the postgraduate research scholars was collected from the P.G Branch of College of Agriculture, Junagadh.

Research design

The present study was conducted applying Ex-Post-Facto research design; this design was used for the study because the researcher does not have any control on the independent variables of selected respondents. According to Kerlinger (1976) Ex-Post-Facto research design is worthy to apply when the independent variables have already acted upon.

Measurement of employability of postgraduate scholars studying in College of Agriculture JAU

To measure the level of employability of postgraduate scholars in College of Agriculture JAU, a systematic procedure was followed. First and foremost, 18 indicators were collected on the basis of review of literature and discussion with major guide and other experts of the department of Agricultural Extension and the University. To know relevancy of each of the 18 indicators, a list of primarily selected indicators of 18 components was sent to 30 experts to understand employability of the respondents. The judges were requested to give response in two way viz. "relevant or non-relevant" for each component. The responses for all the components were collected personally and their relevancy in percentage was calculated. The components which were found relevant to be included in the final list of measuring overall employability of postgraduate scholars by more than 80 percent of the experts was selected as the final components. Out of 18 components, fourteen (14) viz., Information Communication Technology skills, Ability to face interviews, Knowledge about current issues, Self-confidence, Team work and coordination, Fundamental employability aptitude, General knowledge about agriculture, Knowledge about government policies on agriculture and rural development, Creativity skills in solving problems, Leadership quality, Attitude towards agriculture education, Competition orientation, Habit of information collection, Communication skills were finally selected to measure overall employability of postgraduate scholars.

The fourteen (14) variables which were related having relevance with the study was finally selected and sent again secondly to another thirty (30) experts to give opinion to decide weightage of each indicator to calculate overall employability of postgraduate scholars. Finally, a scale of measurement was developed and sent to another 30 experts of the department of Agricultural Extension and the University. The judges were requested to give response in four way viz. "Most relevant" (M), "Relevant" (R), "Least Relevant" (L) and "Non Relevant" (N). The selected questions on the scale in the "Most relevant" (M), and "Relevant" (R) category were finally used to construct the interview schedule.

To find out the overall employability index, the following formula was used.

Overall Employability Index = $(R_1/M_1) \times W_1 + (R_2/M_2) \times W_2 + \ldots\ldots + (R_n/M_n) \times W_n$

Where:

R_1, R2……..R_n = Received score for each indicator by each respondent

M1, M2……M_n = Maximum score one can get for each indicator

W1, W2……W_n = Weightage score of each indicator received from each experts

Statistical frame work for analysis of data

The data were collected through interview schedule and analysed in terms of percentage, frequency and mean scores. The Pearson's coefficient of correlation was used to measure relationship between dependent and independent variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROFILE AND EMPLOYABILITY OF POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARS

With a view to studying the role of independent variables on the level of overall employability of the postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University, coefficient of correlation was worked out and results are presented in Table 1 and depicted in Fig. 1.

(1) Academic performance

The data seen in Table 1 showed that the academic performance was found positively and highly significant with the employability of postgraduate research scholars studying in JAU. The result indicated that employability was observed better among those postgraduate scholars who had higher academic performance. It is natural that individuals having high level of academic performance will have better perception to develop ability to get employment as well as maintain it. The high level of academic performance means more involvement in developing necessary soft and hard skills like talent, knowledge and positive attitude towards content to be learned to be an employable personality. This was observed true here in this study. Therefore, null hypothesis (Ho) has been rejected and it can be concluded that there was positive and highly significant relationship between academic performance of the postgraduate research scholars studying in JAU and their employability. Similar findings were also reported by Aher (2010), Christian (2010), Dobariya (2011), Dadhania (2011), Sasidharan (2013).

(2) Age and employability

The result from Table 1 revealed that there was non-significant relationship between age of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University and their employability. The result indicates that age of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University did not

play a role in developing their employability. Nevertheless, it was observed that employability varied little among those postgraduate scholars who were older. Reason had been that the sense of responsibility of older postgraduate scholars was higher than the younger once. Still, the null hypothesis (Ho) in case of age of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University was accepted and it was concluded that there was non-significant relationship between age and employability of postgraduate scholars. The results were in line with the observations of Dadhania (2011).

Table 1: Relationship between profile of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University and their overall employability **n=120**

Sr. No.	Independent variables	Correlation Coefficient (r)
A	**Personal variables**	
X_1	Academic Performance	0.277 **
X_2	Age	0.041 NS
X_3	Sex	0.066 NS
X_4	Marital Status	0.140 NS
X_5	Medium of instruction at school level	0.143 NS
B	**Socio-economic variables**	
X_6	Native of the respondent	0.133 NS
X_7	Annual income	0.144 NS
X_8	Father's education	0.275 **
X_9	Mother's Education	0.201 *
C	**Situation-communication variables**	
X_{10}	Involvement in extracurricular activities	0.148 NS
X_{11}	Library exposure	0.284 **
X_{12}	Computer exposure	0.166 NS
X_{13}	Internet exposure	0.119 NS
D	**Psychological variables**	
X_4	Job preference	0.273 **
X_5	Achievement motivation	0.115 NS

* Significant at 0.05 level of probability NS = Non-significant ** Significant at 0.01 level of probability

(3) Sex and employability

It is evident from Table 1 that there was non-significant relationship between sex and employability of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University. This indicates that sex of the students did not play any role in developing employability among postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University. The result shows that level of employability was similar among the postgraduate scholars irrespective of been male or female. This reveals that educating the girl child is as important as educating the boy child. Understanding the above fact, the null hypothesis (Ho) in case of sex of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University was accepted and it was concluded that there was non-significant relationship between sex and employability of postgraduate scholars. The results were in line with the observations of Unterhalther, (2006) and Anonymous 2015.

(4) Marital status and employability

The result from Table 1 revealed that there existed non-significant relationship between marital status of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University and their employability. The result indicates that marital status of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University did not play a role in developing their employability. Reason had been that few of the postgraduate scholars were married (less than 20 per cent). Hence, the null hypothesis (Ho) in case of marital status of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University was accepted and it was concluded that there was non-significant relationship between marital status and employability of postgraduate scholars.

(5) Medium of instruction at school level and employability

The result from Table 1 indicated that there existed non-significant relationship between medium of instruction at school level of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University and their employability. The result indicates that medium of instruction of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University did not play a role in developing their employability. It can be observed that employability was similarly positive among the postgraduate

scholars who did their schooling in English medium than those in any other local language medium. The result can be justified by the fact that employability varied little among those postgraduate scholars who were from English medium or any other local language medium at school level. Hence, the null hypothesis (Ho) in case of medium of instruction at school level of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University was accepted and it was concluded that there was non-significant relationship between medium of instruction at school level and employability of postgraduate scholars. The results were in line with the observations of Dadhania (2011) and Sasidharan (2013).

(6) Native of the student and employability

It was evident from Table 1 that there was non-significant relationship between native and employability of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University. This indicates that native of the students did not play any role in developing employability among postgraduate scholars studying in higher agriculture education. The result shows that level of employability was almost similar among the postgraduate scholars coming from rural or urban natives. The result indirectly indicates that sensitivity to develop employability was seen similar among irrespective type of native of the scholars.

Understanding the above fact, the null hypothesis (Ho) in case of native of postgraduate scholars studying in higher agriculture education was accepted and it was concluded that there was non-significant relationship between native and employability of postgraduate scholars. The results were in line with the observations of Patel (2004), Christian (2010), Pattar (2011) Dadhania (2011) and Sasidharan (2013).

(7) Annual family income and employability

The data presented in Table 1 showed that there was non-significant relationship between annual family income and employability of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University. The result shows that employability was observed almost comparable among postgraduate research scholars with their irrespective level of family income.

The reason for this non-significant relationship might be due to the fact that the annual family income varied least among the postgraduate scholars, so that it did not make any significant impact on their employability. It is natural that as far as development of employability is concerned everyone viz. scholars from high, medium or low level of income groups will have similar level of interest to be employable person. This was seen in this study also. Hence this provides sufficient ground to accept the null hypothesis (Ho) in case of family income of postgraduate research scholars and it can be concluded that there was non-significant relationship between family income of postgraduate research scholars and their employability. Similar observations were made by Shingare (2005), Jat (2009), Dobariya (2011), Dadhania (2011) and Sasidharan (2013).

(8) Father's education and employability

It was evident from the data presented in

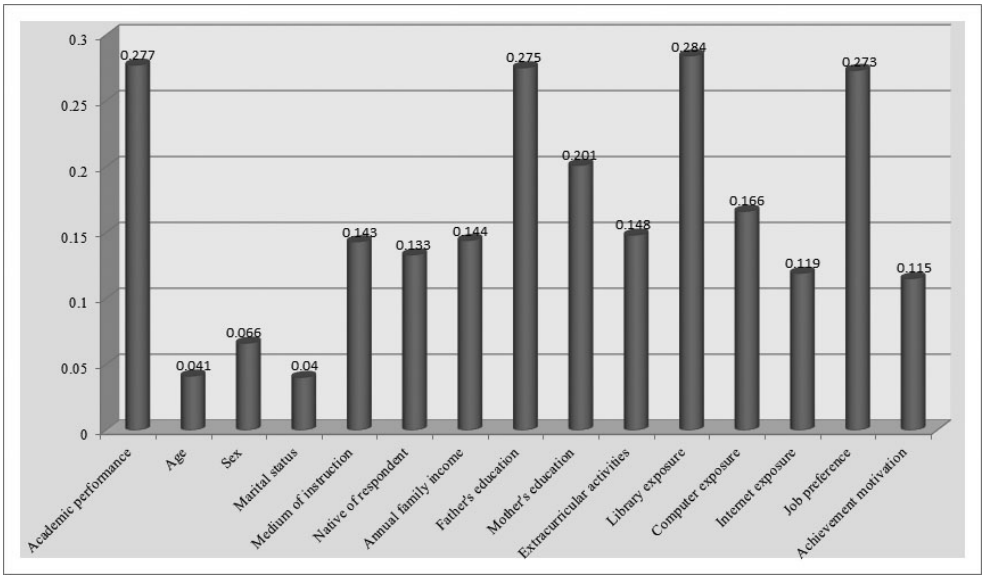

Fig 1: Relationship between profile of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University and their overall employability

Table 1 that there existed positive and highly significant relationship between father's education and employability of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University. This leads to reject the null hypothesis (Ho) in case of father's education, hence concluded that there was positively significant relationship between fathers' education of postgraduate agricultural scholars and their employability. The result shows that level of employability of those scholars was better; whose fathers' education level was higher. The reason for this might be that educated fathers might have understood the need of developing employability among their children and motivated them to gain and maintain successful careers. Also every educated father will want his son or daughter to be better in life than himself, hence will motivated them to gain and maintain successful careers. This finding is in concurrence with the findings reported by Aher (2010), Christian (2010), Dadhania (2011) and Sasidharan (2013).

(9) Mother's education and employability

The result from Table 1 indicated that mother's education of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University had a positively significant relationship with their employability. The result emphasized that postgraduate scholars with educated mothers showed better level of employability. Understanding the importance of developing employability skills in this competitive era, the educated mothers might have motivated their children to think and act positively towards employability. Thus, it can be said that educated mothers of the postgraduate scholars encouraged and stimulated them to develop their overall employability skills.

Thus, Null Hypothesis (Ho) was rejected and it was concluded that there was positively significant relationship between degree of mother's education of the postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University and their level of employability. The result was in conformity with the results of Aher (2010), Christian (2010) and Sasidharan (2013).

(10) Involvement in extracurricular activities and employability

The data observed in Table 1 revealed that there was positive non- significant relationship between degree of involvement in extracurricular activities of the postgraduate scholars and their employability, reflecting that employability was observed identically positive among those postgraduate scholars who were more or less active in extracurricular activities. Those postgraduate scholars with more involvement in extracurricular activities seem to have the same employability as that of those with less involvement extracurricular activities. Another reason for the positive non-significant relationship might be that the postgraduate scholars had more or less the same degree of involvement in extracurricular activities. This leads to accept the null hypothesis (Ho) in case of involvement in extracurricular activities, that there was non-significant relationship between involvement in extracurricular activities of postgraduate scholars in Junagadh Agricultural University and their employability.

The result was in line with the findings made by Christian (2010) and not in line with the findings of Dadhania (2011) and Sasidharan (2013).

(11) Library exposure

The result observed in Table 1 discloses a positive and highly significant relationship between library exposure of postgraduate scholars in Junagadh Agricultural University and their employability. The result indicates that employability was observed better among those postgraduate scholars who had higher degree of library exposure. The postgraduate scholars might have utilized the library facilities not only for academics and research purposes but also for job preparations and developing their employability skills. In a circular dated 28th January, 2015; No. JAU/COL/LIB/58/15, the University library had announced to the Junagadh Agricultural University Fraternity that they had increased online access of e-books by 227 in addition to the previous available e-books which users can access at www.astralebooks.com. This effort by the University authority had played significant role in developing employability among the scholars. This might be also one of the reasons for the positive and highly significant relationship between library exposure and employability of postgraduate scholars. This finding leads to reject the null hypothesis (Ho) in case of library exposure and thus concluded that there was positive and highly significant relationship between library exposure and employability of postgraduate scholars. Similar observations were also made by Patel and Chauhan (2005), Pattar (2011) and Sasidharan (2013).

(12) Computer exposure and employability

It was revealed from Table 1 that there was positive non-significant relationship between computer exposure of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University and their employability. The result observed in one of the previous tables indicates that computer exposure of most of the postgraduate scholars was positively higher and similar, but did not have any significant impact on their level of employability. Hence, it was seen that level of employability was almost parallel among postgraduate

research scholars with their irrespective level of computer exposure. Thus, this leads to accept the null hypothesis (Ho) in terms of computer exposure and it was concluded that there was non-significant relationship between computer exposure of postgraduate research scholars and their level of employability. The result was in line with the findings of Shah (2006), Dobariya (2011) and Sasidharan (2013).

(13) Internet exposure and employability

It is revealed from Table 1 that there was positive non-significant relationship between computer exposure of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University and their employability. The result indicates that internet exposure did not play any role in developing the employability of postgraduate scholars. It can also be inferred that internet exposure of most of the postgraduate scholars was optimistically higher and similar, but did not have any significant impact on their level of employability. Thus, this leads to accept the null hypothesis (Ho) in terms of computer exposure and it was concluded that there was non-significant relationship between internet exposure of postgraduate research scholars and their level of employability. The result was in line with the findings of Shah (2006), Dobariya (2011) and Sasidharan (2013).

(14) Job preference and employability

The data from Table 1 specified that relationship between employability of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University and their level of job preference was observed positive and highly significant. The positive and highly significant relationship discloses that level of employability was higher among postgraduate scholars with diversified interest to be part of academic, research, farming (entrepreneurship), extension related jobs and dairy farming (entrepreneurship). It is natural that the person with high degree of interest of diversified job preference will always try to make them vigorous and capable developing employable capabilities and soft skills to get various jobs to grab higher job opportunities. This might be the reason to have positive and highly significant relationship between job preference of postgraduate scholars in Junagadh Agricultural University and their level of employability.

Thus, null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected in case of job preference and it was concluded that there was positive and highly significant relationship between job preference and employability of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University. This finding is in line with observations of Christian (2010) and Sasidharan (2013) and not in line with the results reported by Shah (2006).

(15) Achievement motivation and employability

The data presented in Table 1 shows that there existed a positive but non-significant relationship between achievement motivation and employability of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University. The result reflects that employability was observed identically positive among the postgraduate scholars irrespective of their level of achievement motivation. The reason for this might be that level of achievement motivation was observed similar and higher among the postgraduate scholars, so that it did not make any significant impact on their employability.

Hence, the null hypothesis (Ho) was accepted and it was concluded that there existed a non-significant relationship between achievement motivation and employability of postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University. Similar observations were also made by Shah (2006), Patel (2007), Pattar (2011), Sasidharan (2013), Sunil and Vinaya (2016) and Soni et al. (2017) and Patel et al. (2017).

OVERALL EMPLOYABILITY

Overall employability was measured considering fourteen indicators. The fourteen components selected as indicators to measure overall employability of postgraduate scholars were fundamental employability aptitude, general knowledge about agriculture, knowledge about current issues, knowledge about government policies on agriculture and rural development, communication skills, Information Communication Technology skills, ability to face interviews, self-confidence, competition orientation, habit of information collection, attitude towards agriculture education, team work and coordination, creativity skills in solving problems and leadership quality.

It is observed from Fig. 1 that a great majority (72.50 per cent) of the postgraduate scholars studying in Junagadh Agricultural University had above average level of overall employability, followed by 16.67 per cent of them who had average level of overall employability and the rest of the 10.83 per cent had high level of overall employability. It was interesting to note that none of the postgraduate scholars studying in higher agriculture education had below average or poor level of overall employability. Thus it can be concluded that a vast majority (83.33 per cent) of the postgraduate scholars associated with employability had above average to high level of overall employability.

CONCLUSION

The level of employability was observed significantly higher among those postgraduate scholars, who had better academic performance, highly educated father and

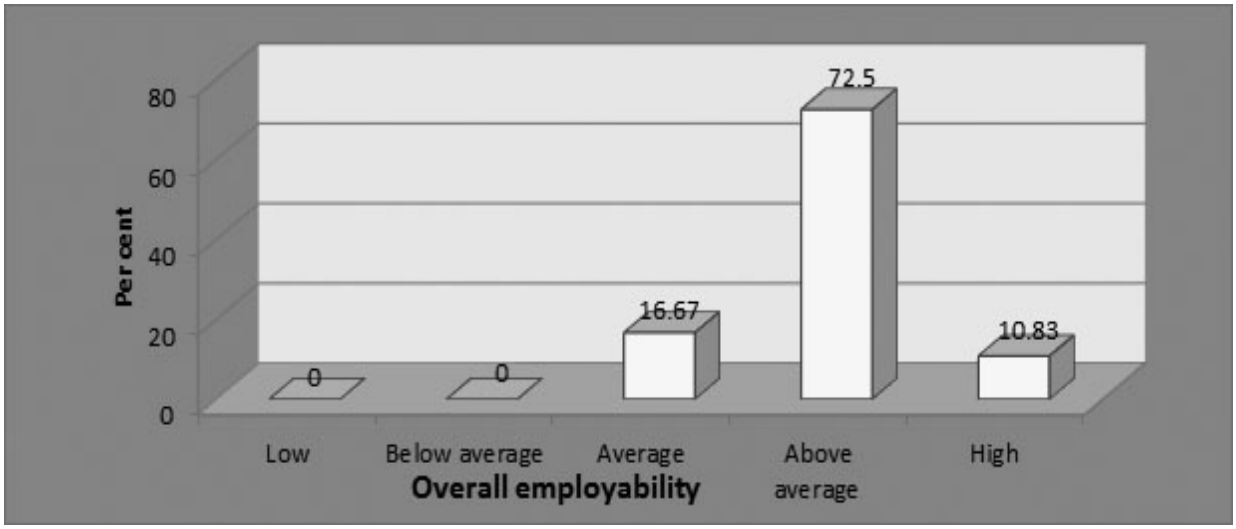

Fig. 2 : Postgraduate scholars according to their overall employability

mother, higher degree of library exposure and increased level of job preference.

The level of employability was observed almost similar among postgraduate scholars irrespective of age, sex, marital status, medium of instruction at school level, native, annual family income, involvement in extracurricular activities, computer exposure, internet exposure and achievement motivation.

The study established a positive relationship between library exposure and employability of the postgraduate scholars. Frequent useful visits to the library provided the scholars with exposure to various journals books and related publication which might have helped in widening their knowledge levels and hence their employability skills. Thus proper motivation from the side of the teaching faculty and continuous evaluation should be taken up to increase the library exposure of the scholars leading to the development of their employability skills.

Considering the world as a global village, a comparative study on the employability of postgraduate scholars in SAUs of India and other developing countries can be carried out by future foreign students.

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