

CONSTRAINTS FACED AND SUGGESTION OFFERED BY POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARS IN DEVELOPING EMPLOYABILITY

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ABSTRACT

Employability is not just about vocational and academic skills. Individuals need relevant and usable labour market information to help them make informed decisions about the labour market options available to them. The factors that help people employable include the knowledge and abilities relating to a particular job, the ability to identify suitable job opportunities, self-presentation on resumes and at interviews and external factors such as the job market and personal circumstances. The agricultural graduates and post graduates should be enabled with some marketable professional abilities and employability skills to be successful in this competitive technology driven world. Therefore, the study was undertaken on constraints faced and suggestion offered by employability of postgraduate scholars studying in JAU, Junagadh. The sampling of 120 postgraduate research scholars studying in any semester and subjects at College of Agriculture, Junagadh Agricultural University. The result of research finding revealed that the foremost constraints as realized by the postgraduate scholars for low level of employability were education system does not provide platform to build necessary confidence among scholars to face the job competition got first ranked, followed by inadequate language competency in English among the scholars, low level of realization to have self-motivation among the scholars to develop their employability skills, lack of desirable employability generating aptitude among teachers involved in higher agriculture education and improper guidance of the postgraduate scholars by the major guide ranked with second, third, fourth and fifth, respectively. The important suggestion offered by the postgraduate scholars to develop their employability were; need to include more practical exercises in the course curriculum to improve team work and coordination got first ranked, followed by provide better training to the scholars to face the job interviews confidently, give more thrust to develop entrepreneurship and self-employment among the agriculture graduates than preferring the white collared jobs, integrate the RAWE programme with various industries and successful private firms to give more exposure to the job situations and reduce the work load on lecturers to be able to give more attention to postgraduate scholars ranked with second, third, fourth and fifth as realize to address by the postgraduate scholars to make themselves employable, respectively.

Keywords : constraints, suggestions, employability, postgraduate, scholars

INTRODUCTION

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 being capable of getting and keeping fulfilling work. More comprehensively, employability is the capability to move self-sufficiently within the labour market to realise 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.

Youth unemployment has been at an increasing rate in India. Despite the whopping rise in the number of

agricultural graduates and postgraduates every year, hardly there is an attempt that links trends of employment needs of various sectors of economy (public, private or self-entrepreneurship) and clients (students, farmers and agro-industry) against the kind and number of manpower produced by the system of higher agricultural education. The need for developing the employability level of agricultural graduates is therefore the need of the hour. With one of the youngest populations in the world, a low dependency ratio (ratio of those not in the labour force to those in the labour force) and a surplus workforce, India has a strong comparative advantage over most major economies. Realizing significant role of agricultural postgraduate research scholars in the development of agriculture and economy of the country, a study on employability of postgraduate scholars studying in

Junagadh Agricultural University, Junagadh was undertaken.

OBJECTIVE

To know the constraints faced and suggestions offered by postgraduate scholars in developing employability

METHODOLOGY

The study was undertaken in the College of Agriculture, Junagadh Agricultural University, Junagadh. 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 the College of Agriculture. The data were collected through structural interview schedule. The collected data were classified, tabulated and analyzed in order to make the findings meaningful. The constraint faced by each respondent was measured in terms of mean value. To know the degree of importance respondents were asked to give their response in three-point continuums i.e. important, less important and not important. The scores assigned were, 2, 1 and 0 for important, less important and not important, respectively. Finally, the

mean score for each suggestion was calculated for ranking them in terms of its importance. This refers to the opinion, ways or means the constraints faced by respondents could be solved thereafter increasing the employability of postgraduate research scholars. In the same way of constraints, mean score for each suggestion was calculated for ranking them in terms of its importance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Constraints faced by the postgraduate scholars in developing employability

There is an increasing competition in the job market today including the agriculture and allied sectors. Unemployed as well as unemployable graduates and postgraduates seem to worsen this situation. There is an increasing gap between the number of job seekers and the job opportunities. Among the job seekers too, competent and capable ones are few in number. In this study, the need was realized to identify the constraints faced by the postgraduate scholars in developing employability. The data regarding this is collected and presented in Table 1.

(n=120)

Table 1 : Constraints faced by postgraduate scholars in developing their employability

Sr. No.	Constraints	Mean score	Rank
1	Education system does not provide platform to build necessary confidence among scholars to face the job competition	1.90	I
2	Inadequate language competency in English among the scholars	1.88	II
3	Low level of realization to have self-motivation among the scholars to develop their employability skills.	1.87	III
4	Lack of desirable employability generating aptitude among teachers involved in higher agriculture education	1.85	IV
5	Improper guidance of the postgraduate scholars by the major guide	1.83	V
6	Improper orientation from academic institutions about the job opportunities.	1.81	VI
7	Lack of expected level of well qualified teaching staff with expected teaching skills	1.79	VII
8	Course curriculum does not meet diversified needs of the prevailing agricultural situation	1.76	VIII
9	Lack of desired level of quality among students expected by job providers	1.73	IX
10	Lack of needed updated competency in using IT and related components by the scholars.	1.70	X
11	Frequent change in the need to bridge the recent emerging avenues in agricultural research creates a problem	1.68	XI
12	Lack of interest among the scholars to develop the employability skills.	1.66	XII
13	Improper learning situation provided to the students.	1.64	XIII
14	Higher agriculture education is more theoretical and less practical oriented	1.62	XIV
15	Lack of expected level of realization to develop employability among the scholars by the teachers.	1.59	XV
16	Lack of proper funding to the agricultural institutions to provide better facilitated education to generate employable scholars.	1.58	XVI
17	Deterioration in quality of agricultural education.	1.56	XVII
18	Poor involvement of the students in learning process.	1.53	XVIII
19	Lack of academic moral values among students	1.49	XIX

The foremost constraints as realized by the postgraduate scholars for low level of employability were; education system does not provide platform to build necessary confidence among scholars to face the job competition got first ranked, followed by inadequate language competency in English among the scholars, low level of realization to have self-motivation among the scholars to develop their employability skills, lack of desirable employability generating aptitude among teachers involved in higher agriculture education and improper guidance of the postgraduate scholars by the major guide with second, third, fourth and fifth rank, respectively.

The other notable constraints as realized by the postgraduate scholars for low level of employability among the

agricultural postgraduate scholars were; improper orientation from academic institutions about the job opportunities (sixth ranked), lack of expected level of well qualified teaching staff with expected teaching skills (seventh ranked), course curriculum does not meet diversified needs of the prevailing agricultural situation (eighth ranked), lack of desired level of quality among students expected by job providers (ninth ranked) and lack of needed updated competency in using IT and related components by the scholars (tenth ranked).

Suggestions to make the postgraduate scholars employable

The data regarding the suggestion made by the postgraduate scholars to develop their employability was collected and presented in Table 2.

Table 2 : Suggestions to make the postgraduate scholars employable

(n=120)

Sr. No	Suggestions	Mean score	Rank
1	Need to include more practical exercises in the course curriculum to improve team work and coordination	1.96	I
2	Provide better training to the scholars to face the job interviews confidently	1.88	II
3	Give more thrust to develop entrepreneurship and self-employment among the agriculture graduates than preferring the white collared jobs	1.82	III
4	Integrate the RAWA programme with various industries and successful private firms to give more exposure to the job situations	1.79	IV
5	Reduce the work load on lecturers to be able to give more attention to postgraduate scholars	1.76	V
6	Provision of higher agriculture education in the real fields than in the classroom	1.72	VI
7	Encourage the campus recruitment and placement opportunities by the institutions	1.69	VII
8	Enable the curriculum with more ICT related courses	1.68	VIII
9	Provide opportunities to interact with successful farmers and entrepreneurs	1.62	IX
10	More thrust to job oriented experiential learning programme	1.59	X
11	Include more rural reality oriented courses in the curriculum	1.56	XI
12	Need motivational efforts by teachers to take up challenging jobs	1.55	XII
13	Frequent lectures of successful alumni working in the different professions should be arranged	1.52	XIII
14	Need to include more practical exercises in the course curriculum to improve problem solving ability	1.50	XIV
15	Recruit more efficient and competent teachers who can develop the employability skills of the scholars.	1.48	XV
16	Regional and local planning of the agricultural education system and course curricula to address the local needs	1.46	XVI
17	Pre-service training on teaching ability should be provided to the teachers	1.45	XVII
18	Redefining the existing examination and evaluation system to develop more creative and efficient agricultural graduates.	1.44	XVIII
19	More emphasis for the recent avenues in agricultural education in the course curriculum	1.42	XIX

The data in Table 2 revealed that the important suggestion offered by the postgraduate scholars to develop their employability were, need to include more practical exercises in the course curriculum to improve team

work and coordination got first ranked, followed by provide better training to the scholars to face the job interviews confidently, give more thrust to develop entrepreneurship and self-employment among the agriculture graduates than

preferring the white collared jobs, integrate the RAWE programme with various industries and successful private firms to give more exposure to the job situations and reduce the work load on lecturers to be able to give more attention to postgraduate scholars ranked as second, third, fourth and fifth to realized to address by the postgraduate scholars to make themselves employable, respectively.

Provision of higher agriculture education in the real fields than in the classroom (sixth ranked), encourage the campus recruitment and placement opportunities by the institutions (seventh ranked), enable the curriculum with more ICT related courses (eighth ranked), provide opportunities to interact with successful farmers and entrepreneurs (ninth ranked), and more thrust to job oriented experiential learning programme (tenth ranked) were the other important suggestions by the postgraduate scholars to make themselves employable.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the foremost constraints as realized by the postgraduate scholars for low level of employability were education system does not provide platform to build necessary confidence among scholars to face the job competition got first ranked, followed by inadequate language competency in English among the scholars, low level of realization to have self-motivation among the scholars to develop their employability skills, lack of desirable employability generating aptitude among teachers involved in higher agriculture education and improper guidance of the postgraduate scholars by the major guide ranked with second, third, fourth and fifth, respectively.

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