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Indicators of employability of postgraduates of Sri Venkateswara veterinary university, Tirupati, India

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Abstract

Employability refers to a person's capability to gain employment, maintaining employment and obtain new employment if required. In simple words, employability refers to one's capacity to obtain and maintain fulfilling work. The present study was undertaken with the main objective of ascertaining the employability of postgraduates of Sri Venkateswara veterinary university (SVVU). Ex-post-facto research design was followed in the present investigation. Out of the total 479 postgraduate students a sample of 120 respondents were selected from each academic year through proportionate random sampling. In this research, to study and measure the employability of postgraduates, seven indicators based on the opinion of experts and review of literature was collected. The collected data were classified, tabulated, analysed 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. It can be concluded that three-fourth (75%) of the postgraduates of SVVU had high to medium level of overall employability.

Keywords: Overall employability, indicators, postgraduates, Sri Venkateswara veterinary university (SVVU)

Introduction

India is principally an agricultural country. About sixty-five percent of the Indian population resides in villages. Most of the farmers in the villages depend on livestock and agriculture for their livelihood. Employability of veterinary graduates and postgraduates is one of the heavily targeted areas of Sri Venkateswara Veterinary University in Andhra Pradesh. The value of education for employability is being highlighted in the current shifting business climate with such a focus on the development of not only skills but also practical experience. In addition to subject-specific knowledge, students must improve employability skills to achieve competitiveness for graduate employment. Unemployment among Veterinary graduates and postgraduates for the past few years in AP is increasing tremendously. Despite the whopping rise in the number of veterinary graduates and postgraduates every year, hardly there is an attempt that links trends of employment needs of various sectors of the economy (public/private/self-entrepreneurship) and clients (students and farmers) against the kind and number of manpower produced by the system of higher veterinary education. As a result, increasing the employability of veterinary graduates is a pressing necessity. The present day scientific and technological advancement in the field of Veterinary and Animal Science have opened the new avenues for raising the average productivity of livestock population. As per NCA (National Commission on Agriculture 1976) norms there are 1.2 crore livestock units and there is need to have at least one veterinary doctor for every 5,000 Livestock units.

Employability refers to a person's capability to gain employment, maintaining employment and obtain new employment if required (Hillage and pollard, 1998) [3]. In simple words, employability refers to one's capacity to obtain and maintain fulfilling work. Employability must be crucial to the postgraduates just at the brink of their career. Economic and societal changes have created a mismatch between the skill set of veterinarians and those required for career and economic success and that traditional approaches to veterinary education leave graduates inadequately prepared for successful transition to practice. These imperatives have yielded calls to broaden the scope and potential of the profession by expanding the set of skills, knowledge, attitudes and attributes required for the success of future veterinarians. The veterinary graduate and postgraduates should be enabled with some professional abilities and also employability skills to be successful in the competitive technology driven world. In this study, we look at the possibility of broadening the focus of veterinary education to include a

different goal, employability in order to complement and broaden present approaches and better prepare students for successful employment. Those specific attitude and skills allow effective and wise use of knowledge, experience and higher education includes communication i.e., ability to express clearly in writing, verbal communication like expressing the ideas and views clearly and confidently in a speech, critical thinking skills, persuading ability to convince others to discuss and reach agreement, team work for working confidently within a group, leadership quality to be able to motivate and direct others, planning and organising capacity to be capable to plan activities and carry them effectively. Investigating, analysing 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, personal quality like responsibility, self-confidence and self-reliance are also very much essential for developing employability for veterinary graduates.

Materials and Methods

Area of the study

All the three Veterinary colleges under Sri Venkateswara Veterinary University, Andhra Pradesh viz., College of Veterinary Science Tirupati; College of Veterinary Science Gannavaram and College of Veterinary Science, Proddatur were selected purposively for the study. A list of all the postgraduate students (both completed and pursuing) was collected from the concerned sections of the three colleges. Out of the total number of postgraduates available from five batches of the three veterinary colleges were pooled and proportionate number of students were selected from that particular academic year as respondents. Thus, out of the total 479 postgraduate students available, a sample of 120 respondents were selected through proportionate random sampling i.e., from the 2016 academic year – 21 students; from 2017 academic year – 22; from 2018 academic year – 23; from 2019 academic year – 24 and from 2020 academic year – 30 students constituted the sample from all the three colleges.

Research design

Ex-post-facto research design was followed for the present study and it is defined as a systematic empirical enquiry in which independent variables have not been directly manipulated because they have already occurred or they are inherently not manipulable. Keeping in view, the adaptability of the proposed design to the type of variables under consideration, size of the respondents and phenomenon to be studied, the ex-post-facto design was selected as an appropriate design.

Tools for the study

The data was collected through online mode by google forms from purposively selected postgraduates.

Measurement of employability of postgraduates of SVVU

To know the overall employability of postgraduates, a list of 10 indicators was prepared and opinion was collected from thirty (30) academicians, social scientists and extension experts. From the 10 indicators, 7 indicators which were opined apt for employability in current situations and obtained a mean score of 10 and above by the experts were considered.

Finally, 7 items were selected as final indicators to know overall employability. The weightage scores of above mentioned seven indicators were worked out. Thereafter, mean scores were worked out for all 7 indicators. The mean weightage scores of all the seven indicators received from the experts accounting to hundred (100) is given below.

Table 1: Mean weightage scores of indicators of employability

S. No.	Indicator	Weightage Score
1.	Fundamental employability aptitude	15.83
2.	Knowledge about veterinary education in general	20.00
3.	Knowledge about government policies in veterinary & Animal Husbandry	14.67
4.	Communication Skills	13.33
5.	Information and Communication Technology skills	10.67
6.	Self Confidence	14.67
7.	Competition orientation	10.83
Total		100.00

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

$$\text{Overall Employability Index} = (R1/M1) \times W1 + (R2/M2) \times W2 + \dots + (Rn/Mn) \times Wn$$

R1, R2.....Rn = Received score for each indicator by each respondent

M1, M2.....Mn = Maximum score one can get for each indicator

W1, W2Wn = Weightage score of each indicator received from experts

Based on above formula, Overall employability index was worked out for all the respondents.

Results and Discussion

Fundamental employability aptitude

Fundamental employability aptitude was operationally defined as the propensity of an individual for gaining and maintaining an employment. It was evident from Fig 1 that, majority (60.83%) of the respondents had medium level of fundamental employability aptitude followed by high (22.5%) and low (16.67%) levels of fundamental employability aptitude. The reason for majority of respondents to possess medium to high level of fundamental employability aptitude might be self-motivation of the postgraduates as well as the efforts on the part of the institution to develop their aptitude. The above results are in the line with the findings of Devi (2019) [2].

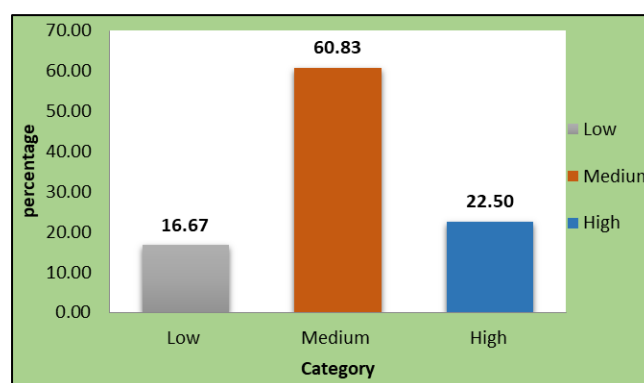


Fig 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their fundamental employability aptitude

Knowledge about Veterinary Education in general

It was defined as the basic practical as well as theoretical knowledge of a veterinary graduate in general. From the Fig. 2, it is indicated that majority (60.83%) of the respondents had medium knowledge about veterinary education followed by high (22.5%) and low (16.67%) levels of knowledge on veterinary education in general. The reason for high proportion of the respondents to have medium to high knowledge about veterinary education might be due to the fact that they have completed their under graduation and also majority of the respondents are hailed from rural areas with livestock rearing as main/subsidiary occupation. The findings were in similar line with the findings of Chamela (2016) [1].

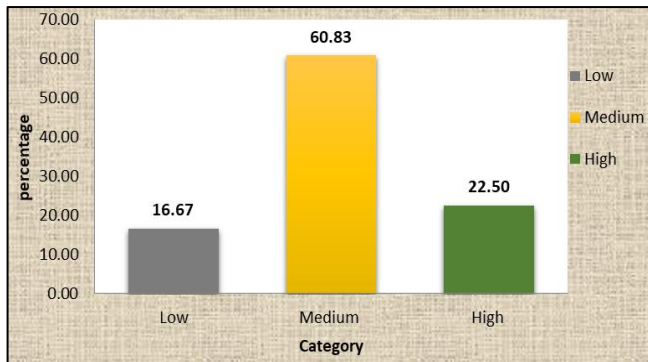


Fig 2: Distribution of the respondents according to their knowledge about veterinary education in general

Knowledge about Government policies in veterinary and animal husbandry

It was operationally defined as how Government policies facilitate in making postgraduates alert about the existing scenario worldwide and play a role in developing their employability skills and work conditions. It is obvious from the Fig. 3 that majority (45.00%) of the respondents had medium level of knowledge about Government policies in Veterinary & Animal Husbandry, followed by high (37.5%) and low (17.50%) levels of knowledge about government policies in veterinary and animal husbandry. The reason for medium to high level of knowledge about government policies in veterinary & animal husbandry among majority (82.50%) of the Veterinary postgraduates might be due to gaining awareness on how these policies can affect their future career aspirations. The results were in coincidence with the findings of Mishra (2016) [4].

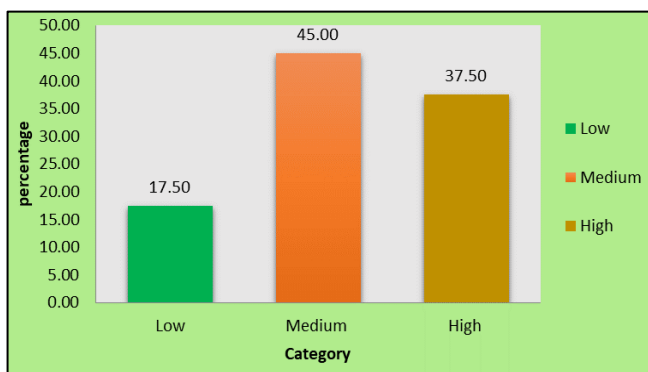


Fig 3: Distribution of the respondents according to their knowledge about govt policies in veterinary and animal husbandry

Communication skills

Communication skills refer to the ability of the respondents to

convey information effectively and efficiently. It is evident from the Fig. 4 that majority (43.40%) of the respondents had high level of communication skills followed by medium (38.30%) and low (18.30%) levels of communication skills. The reason for having high communication skills among the vast majority (81.70%) of the respondents might be due to effective utilisation of communication related courses, active involvement in the seminars, lectures and other college professional activities as a part of their postgraduation. Similar findings were also reported by Devi (2019) [2].

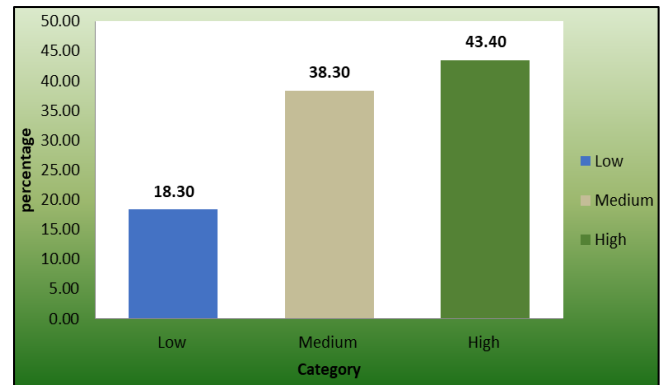


Fig 4: Distribution of the respondents according to their communication skills

Information Communication Technology Skills

Information Communication Technology skills were operationally defined as the abilities in using a diverse set of technological tools and resources used to communicate, create, disseminate, store and manage information. From the Fig. 5 it was observed that, majority (58.40%) of the respondents had high level of skills of using of ICT tools followed by low (36.60%) and medium (5.00%) skills of using ICT tools. The reason for majority (95.00%) of the respondents to possess high to low level of skills might be due to increased level of usage of ICT tools for their research purpose, seminars and lectures. The necessity of competency increased usage of ICT tools by the postgraduates as a part of developing their employability. The findings were in similar line with the findings of Tanwar (2018) [7].

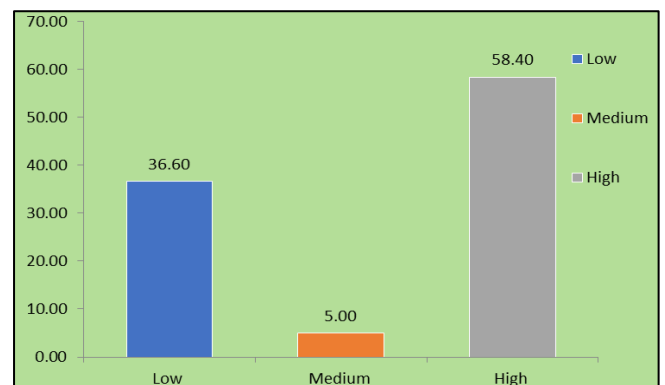


Fig 5: Distribution of the respondents according to their ICT skills

Self-confidence

It was operationally defined as the degree of assurance of any individual on his/her own abilities, talent, capacity and understanding. From the Fig. 6 it was inferred that, three-fourth (75.00%) of the respondents possessed medium level of self-confidence, whereas 13.3 per cent were with high self-confidence and few (11.66%) were with low level of self-

confidence. The reason for great majority (88.34%) with medium to high degree of self-confidence among the respondents might be due to having the expected level of knowledge, experience, practice, realisation to be self-reliable, frank and trustworthy. The findings were in similar line with the findings of Sasidharan (2013) [6].

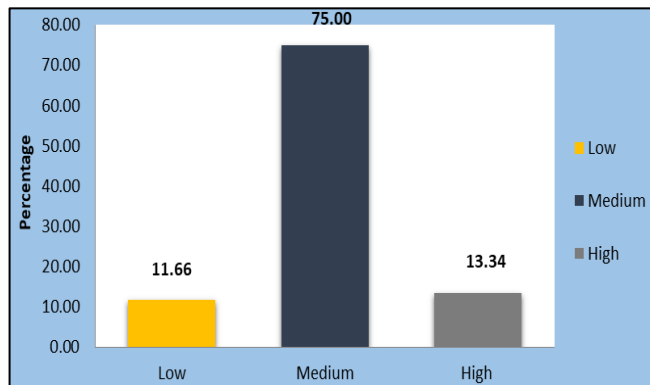


Fig 6: Distribution of the respondents according to their self confidence

Competition orientation

It is the extent to which postgraduates are oriented to place themselves in rivalry situation for projecting his/her excellence in any profession. From the and Fig. 7 it is evident that, majority (43.34%) of the respondents had medium level of competition orientation followed by high (37.50%) and low (19.16%) levels of competition orientation. The reason for majority (80.84%) to have medium to high level of competition orientation might be due to the fact that postgraduates were aware of existing competition in getting jobs and also prepared actively to face competitive level in any acquired job. The findings were in similar line with the findings of Mishra (2016) [4].

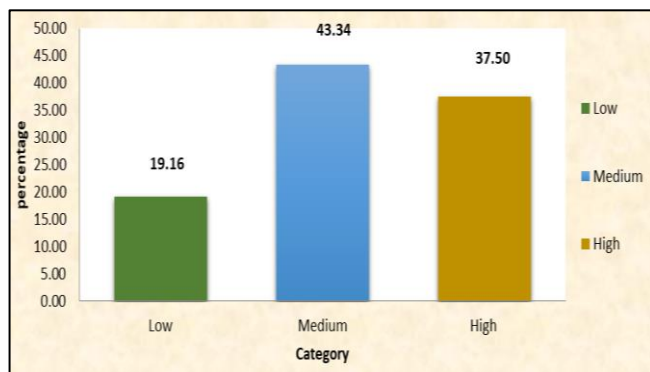


Fig 7: Distribution of the respondents according to their competition orientation

Overall employability

Results from the Fig. 8, indicates that majority (50.00%) of the respondents had high level of overall employability followed by medium (25.00%) and low (25.00%) levels of overall employability. The results indicated that, the postgraduates have underwent enough efforts to inculcate superior level of employability. The degree programme and various integral parts of whole syllabus are designed in such a way that they assist students to explore, become aware, understand, acquire skills to develop confidence and competence for solving problems. Another attributed reason might be, the activeness from the side of scholar, nature of

syllabus and motivating academics, infrastructural facility, regional and international level library, ICT availability and favourable atmosphere created by the authority altogether played a role for having high level of overall employability among the postgraduates of SVVU, Tirupati. The above results are in line with the findings of Omede and Kanani (2015) [5].

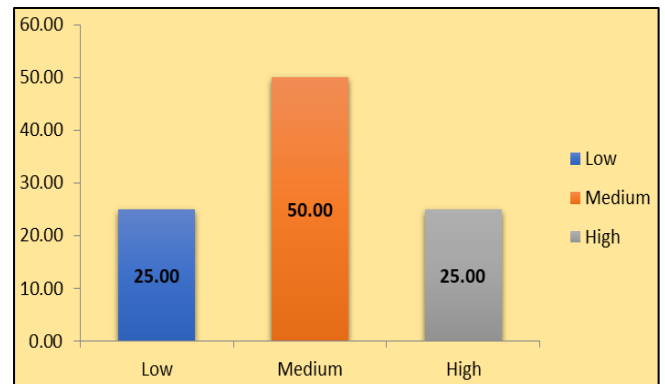


Fig 8: Distribution of respondents according to their overall employability

Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that three-fourth (75.00%) of the postgraduates of SVVU had high to medium level of overall employability. The indicators in rank order of their weightage scores are Knowledge about veterinary education in general, Fundamental employability aptitude, Knowledge about government policies in Veterinary & Animal Husbandry, Self confidence and Communication skills.

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