



A STUDY ON IDENTIFYING THE PRESENCE OF SKILL-RELATED COMPONENTS OF EMPLOYABILITY IN THE POSTGRADUATE CURRICULA OF KUVEMPUR UNIVERSITY.

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Abstract: Higher Education institutions and Universities are dynamic spaces for personal development and intellectual exploration, we all live in a society where job attainment is often paramount to a person's overall well-being. Thus, for many students, the University is not only a place for development, but also a pathway to a better career and financial opportunities for themselves, their families and their communities. Consequently, for many students, pursuing higher education involves a cost-benefit analysis. The students need to think about how the universities are developing their employability because employability is strongly correlated with the growth ability of long-term professional and personal success. Therefore the University has established an initiative to ensure that each of its student engages with these aspects of Employability skills and has integrated it into the academic curriculum in all disciplines. Postgraduates have been admitted to the importance of employability and engaging in dynamic learning opportunities. This research paper explores ways to identify the presence of skill-related components of employability in selected postgraduate curricula of Kuvempu University as perceived by teachers of Postgraduate departments.

Key Words: Skills, Employability, Curriculum, Postgraduates, Teachers, Higher Education.

Introduction:

Education plays an important role in creating change in a planned way and is tasked with converting people into human resources. Higher education is viewed as a civilizing and enlightening force that heightens consciousness, broadens horizons, deepens comprehension, sharpens perceptions, and intensifies

sensitivity. Different features of higher education have a significant impact on how well students develop on all fronts and in a quality manner. These factors are connected to the institution's leadership, faculty, and student body. For the growth of human resources, proper planning and execution of the development of these aspects are very essential. The main goal of higher education is to develop students into lifelong, critical, and reflective learners by developing their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and capacities. Because a university degree is a minimal requirement in our nation for many occupations, including those that are clerical job. A student attending college and earning a degree with employability is a result of the degree's diverse skills, knowledge, and talents. This aligns with the viewpoint of skills and abilities, which sees concern about employability as supportive to rather than in opposition to effective learning. As skilled labour needed for professions in agriculture, industry, administration, business services, and other sectors.

Empowering learners is about giving student control over the educational process and their postgraduates should leave higher education better in many ways than when they enter it. This improvement should be attributes to the graduate curriculum which is important to equip them with skills they can use to sell them -selves to employers (washer, 2000). The important thing is which a university degree need necessary qualification for employment. Employability has become an important construct and has been present since the 1900s as can be expected there are those sceptics who argue that employability is more than” the latest buzz word” (Clarke,2008. Verhar & Smulders,1999).

Definition of Employability Skill: Employability can be defined as a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, benefiting themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy (Yorke, 2004). Cranmer (2006) suggests such employability skills need to be incorporated into teaching and learning experiences in order to enhance graduates’ ability to secure jobs. The amount of development and nurtured skills making graduates ready for work in the curriculum is defined as the level of graduate employability, according Boden and Nedeva (2010).

Employability brings with it a shift in responsibility for career development, making the employee ultimately responsible for the investment and continuous development of student career. As such each person become increasingly aware of the importance of the learning and the role of the higher education institution and universities in this regard (Vander Heijden, boon, Vander, Klink & Miejs,2009). From these higher institutions come the future talent of a nation and many argue that it is the breeding ground for employability skill.

Need and Importance of the Study: Educational institutions play a major role in individual student employability growth as they are the prime sources of skills and knowledge. In Educational institutes, & colleges, it has been observed that only the number of qualified students increases when the skill and competence pool is very low. As a result, they provide a substandard level of quantity in higher education, resulting in the delivery of poor-quality of students who cannot meet workplace. There are several reasons for lower levels of employability in higher education, such as system/ structural issues, unavailability of teachers, and infrastructure, outdated syllabus, insufficient practical sessions, absence of career counselling facilities, and

so on. Hence, it creates a gap between higher education & employability. Education institutions & universities should improve students' employability skills, as most unemployed graduates come from fields such as social science, literature, economics, and sciences. The unemployment issues these factor cause difficulty in completing graduate to find a place in the employment sector. Employability is suitable for all students, and at all levels of study so includes both undergraduate and postgraduate provisions.

Today, employers expect students to have an extra set of skills needed for employment, known as employability skills, so that they can make an immediate contribution to the workplace when hired to take advantage of the workplace and make the most human resources. Therefore, a carefully designed and well-planned education system is very critical in developing such human capital. Thus, institutions of higher learning like post-graduation play a very important role in the teaching and learning process, contributing to the provision of knowledge and skills to future graduates. Good curriculum designs will continue to help learners build an understanding of the subject matter and maintain the more recent interest in developing a number of skilful practices, or 'skills'. An intent to improve student employability, like the intention to familiarize students with practices specific to a subject, depends on integrated learning, teaching, and assessment methods embedded in the wider curriculum structure.

This research elaborates the necessity to explore the perception, importance, awareness, and requirement of these skills among the Postgraduates. Therefore, the present study was carried out to investigate the inducing aspects of employability in graduate curriculum of Kuvempu University to explore the aspects of employability among postgraduate students. The opinions of postgraduate teachers about the employability aspects required for postgraduates. Therefore, the aim of this study was to evaluate the connection between aspects of employability skill and career prospects of Kuvempu University postgraduate students by analysing the results of our survey.

Reviews of Related Literature:

P. Vanitha .et.al. (2018) "A Study on Enhancing Employability Skills of Graduates in India" The objective of this study was to identify the employability skills that employers consider important for entry-level graduates and the skills required for sustainable employment by graduates in India. Employability skills are essential in today's global job market. Higher education institutions are up skilling to create a better curriculum that meets the needs of students, employers, society and the nation at large.

Iuliana parvu et. al. (2014) in his study titled "Identification of Employability Skills – Starting Point for the Curriculum Design Processes". The objective of the study was to identify a set of skills Skills, knowledge and competencies expected of graduates in Accounting and Financial Management. The results show that an important part is held by policies regarding the participation of higher education institutions in increasing the employability of future graduates by developing programs learning based on the development of skills and aptitudes needed for the labour market.

Methodology: Descriptive survey research design method will be used for the study, which involves gathering information from a sample of individuals through their responses to predetermined questions. The survey design was chosen for this study because it was found to be most appropriate to collect information directly about teachers regarding aspects of employability in the PG curriculum.

Sampling Design: The population of this study includes all teachers who are teaching in the graduate department of Kuvempu University. Representative samples were drawn from the following domains forming the samples for this study. The present study found that arts, science and commerce teachers selected from 14 departments with 76 teachers serving in the selected department were considered for the purposive sampling technique for this study.

Tool used for the study:

Questionnaire for Teacher's: Teacher's opinion regarding the availability of employability Skills in the P.G. Curriculum, developed by researchers. The Teacher's Questionnaire consists of seven dimensions namely 'Academic Learning' 'Experiential Learning' 'Career Maturity' 'Professional Skills' 'Career Management' 'Meaningful Connections' and 'Global Perspective' and includes 54 questionnaires regarding the Availability of Employability Skills in the P.G. Curriculum.

Statistical Techniques: The researcher used IBM SPSS-21 Statistical packages for Descriptive, Inferential Analysis and interpretation. The Statistical Techniques like Means, Standard Deviation, t-test, ANOVA, and Percentage analysis.

Objective: To Identify the Presence of Skill related Components of Employability in selected Postgraduate Curricula of Kuvempu University as Perceived by Teachers of Postgraduate Departments.

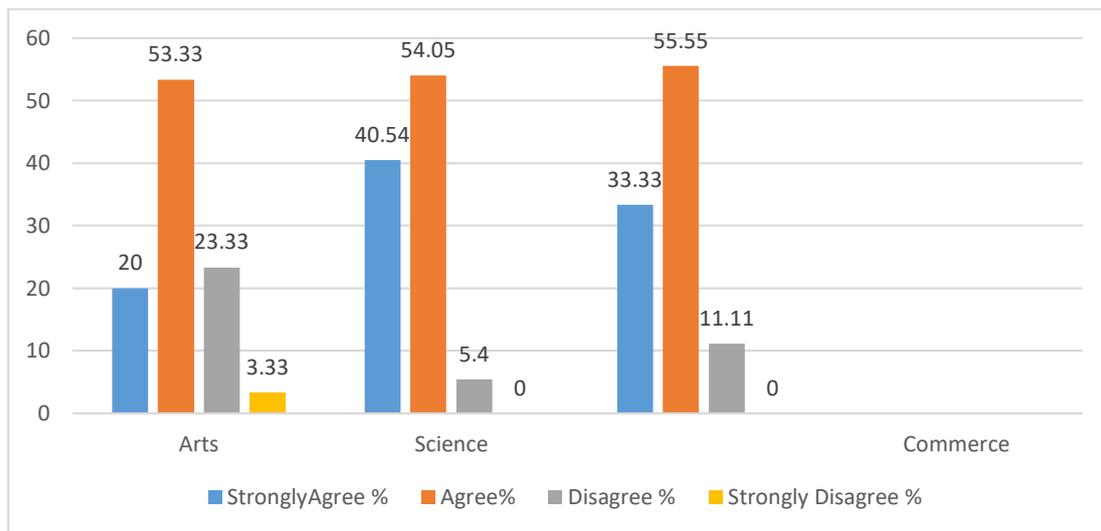
Descriptive, Inferential Analysis and Interpretation of Testing of Hypothesis.

Hypothesis-1: There is no significant difference between the opinions of the Teaching Faculty of Arts, Science, and Commerce discipline with reference to the aspects of Employability in the Curriculum.

1. The Postgraduate Curriculum Provides First-Hand Experience of the Workplace to help Exploration of Career Opportunities and Expand their Network to Students.

Group Statistics	Discipline	Responses									
		Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total	%
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
	Arts	6	20	16	53.33	7	23.33	1	3.33	30	100

Employability Aspects of curriculum	Science	15	40.54	20	54.05	2	5.40	0	0	37	100
	Commerce	3	33.33	5	55.55	1	11.11	0	0	9	100
	Total	24	31.57	41	53.94	10	13.15	1	0	76	100



The graph-1 showing the percentage scores of the Postgraduate Curriculum Provides First-Hand Experience of the Workplace to help Exploration of Career Opportunities and Expand their Network to Students.

The percentage scores of the opinion of the PG teachers of Arts, Science, and Commerce regarding the aspect that the PG curriculum provides first-hand experience of the workplace to help exploration of career opportunities and expand their network to students, was calculated. Table (1) revealed that 20% of Arts teachers Strongly Agree, 53.33% Agree, 23.33% disagree and 3.33% strongly disagree. Among the Science teachers 40.54% Strongly Agree, 54.05% Agree, and 5.4% disagree. 33.33% among the Commerce teachers Strongly Agree, 55.55% Agree and 11.11% teachers disagree.

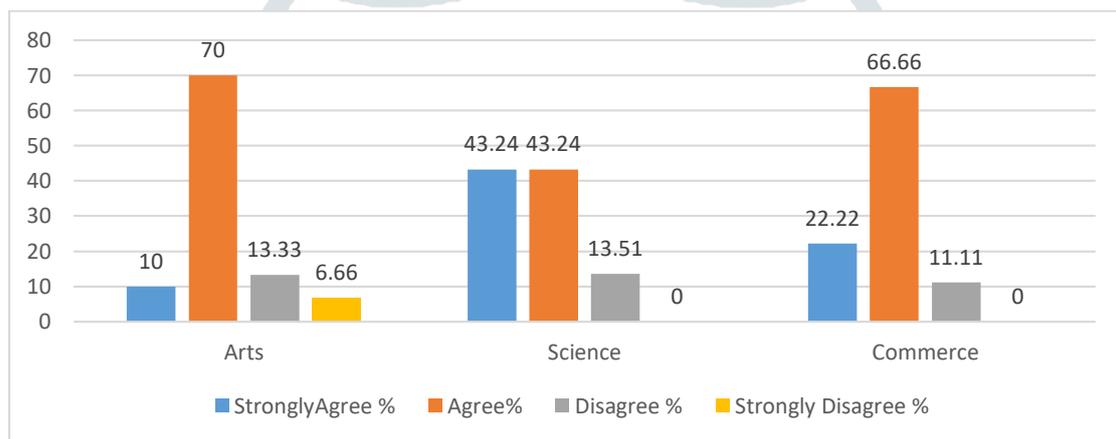
It is clear that majority of the teachers of all the three discipline either strongly agree or agree that the curriculum of their respective subjects provides first-hand experience of the workplace to help exploration of career opportunities and expand their network to students. There is less disagreement and almost low less strong disagreement about the above mentioned employability aspects.

However the Science teachers are more positive in the opinion (Strongly Agree= 40.54%, Agree=54.05%) about the aspects of curriculum provides first-hand experience of the workplace to help exploration of career opportunities and expand their network to students. Followed by Arts PG Teachers (Strongly Agree= 20%, Agree=53.33%) and Commerce PG Teachers (Strongly Agree= 33.33%, Agree=55.55%).

It is further observed from the opinion of the PG teachers regarding includes curriculum provides first-hand experience of the workplace to help exploration of career opportunities and expand their network to students, seems to be more in agreement with regard to the Science teachers followed by Arts teachers compared to that of Commerce teachers .This can be observed from the Graph-1.

2. The Postgraduate Curriculum is Creating Opportunities to Students Acquire the Skills in the Apprenticeship and Volunteering Conducted by Formal & Non Formal Organisation.

Group Statistics	Discipline	Responses									
		Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Employability Aspects of curriculum	Arts	3	10	21	70	4	13.33	2	6.66	30	100
	Science	16	43.24	16	43.24	5	13.51	0	0	37	100
	Commerce	2	22.22	6	66.66	1	11.11	0	0	9	100
	Total	21	27.63	43	56.57	10	13.15	0	0	76	100



The graph-2 showing the percentage scores of the Postgraduate Curriculum is Creating Opportunities to Students Acquire the Skills in the Apprenticeship and Volunteering Conducted by Formal & Non Formal Organisation.

The percentage scores of the opinion of the PG teachers of Arts, Science, and Commerce regarding the aspect that the PG curriculum provides is creating opportunities to students acquire the skills in the apprenticeship and volunteering conducted by formal & non formal organisation, was calculated. Table (2) revealed that 10% of Arts teachers Strongly Agree, 70% Agree, 13.33% disagree and 6.66% strongly disagree. Among the Science teachers 43.24 % Strongly Agree, 43.24% Agree, and 13.51% disagree. 22.22% among the Commerce teachers Strongly Agree, 66.66 % Agree and 11.11% teachers disagree.

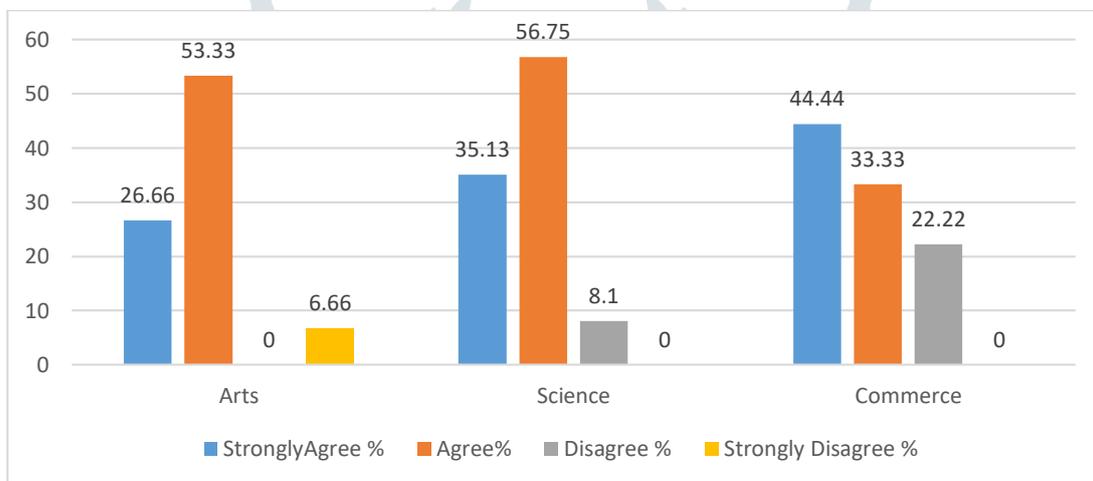
It is clear that majority of the teachers of all the three discipline either strongly agree or agree that the curriculum of their respective subjects provides is creating opportunities to students acquire the skills in the apprenticeship and volunteering conducted by formal & non formal organisation,. There is less disagreement and almost low less strong disagreement about the above mentioned employability aspects.

However the Science teachers are more positive in the opinion (Strongly Agree= 43.34%, Agree=43.34%) about the aspects of curriculum creating opportunities to students acquire the skills in the apprenticeship and volunteering conducted by formal & non formal organisation. Followed by Commerce PG Teachers (Strongly Agree= 22.22%, Agree=66.66%).and Arts PG Teachers (Strongly Agree= 10%, Agree=70%)

It is further observed from the opinion of the PG teachers regarding includes curriculum creating opportunities to students acquire the skills in the apprenticeship and volunteering conducted by formal & non formal organisation., seems to be more in agreement with regard to the Science teachers followed by Arts teachers compared to that of Commerce teachers .This can be observed from the Graph-2.

3. The Postgraduate Curriculum Enables for Project Based Learning to Actively Explore Real Problems and Challenges.

Group Statistics	Discipline	Responses									
		Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total	%
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Employability Aspects of curriculum	Arts	8	26.66	16	53.33	4	13.33	2	6.66	30	100
	Science	13	35.13	21	56.75	3	8.10	0	0	37	100
	Commerce	4	44.44	3	33.33	2	22.22	0	0	9	100
	Total	25	32.89	40	52.63	9	11.84	2	2.63	76	100



The graph-3 The Postgraduate Curriculum Enables for Project Based Learning to Actively Explore Real Problems and Challenges

The percentage scores of the opinion of the PG teachers of Arts, Science, and Commerce regarding the aspect that the PG curriculum enables for project based learning to actively explore real problems and challenges, was calculated. Table (3) revealed that 26.66% of Arts teachers Strongly Agree, 53.33% Agree, and 6.66% strongly disagree. Among the Science teachers 35.13 % Strongly Agree, 56.75% Agree, and 8.1% disagree. 44.44% among the Commerce teachers Strongly Agree, 33.33% Agree and 22.22% teachers disagree.

It is clear that majority of the teachers of all the three discipline either strongly agree or agree that the curriculum of their respective subjects enables for project based learning to actively explore real problems and challenges. There is less disagreement and almost less strong disagreement about the above mentioned employability aspects.

However the Science teachers are more positive in the opinion (Strongly Agree= 35.13%, Agree=56.75%) about the aspects of curriculum enables for project based learning to actively explore real problems and challenges. Followed by Commerce PG Teachers (Strongly Agree=44.44%, Agree=33.33%).and Arts PG Teachers (Strongly Agree= 26.66%, Agree=53.33%)

It is further observed from the opinion of the PG teachers regarding includes curriculum enables for project based learning to actively explore real problems and challenges, seems to be more in agreement with regard to the Science teachers followed by Commerce teachers compared to that of Arts teachers .This can be observed from the Graph-03.

Findings of the Study:

In the present study investigator wants to find the significant difference between the opinions of the teaching faculty of Arts, Science, and Commerce discipline with reference to the dimension of Experiential Learning first aspects of Employability in the Curriculum. Researcher observed from the opinion of the PG teachers regarding the aspect that the PG curriculum provides first-hand experience of the workplace to help exploration of career opportunities and expand their network to students with regard to the Science teachers followed by Arts teachers compared to that of Commerce teachers.

The opinion of the PG teachers regarding second aspects of employability curriculum provides is creating opportunities to students acquire the skills in the apprenticeship and volunteering conducted by formal & non formal organisation, seems to be more agreement with regard to the Science teachers followed by Arts teachers compared to that of Commerce teachers.

Researcher observed from the opinion of the PG teachers about further aspects of Experiential Learning regarding the PG curriculum enables for project based learning to actively explore real problems and challenges seems to be more agreement with regard to the Science teachers followed by Commerce teachers compared to that of Arts teachers.

Conclusion:

The present study was carried out to explore the opinion of the teaching faculty of Arts, Science, and Commerce discipline. The Science teachers are more positive opinion respectively regarding first three aspects of Experiential Learning, followed by Commerce teachers compared to that of Arts teachers. Hence Arts teachers has suggested that PG Curriculum should be inclusive of practical and need based orientation of present society. Integrating real world experience, ICT skills, corporate and business communication in the curriculum.

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