



PROBLEM FACED BY TRAINING AND PLACEMENT OFFICERS FOR PLACING FRESH ENGINEERING GRADUATES: A STUDY OF TECHNICAL INSTITUTES UNDER SHIVAJI UNIVERSITY JURISDICTION.



ABSTRACT:-

Training and placement officers (TPO, s) play crucial role in the engineering institutes. Their role is more significance to identifying the employers from the market and fulfills their manpower demand as and when required. TPO's also needs to perform many other significant tasks, like, arranging industrial visit and guest lecture for the students. Maintaining cordially relation between the industry and institute is also vital responsibility which they have to perform efficiently. Students training part is also been taken care by TPO's. One of the important parameter on which students take admission in engineering institute is quality of placements. Quality of placements are dependent on various factors like, appropriate skills among the students, support given by institute and management, reputation of the institute, market situation and specific demand of the employers. For quality placements, TPO's have to face various challenges. As the current competitive market situations are not so simple for engineering students to get easily placed. In this context an attempt is made in an article to investigate the major problem faced by the training and placement officer to place the fresh engineering graduates.

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KEYWORDS: Training & Placement Officer, Jobs, Fresh Engineers Graduates, Employability.

INTRODUCTION :

Training and placement officer is a person, who brief students on job market realities, inform opportunities in the market, maintain link between employers and students and responsible for the placements of the students in various organizations. He is the key person and back boon of the institute. Placement activity is very essential and significant activity for the institute as well as the students. Institutes name fame and brand is developed on the number of students placed in the quality companies. Placement means here giving the jobs to the students in the companies. A campus placement is activity of indentifying qualified and talented fresh graduates while completing their education. Campus placement helps the corporate world to recruit right candidate and by reducing time and money as per there requirements. There are two types of campus placement, on campus and off campus. In on campus activity organization conduct selection and recruitment process in the institute premises while in off campus conduct entire recruitment process in company premises. In pool campus students from various institutes are invited to participate in recruitment process of the organization. Training and placement officer has to play crucial role in organizing campus placement events for students' benefits. Specific responsibility of the training and placement officer is to provide exposure to students in the

corporate world. Responsibility of training and placement officer are to enhancing industry-institute interface, networking within the Industry for placements and training interventions for enhancing student's capability. Training and placement officer also design and develop placement brochure, placement booklet, industry information brochure for promoting the institute and the students in corporate world. Another significant role is like, alumni networking, inviting prominent industry professionals for guest lectures, organising industry visits for students and event management like alumni meet, corporate meet. Various other vital activities for student's betterment and engagement he has to organize. Current scenario of employment market has change drastically and the role of training and placement officers have become complicated as well as difficult. Day by day the demand for the fresher's is declining and demand for skillful experience manpower is expected from corporate world. Enrollment number of students for engineering courses is increasing but the rate of quality placements is declining.

Four major causes for unemployment in India is jobless growth, increase in the labor force, inappropriate technology and most significant is unsuitable educational systems (Puri. V.K & Misra S. K. 2014) Studies have revealed that Indian institutions produced lakhs of engineers but industry experts strongly feel that only 15% - 25% of them are employable (Belagodu Venkatesh, 2013). Ex-President of India Pratibha Patil stated that there is an enormous gap between industry expectation and skills provided by education institutes to fresh graduates (Times of India Mar 14, 2012). Studies also reveal that 75 million youth are unemployed, half of youth are not sure about their post-secondary education has improved chances of finding a job. Almost 40 percent of employers say a lack of the skills-set is one of the prime reasons for getting entry level vacancies (Mona Mourshed and Diana Farrell and Dominic Barton, Aug-Sep, 2012). It has found that there is ample gap between the academic output and industrial requirement (Saurabh Goyal and Neeraj K. Dubey 2009). It has also found that employers are not satisfied with skill set and quality of the engineering students. Skills of engineers are inadequate compared to US companies and Indian companies are less satisfied with fresh engineering graduates produced in the engineering education institutes (Andrea's Blom and Hiroshi Saeki, April 2011). Students with skills like positive attitude, effective communication, problem solving, time-management, team spirit, self-confidence, criticism handling, flexibility which means also soft skills as a whole, have much better chances of survival in corporate sectors as a comparison with students those who lacking in the soft skills (Saravanan, V. 2009).

The Boston Consulting Group, Global Agenda Council on Skills and Talent Mobility and Steering Board and World Economic Forum in 2011 conducted a study in which it predicted that talent and skills scarcities among employees will continue to be a huge problem worldwide. Reason for these scarcities is the uneven quality of education systems. Only 25% of Indian and 20% of professionals in Russia are at present employable by multinationals (World Economic Forum, 2011). This reveals that there is an intense need for the improvement in the uneven quality of the education system in India which will not only help to sustain in the market place but also produced engineers as per the market requirements. Situations of both technical institutes and students are becoming challenging. Overall Training and Placement Officers affects negatively for performing their role efficiently. This article will explore the problem faced by the training and placements officers of engineering institutes while placing the fresh engineering graduates in the corporate world.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Training and placement officer of each sample technical institute has been selected to collect the valuable information and getting insights. Every institute has training and placement officer and researcher has selected all training and placement officers as samples. The study is limited to only 29 engineering Institutes under Shivaji University Jurisdiction. Newly established and institutes those not having students for last year of engineering are not considered for the study. Researcher has designed a questionnaire and conducted a pilot study. The researcher has discussed the prepared questionnaire with the experts from the industry, academics' and colleagues to find out the shortfall in the questionnaire. Researcher has faced problems like the non-stability of training and placement officers in one place and busy schedule while collecting data. The researcher has tested validity and reliability of the questionnaires. He has used Cronbach Alpha for testing of the reliability of

the questionnaires. Cronbach alpha or coefficient alpha is a technique to measure reliability or the internal consistency of the instrument. It is mostly used to see reliability in the questionnaires with multiple Likert scale questions. Cronbach alpha helps to understand the test designed is accurately measuring the latent variable in which researcher is interested. Researcher has tested, and found that the Cronbach Alpha for questionnaire is (0.7322). This shows that the questions are reliable as the Cronbach Alpha value is greater than and equal to 0.70 in the standard table value, which show that the sets questions are reliable.

Table No.1: Research Methodology and Design

<i>S.N</i>	<i>Research Design</i>	<i>Description</i>
1	Source of Data	Primary and Secondary
2	Research Type	Exploratory research
3	Research instrument	Questionnaires
4	Sampling Units	Technical institutions /college.
5	Sample Size	29 TPOs (Census)
6	Area of Study	3- District: Kolhapur, Sangli & Satara (Affiliated to Shivaji University Kolhapur)

Problems faced by Training and Placement officers while placements of Students:

A main objective of this study is to understand the problem faced by TPO while placing students. Total 18 problems were identified and ranking was done by each training and placement officer. Based on this ranking major problems were identified. Below table indicates the percent of respondents faced the problem.

Table No.2: Problems Faced While Placement of the Students

<i>Sr No</i>	<i>Statements</i>	<i>Frequency N=29</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1	Inadequate students Skills	29	100
2	Students not able to pass the aptitude test	26	89.66
3	Students attitude and interest	25	86.21
4	Students fail to achieve minimum percentage criteria	20	68.97
5	Less employment opportunity availability in market	19	65.52
6	Students expectation	17	58.62
7	Strengthening the selection criteria by companies	15	51.72
8	Core engineering jobs are not available in market	14	48.28
9	Reputation and Ranking of the Institute	10	34.48
10	Corporate demanding diploma candidates instead of engineering graduates	8	27.59
11	Placement consultancy are becoming the impediment in placement activity	7	24.14
12	Insufficient Financial provision for Training and placement activities	6	20.69
13	Minimum salaries offered by the companies to engineering students	6	20.69
14	Preference are given to experience not fresher's by the recruiters	6	20.69
15	Age of Institute	5	17.24
16	Location of the institute	3	10.34
17	Management Support	3	10.34
18	Staff experience and capability/competent faculty	2	6.9

Source: Field work

Above table indicate the problem faced by the training and placement officers while placement of engineering students. The problems are ranked according to the more number of respondents to least number

of respondents by the training and placement officer for placing the students. The most problem faced is inadequate student’s skills and least problem is staff experience and location of the institutes, management of the institutes and age of the institutes. Total 18 statement indicating problem faced are regrouped into five. It includes students’ skill problem, criteria of companies, Market force relating problem, Institute reputation relating problems and Management support problem.

Table No.3: Regrouping of the Problems

<i>S. N</i>	<i>Statements</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Classification of Problem</i>	<i>Total</i>
1	Inadequate students Skills	29	Students skills relating Problem	117
2	Students not able to pass the aptitude test	26		
3	Students attitude and interest	25		
4	Students fail to achieve minimum percentage criteria	20		
5	Students expectation	17		
6	Strengthening the selection criteria by companies	15	Criteria’s of Companies	49
7	Core engineering jobs are not available in market	14		
8	Corporate demanding diploma candidates instead of engineering graduates	8		
9	Minimum salaries offered by the companies to engineering students	6		
10	Preference are given to experience not fresher’s by the recruiters	6		
11	Less employment opportunity availability in market	19	Market force relating problem,	26
12	Placement consultancy are becoming the impediment in placement activity	7		
13	Reputation and Ranking of the Institute	10	Institute reputation relating problems	18
14	Age of Institute	5		
15	Location of the institute	3		
16	Insufficient Financial provision for Training and placement activities	6	Management support relating problem.	11
17	Management Support	3		
18	Staff experience and capability/competent faculty	2		

Source: Field work

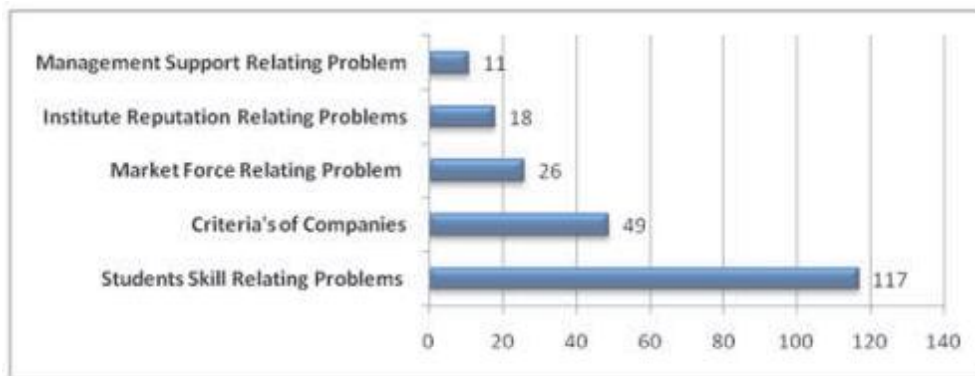
Table No.03 shows the problem faced by the training and placement officers. Total 18 problems were identified and this problems have classified into five Groups Mainly, students skills relating problem, criteria’s of companies, market force relating problem, institute reputation relating problems and management support relating problem. For each problem frequency is calculated and as per the rank has given. Following table and graph indicates that hierarchy of problem faced by the TPOs while placement activity.

Table No.4: Hierarchy of Problem Faced by the TPO'S

<i>Sr. No</i>	<i>Problem Faced by the TPO'S</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
1	Students skills relating Problem	117
2	Criteria's of Companies	49
3	Market force relating problem,	26
4	Institute reputation relating problems	18
5	Management support relating problem.	11

Source: Field work

Graph No.1: Hierarchy of Problem Faced by the TPO'S



From above table seen that most important difficulty faced while placement of engineering students are lack of students skill, with criteria of companies the dominant problem. Market recession and competition are secondary problem relating to market forces. Comparatively few respondents have mention problem relating to institute reputation and management support. In detail discussion of all factors are given below.

Table No.5: Students Skills Related Problems

<i>Sr. No</i>	<i>Statement</i>	<i>Frequency N=29</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1.	Inadequate students Skills	29	100
2.	Students not able to pass the aptitude test	26	89.66
3.	Students attitude and interest	25	86.21
4.	Students fail to achieve minimum criteria	20	68.97
5.	Students expectation	17	58.62

Source: Field work

Out of total the most dominant problem is faced relating to the students skills. Training and Placement Officers' said that though students have the engineering degree, they are lacking the adequate skills in the dynamic corporate world. Reason for these Training and Placement Officers' said students are not serious about their studies and students are not attending the training and placement activities seriously. There are only less numbers of students who attends the training and placements lecture. It was also explored while discussion with the Training and Placement Officers' that there is heavy competition between the old and new engineering institutes. Corporate awareness is very low amongst the students. Students are only focusing on the technical aspects and there is less focus given on the personal as well as professional development.

Next hurdle for the placement of the students is student's inability to qualify the aptitude test conducted

by the companies. Here educational institute have to work hard, along with the formal education they have to guide students for preparing aptitude test. Companies put criteria of certain percentage throughout in the academic records. Students fail to satisfy the particular criteria and not able to attend the recruitment process.

Respondents have also indicated that student's fails to show right optimistic attitude at the time of selection process. They have their own expectations, high salaries demand or expecting growth without having any filed experience of required qualities. It is concludes that out of five problems significant problem faced by the Training and Placement Officers' are problem related to the students skills (117 frequency). A technical institute has to develop scientific training and development procedure which can assess the students' training requirements and fulfill the same. Based on the proper identification of training needs and with application of modern interactive training methods engineering institutes can enhance the students' skills.

Table No.6: Criteria's of Companies

<i>SN</i>	<i>Statement</i>	<i>Frequency N=29</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1.	Strengthening the criteria by companies	15	51.72
2.	Core engineering jobs are not available in market	14	48.28
3.	Corporate demanding diploma candidates instead of engineering graduates	8	27.59
4.	Minimum salaries are offered by the companies to engineering students	6	20.69
5.	Preferences given to experience-Not fresher's by the Recruiters	6	20.69

Source: Field work

After the student's skill set relating to problem, the next important problem faced is Criteria's of Companies. As there is more supply of fresher than demand recruiting companies follow very strict criteria. It may be in terms of academic records and other skills set. According to discussion with 'Training and Placement Officer' it was found that students are not able to fulfill the criteria and not able to get select in the companies. Another import problem faced by engineering students is lack of core engineering jobs. Majority of the companies are working as outsource industry. They fill the post of KPO, BPO and service sector. Students are not willing to join those companies. Today in job market companies are giving preference to diploma students than Engineering students. They hire diploma students with comparatively less salary, train them for a specific skills and get the work done within substantially cost saving. Diploma students are preferred not only because they are offered less salary by the corporate but also they are working on the shop floor level. Were engineering students are interested into core and supervisory jobs. This brings down the salaries of the engineering students. On the other side if companies want to hire engineering graduates they give preference to experience candidates instead of fresher's.

Table No.7: Market Force Relating Problem

<i>Sr. No</i>	<i>Statement</i>	<i>Frequency N=29</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1	Less employability opportunity availability in market	19	65.52
2	Placement consultancy are becoming the impediment in placement activity	7	24.14

Source: Field work

Market recession has put downward pressure on the placements. Most of the companies are facing heat of recession. It has reduced the new core job creation in the market because of which problems are faced while

placement of the students. Companies are fulfilling their recruitment process through consultancies and recruitment through consultancies is putting downward pressure on college placements. It is concluded that less employability opportunity and role of consultancy are impediments in the placement process of the engineering institutes. This study shows that Training and Placement Officers' are focusing and placing students only in manufacturing, IT, Real Estate sectors. There are other sectors like, services, financial services; banking, engineering sales and services, consulting where engineers are recruited. This sector has to be explored by the training and placement officers for the placement purpose. In country there are other industrial area where engineering student's jobs are available. In this region institutes have built their network to achieve their placement objectives.

Table No.8: Institute Reputation Relating Problems

<i>Sr. No</i>	<i>Statement</i>	<i>Frequency N=29</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1	Reputation and Ranking of the Institute	10	34.48
2	Age of Institute	5	17.24
3	Location of the institute	3	10.34

Source: Field work

Under Shivaji University numbers of institutes are located at villages. Out of 36 institutes there are 18 institutes which are established after 2009 and there are only 12 institutes which are old and their establishment is from the year 1983 to 2001. Out of these 36 institutes 26 institutes are located at rural areas while only 10 institutes are in urban areas. While selecting institutes for placement companies generally give preference to the old reputed institutes. Newly started institutes are facing problem in attracting companies for the placement.

Table No.9: Management Support Relating Problem

<i>Sr. No</i>	<i>Statement</i>	<i>Frequency N=29</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1	Insufficient Financial provision for Training and placement activities	6	20.69
2	Management Support	3	10.34
3	Staff experience and capability/competent faculty	2	6.9

Source: Field work

It is encouraging that comparatively fewer respondents have expressed the problem relating to management support. Only 6 of them have stated that problem in terms of insufficient funds, and only few (3) of them said lack of management support and lack of staff experience and competency faculty. This shows that among five problems management support relating problem is less affected to training and placement officers.

CONCLUSION:

Training and placement officers are backbone of the engineering institutes and their role is significant for institutes as well as for student's community. Increasing number of enrolment of students for engineering courses and establishment of newly engineering institutes have created various problems to the training and placement officers. Major Problems faced are students are not having proper skills to perform a job, failed to fulfill the criteria set by the companies etc. Secondary problems like market forces, institute reputation and management support are also affecting for the placements of the students. Students skill relating problems

which includes, inadequate students skills, students not able to pass the aptitude test, students attitude and interest, students fail to achieve minimum percentage criteria and students ever increasing expectation are most significant problem faced by the training and placement officer while placing the students. Secondly problem related company criteria which includes, strengthening the selection criteria by companies, availability of less core engineering in market, preference given to diploma holders and experience engineers instead of fresh engineers, and low salary offered at initial level also affects negatively. In market relating problem training and placement officers faced problem like less employment opportunity availability and placement consultancy are becoming the impediment in placement activity. Institute Reputation and management support are also affects but in low level. It is concluded that Institutes, industry and even universities have to take initiative to solve this problems. Role of training and placement officers is also needed to well define by the institute and University

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