

Graduates Construction of Knowledge and Ability to Act on Employable Opportunities

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Abstract : Introductory: How is knowledge and ability to act on employable opportunities constructed among students and graduates at higher educations? This question have been drawn much attention by researchers, governments and universities in Denmark, since there has been an increases in the rate of unemployment among graduates from higher education. The fact that more than ten thousand graduates from higher education without the opportunity to get a job in these years has a tremendous impact upon the social economy in Denmark. Every time a student graduate from higher education and become unemployed, it is possible to trace upon the person's chances to get a job many years ahead. This means that the tremendous rate of graduate unemployment implies a decrease in employment and lost prosperity in Denmark within a billion Danish Kroner scale. Basic methodologies: The present study investigates the construction of knowledge and ability to act upon employable opportunities among students and graduates at higher educations in Denmark in a literature review as well as a preliminary study of students from Aarhus University. 15 students from the candidate of drama have been engaging in an introductory program at the beginning of their candidate study, which included three workshops focusing upon the more personal matters of their studies and life. They have reflected upon this process during the intervention and afterwards in a semi-structured interview. Concurrently a thorough literature review has delivered key concepts for the exploration of the research question. Major findings of the study: It is difficult to find one definition of what employability encompasses, hence the overall picture of how to incorporate the concept is difficult. The present theory of employability has been focusing upon the competencies, which students and graduates are going to develop in order to become employable. In recent years there has been an emphasis upon the mechanism which supports graduates to trust themselves and to develop their self-efficacy in terms of getting a sustainable job. However, there has been little or no focus in the literature upon the idea of how students and graduates from higher education construct knowledge about and ability to act upon employable opportunities involving network of actors both material and immaterial network and meaningful relations for students and graduates in developing their enterprising behavior to achieve employment. The Act-network-theory combined with theory of entrepreneurship education suggests an alternative strategy to focus upon when explaining sustainable ways of creating employability among graduates. The preliminary study also supports this theory suggesting that it is difficult to emphasize a single or several factors of importance rather highlighting the effect of a multitude network. Concluding statement: This study is the first step of a ph.d.-study investigating this problem in Denmark and the USA in the period 2015 - 2019.

Keywords : employability, graduates, action, opportunities

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