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### Constraints faced by undergraduate veterinary students and suggestions to overcome them

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#### Abstract

The study examines the constraints faced by undergraduate students enrolled in a veterinary college to provide insight for improving educational programs and strategies. The investigation was conducted using an Ex-post-facto research design. Data were collected from 193 students enrolled in the College of Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry, Sardarkrushinagar. The major constraint reported by students was the long distance between the hostel and college or unsuitable college timings (75.26%). Less practical or applied knowledge imparted and issues with the language medium formed the second major constraint (61.57%). The third highest constraint was mess food problems/canteen facility (37.89 per cent). Students suggested relocating hostels nearer to the college (70.52%) and making the course more practical oriented (40.00%) as the most viable solutions.

**Keywords:** Constraints, education, hostel, practical, students, veterinary

#### Introduction

India is predominantly an agrarian nation, and livestock production significantly supports the livelihoods of millions of rural households (Mathialagan, 2007) <sup>[3]</sup>. With rising demand for trained veterinary professionals, the gap between the requirement and availability of registered veterinarians remains substantial (Damodaran, 2014) <sup>[1]</sup>. This indicates promising employment opportunities for veterinary graduates. Higher education plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' social and personal development (Merton, 1957) <sup>[4]</sup>. Despite its significance, veterinary students encounter various challenges that influence their academic experiences. As limited studies focus specifically on veterinary undergraduates, there is a need to understand their difficulties and identify strategies for improvement. Understanding these difficulties and the students' suggestions to overcome them is essential for making marked improvements in the educational programme of veterinary colleges. For this investigation, 'constraints' operationally refers to the difficulties faced by the veterinary student while pursuing their veterinary education.

#### Methodology

The study utilized an "Ex-post-facto" research design. This

design is applied because the independent variables have already acted upon the outcomes (Kerlinger, 1973) <sup>[2]</sup>. The investigation was carried out within the jurisdiction of the S. D. Agricultural University, Sardarkrushinagar. The specific location was the College of Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry, Sardarkrushinagar, located in the Banaskantha district of Gujarat state. This college was purposively selected because the investigator had existing liaison and good rapport with the students, which was expected to yield better responses and reliable information. The college is purely a residential college and imparts education according to the pattern of the Veterinary Council of India.

The study population comprised 193 undergraduate students available at the time of data collection. Data were gathered using an interview schedule. The construction of the schedule was based on an extensive review of literature and guidance from experts in extension education and allied sciences. The instrument was pre-tested with 25 non-sampled respondents, and necessary modifications were incorporated into the final draft.

To identify the difficulties faced by students, open-end questions were asked concerning the constraints they encountered while pursuing veterinary education. Suggestions were also sought from the students to help

overcome these constraints. The responses related to constraints and suggestions were properly grouped, and results were interpreted using frequency and percentage calculations.

## Results and Discussion

This section presents the findings regarding the constraints faced by the undergraduate veterinary college students

(Table 1) and the suggestions provided by them to mitigate these constraints (Table 2). The students were requested to express the constraints faced by them in pursuing veterinary education. These constraints were grouped, ranked, and presented based on frequency and percentage. The data clearly indicated that the most frequent constraint expressed was related to logistics and scheduling.

**Table 1:** Constraints faced by respondents in pursuing veterinary education (n=193)

Sr. No.	Constraints	Frequency	Percent	Rank
1	College is far away from hostel /Timings of college are not suitable	143	75.26	I
2	Less practical/applied knowledge imparted/change in medium(language)	117	61.57	II
3	Mess food problem/canteen facility	72	37.89	III
4	Teaching staff not fully skilled	70	36.84	IV
5	Inadequate library and internet facilities	53	27.89	V
6	No provision of teaching material	35	18.42	VI
7	Course work is very lengthy	32	16.84	VII
8	Less stipend provided during internship	30	15.87	VIII
9	Shortage of scientific instruments	20	10.52	IX

The data in Table 1 show that the major constraint (Rank I), expressed by 75.26 per cent of the students, was that the college was far away from the hostel / timings of college are not suitable. The second major constraint (Rank II) was less practical/applied knowledge imparted/change in medium (language), expressed by 61.57 per cent of students. The other constraints expressed were mess food problem/canteen facility (37.89 per cent, Rank III), teaching staff not fully skilled (36.84 per cent, Rank IV), and inadequate library and internet facilities (27.89 per cent, Rank V). Constraints faced by relatively fewer students included no provision of

teaching material (18.42 per cent, Rank VI) and course work is very lengthy (16.84 per cent, Rank VII). Other constraints were less stipend provided during internship (15.87 per cent, Rank VIII) and shortage of scientific instruments (10.52 per cent, Rank IX). This finding is partially in line with that reported by Shingare (2005) <sup>[7]</sup>, Patel (2005) <sup>[6]</sup> and Patel (2012) <sup>[5]</sup>.

Following Suggestions were sought from the veterinary students to overcome the constraints faced by them in pursuing veterinary education.

**Table 2:** Suggestions Given by the Respondents to Overcome the Constraints (n = 193)

Sr. No.	Suggestions	Frequency	Percent
1.	Hostel should be near to college	134	70.52
2.	Course must be more practical oriented	76	40.00
3.	Excellent hostel and food canteen facility should be provided	70	36.84
4.	Educational system and timings of college should be changed	65	34.21
5.	Increase stipend for internship	46	24.21
6.	Teaching staff should be friendly with sense of humour and positive attitude	37	19.47
7.	Library facilities should be enriched with current books, periodicals and internet	20	10.52
8.	There should be availability of scientific instruments in laboratory	13	6.84

The data in Table 2 illustrate the major suggestions endorsed by the students in descending order. The most frequent suggestion, supported by 70.52 per cent of students, was that the hostel should be near to college. The second major suggestion was that the course must be more practical oriented (40.00 per cent). Other suggestions included providing excellent hostel and food canteen facility (36.84 per cent), changing the educational system and college timings (34.21 per cent), and increasing the stipend for internship (24.21 per cent). Suggestions regarding staff behavior (friendly with a sense of humor and positive attitude) were given by 19.47 per cent of students. This finding is partially supported by the findings reported by Shingare (2005) <sup>[7]</sup>, Patel (2005) <sup>[6]</sup> and Patel (2012) <sup>[5]</sup>.

## Conclusion

This study identifies critical constraints affecting

undergraduate veterinary education and provides evidence-based pathways for institutional enhancement. The primary challenges—involving logistical barriers, inadequate practical training, and facility deficiencies—represent systemic impediments that extend beyond curriculum to encompass the broader learning environment. Student recommendations for hostel relocation, curriculum restructuring toward practical orientation, and improved institutional facilities directly address identified constraints and offer a strategic framework for educational reform. The convergence between student-identified problems and proposed solutions demonstrates that meaningful institutional improvement requires simultaneous attention to infrastructure development and pedagogical transformation. By implementing these evidence-based recommendations, veterinary colleges can enhance student learning experiences, improve retention, and better prepare graduates

to meet the substantial demand for skilled professionals in India's agricultural sector. Regular stakeholder engagement and systematic quality assurance mechanisms should be institutionalized to ensure continuous improvement and strengthen the capacity of veterinary education systems in addressing evolving professional and academic needs.

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