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Emirati students disagree about public sector jobs

by [Amna Al Haddad](#) on Tuesday, 07 July 2009

The economic crisis will force more young Emiratis to look for jobs in the public sector as opposed to private companies, officials said.

"After the economic crisis, nationals prefer to work in a government or semi-government company," said Noora Al Bedur, director of employment and development at the National Human Resource Development and Employment Authority (Tanmia).

"The government will support them, and is behind them, they shouldn't be worried," she added.

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But, both graduate and undergraduate students told *Arabian Business* they did not want to work in banking or government-related posts because the jobs were dull.

Students at the American University of Sharjah (AUS) said they were attracted by perceived higher wages paid by private companies.

Mohammed Ahmed, a business and commerce student said he preferred to work for a private company because the job would be more interesting.

"The drawback [in a public company], is the lower income level compared to private and it may be a boring job to begin with," he said.

Al Bedur said the conception among students that private sector firms paid bigger wages was not entirely true.

"For the payment, post-secondary degree holders get AED4,000 in private companies as a minimum, while in banks they get about AED7,000-10,000 as a package," she said.

Recent business management graduate Sara al Falasi, who is half British, said: "I don't find working at a bank is the only option locals' have in today's market.

"I have been brought up in a culture where being around different people is important. Also, to be honest, my language in Arabic is not that strong."

Architecture and design student Omar Al Suwaidi, who is due to graduate in spring 2010, said: "I'd rather work in a private company, because, for my major, it's hard to find a public company that may offer me a position."

He said this was due to government firms sticking to "ancient-looking" buildings, while he preferred to work in a modern place.

Nuha Rasheed a student who graduated in 2005 from AUS with a degree in graphic design and masters in management expressed some dissatisfaction with working for a private company.

"In private companies, they don't value locals, and they see them as not good enough, and that they're below them. They feel they have to teach them, train them – they don't want them to grow."

However, she added: "I'd still rather not work in a government company and get done by 2:30."

Just 14,000 UAE nationals are employed in the private sector, according to World Bank figures.

Officials have urged more private sector firms to employ locals because not enough jobs are being created in the public sector to meet the increasing number of Emirati graduates.

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