



Fresh graduates entrants to the working world

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ABSTRACT

Way back in 1990s having a degree or a diploma is basically a ticket for a fresh graduate to enter the working world successfully. However the scenario has changed with the number of graduates who completes their degree has increased year after year. This research aims to study the significant of soft skill and confidence level which a graduate has in securing a job. The findings of the study will assist academicians and students to seek ways to improve soft skills and confidence abilities in students before they graduate. Questionnaires will be distributed to three hundred students who have graduated from UiTM Perlis, UiTM Kedah and UiTM P. Pinang. Samples will be controlled to eliminate inappropriate elements contained in the sampling frame.

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Introduction

Twenty years ago, having a degree or a diploma is basically a ticket for a graduate to enter the working world successfully. However the scenario has changed with the number of graduates who completes their degree has increased and this has resulted with stiff competition to secure a job.

The purpose of the research is to study on why fresh graduates are not able to secure a job in organizations with the degree/ diploma which they have obtained. In previous research held and discussions with the industry players mentioned that the fresh graduates are not work ready and this has resulted in the government having to invest time and money to train the graduates to start work. It was also mentioned that these fresh graduates are not proficient in English language and they are able to present new ideas, explain issues and problems which would help the organizations to overcome challenges with workable solutions which is very much sought after by employers.

Understanding the setback, universities have introduced additional activities and courses which includes soft skills and confidence levels awareness. Many have also make it compulsory for students to undergo industrial placements or better known as practical training especially going for internship abroad. This collaboration would later create a networking which benefits both parties.

Literature Review

The graduates

Graduates are also known as output of the growing trend in higher education for the user-pays approach (Moreau & Leathwood, 2006). The number of graduates who leaves colleges and universities every year tend to contribute to an increase in term-time employment and its impact upon student's professional life.

Graduates who leave universities today are those who are born in year 1992 to 2000. They are also known as the Generation Y, who grows up with technology and is used to having technology as a large part of their life. These young generations are more acceptable with change and are less likely

to see job security as an important factor in the workplace (Hart, 2006). As employees, Gen Ys are typified as valuing skill development and enjoying the challenge of new opportunities.

Graduate recruitment and turnover

With the increased number of graduates who completes their degrees, these definitely lead to intense competition for positions on graduate schemes, but recent empirical research (Harvey & Contributors, 2003) suggest that a more complex picture is emerging, both with respect to new and emerging graduate occupations and also graduate expectations

Competitive business world

For an organization or any business entities to stay in the market, it has to offer products or services which is up to the mark. It also has to be on its toes as the business world is very competitive. Competition is a major factor that motivates industry to be more efficient and to employ strategies which will improve production, service and product quality. However strategies, creativity and for innovation to emerge, collaboration and strong teamwork among employees is very much needed. (Mustapha & Abdullah, 2000).

Internship programme

Internships have been introduced as one of the alternative to introduce new graduates into a particular field. It is also known as co-operative education which allows students to "acquire essential skills by being exposed to the real work life situation which is beyond the boundaries of the campus" (Ng & Burke, 2006, p. 480). Internship programme is also a platform for enquiring workplace learning which is more social in nature, action-oriented and context-specific than in the educational environment (Eraut, 2004)

Problem Statement

The unemployment rate among university graduates are alarming increasing. Many employers are saying that the fresh graduates are not prepared for the industry as they are lacking in the soft skills and lack of self confidence in themselves.

Gucharan Singh (2008) mentioned that majority of the young graduates leaves the university with good certificates and degrees, however it was noted that these graduates are lack of

skills, attitudes, and understanding which are very much needed for these graduates to successfully enter the world of work. Many moaned and grumbled when they fail to secure a job. Many mentioned that jobs are not available as economy is bad, but often jobs are readily available, but these graduates lack what is needed to get and keep jobs.

Employability skills are not job specific, but are skills which cut horizontally across all industries and vertically across all jobs from entry level to chief executive officer. (Sherer and Eadie 1987, p.16).

Objective (s) of the Research

1. To study whether soft skill do affect unemployment rate.
2. To study whether confidence affect unemployment rate.

Hypotheses for the study:

H1: There is a positive significant relationship between lack of soft skills and the effect of unemployment rate among fresh graduates

H2: There is a positive significant relationship between lack of confidence and the effect of unemployment rate among fresh graduates

Methodology

This study focuses on the internship students from the 3 UiTM campuses which are UiTM P. Pinang, UiTM Perlis and UiTM Kedah. 100 students would be identified from each of the listed campus.

Researches would liaise with the Coordinators of Industrial Linkages and Community Unit (UiLC) in identifying students who have undergone industrial training/placement either at local or overseas organizations. Students would be answering questionnaires which would help researches to answer the above research objective.

The researches would perform descriptive analysis on the results obtained and a paired comparisons analysis will be conducted to identify any variation in output between students attending internship locally as compared to students sent for overseas internship.

Conclusion

With the increase number of graduates leaving the university, each one of them need to ensure that they have all what the employers need ie; an employee with good soft skills, employee with high confidence level and employee who is willing to learn on how to learn. This research would give a strong insight on what is needed for a fresh graduate to be employed. This would also reduce the unemployment rate which is now on the raise.

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