

SUPERVISOR'S AND PANEL APPROVAL

“I hereby acknowledge that I have read this works and my opinion this works is sufficient in terms of scope and quality for submission and award of Degree in Technopreneurship with Honours”

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EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY

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DECLARATION

“I hereby declare that this study entitle “Effectiveness Strategies to Enhances Graduate Employability” is my own work except for the quotations summaries that have been duty acknowledged”

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DEDICATION

I dedicated this research to my beloved mother Zakiah binti Yussof and father Junaidi Abdillah bin Suwardi who have raised me up to this day, and always give encouragement and guidance to complete this study. Also special thanks to my supervisor, Professor Dr. Mohd Ridzuan Bin Nordin who helps me a lot to completing my research and have taught me to be more strong and decisive action to get knowledge. Also to my close friends especially Muhammad Nur Hafiz Bin Ghozali, who help me a lot such as gaining the ideas. Research is not only about read and write. Research also need to explore and asking others to completing it. Then, thanks to my panel and my friends that help me throughout the study towards accomplishing my thesis.

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ABSTRACT

The issue of unemployed graduate is not new. Each year graduate increase exceeding the job offers in market. As a university student, of course, this is a concern issue for them as they continue to study for a better job. But, unemployment issue can be avoided by well preparation and effective strategy of students before they hunt for an employment. The objective of this research is to identify the strategy used by young employee to find a job. Next is to identify the relationship between job search strategy and a career success. This study will focus on the students' preparation before they looking for employment such as an education, interpersonal skills and experience and job-related skills. Three of these will act as mediator between job search strategy (independent variable) and job search success. The collected listed strategies can be used for students next, they can build a planned strategy to find a job. To collecting a data for this research, an interview session will be conducted to graduates from Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM). Judgemental sampling technique was used to define potential informant for the research. The collected data then analyzed using directed content analysis and transcribing. The data transcribe then be analyzed using thematic approach in order to cover all the objectives. In the last part of this research, researcher may conclude that graduate who proactive in searching job, will get immediate job offer while graduate who reactive have to wait before they get the job offer. Plus, well-prepared graduate able to manage their confidence before and during interview which may increase possibilities to be hired. Researcher hope that this research may help final year student to take action in order to secure employment.

Keywords: *unemployment, job search strategy, job search success*

ABSTRAK

Pengangguran merupakan isu yang sudah lama diperkatakan. Pengangguran dikalangan siswazah juga meningkat setiap tahun kerana bilangan siswazah melebihi permintaan di pasaran. Sebagai bakal siswazah, tentu sahaja perkara ini membimbangkan pelajar kerana mereka menyambung pelajaran demi mendapatkan pekerjaan yang lebih baik. Namun begitu, hal ini dapat dielakkan dengan penyediaan diri dan strategi terancang yang berkesan sebelum pelajar melangkah mencari pekerjaan. Objektif kajian adalah untuk mengenalpasti strategi-strategi mencari pekerjaan yang digunakan oleh siswazah yang telah bekerja. Seterusnya, mencari kaitan di antara strategi yang efektif dengan kejayaan bekerja. Fokus kajian adalah kepada penyediaan diri pelajar sebelum mencari kerja seperti pendidikan, kemahiran interpersonal, pengalaman dan kemahiran berkaitan dengan pekerjaan. Tiga perkara ini merupakan pengantara kepada strategi mencari kerja (pembolehubah bebas) dengan kejayaan mencari kerja. Strategi ini boleh digunakan oleh bakal siswazah seterusnya membuat strategi terancang untuk mencari pekerjaan. Dalam mengumpul data bagi kajian ini, sesi temu duga akan dijalankan kepada siswazah lepasan Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM). Teknik persampelan penilaian digunakan untuk menentukan maklumat berpotensi untuk penyelidikan. Data yang dikumpulkan kemudian dianalisis dan ditranskripsi. Transkripsi data kemudian dianalisis menggunakan pendekatan tematik untuk memenuhi kesemua objektif. Di bahagian akhir penyelidikan ini, penyelidik mungkin menyimpulkan bahawa siswazah yang proaktif dalam mencari pekerjaan, akan mendapat tawaran kerja segera sementara siswazah yang reaktif perlu menunggu beberapa tempoh sebelum mereka mendapat tawaran pekerjaan. Selain itu, graduan yang bersedia dengan baik dapat menguruskan keyakinan mereka sebelum dan ketika wawancara yang dapat meningkatkan peluang untuk diupah. Penyelidik berharap kajian ini dapat membantu pelajar tahun akhir mengambil tindakan untuk mendapatkan pekerjaan.

Kata kunci: pengangguran, strategi mencari pekerjaan, kejayaan mencari pekerjaan

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Graduate is person who completed a course of study or training. Student and graduate desire to achieve higher education is influenced by the believe of wider employment opportunities upon graduation. Plus, the education may improve life. Besides, students and graduate already thought about the employment before they choose the course for study. So, they tend to choose area that lead to better employment opportunity. The diversity of educational institutions in higher education, it is to be expected that graduate have different level of skills, knowledge and capabilities which affect their chances of obtaining employment.

Today, graduate who look for job are among Generation Y (Gen Y) based on the year they were born. According Harry Wallop (2014), Generation Y also known as Millennials are those born between 1980 until 2000. The behaviors and attitude of this generation are strongly influenced by technology. Other generations are defined by Graduate Recruitment Bureau of United Kingdom (n.d.) as given in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Generation and year of birth (Source: Graduate Recruitment Bureau of United Kingdom)

Generation	Year of birth
Veterans	1920-1940
Baby Boomers	1940-1960
Generation X	1960-1980
Generation Y	1980-2000
Generation Z	2000-2020

Each group has their own set of values, orientation to the world, sense of loyalty, expectation of their leadership and expectation on work environment. Everyone wants a workplace and culture that allows and encourages them to be productive and influential members of a company. Gen Y are defined by several qualities or characters being optimism, confidence, intelligence, independence, high in entrepreneurial spirit, high level of sociability, morality and public duty.

Gen Y is also known as generation that remain in education longer, travel further, have access to more information than any other generation, be more aware of technology and more creative to think outside the box. Besides, graduate from Gen Y want to constantly learn new skills, be challenged intellectually and continually achieve it. Graduate are becoming more sophisticated when searching employment. They tended to make comparisons between different vacancies and different employers and regularly search for other relevant employment opportunities.

The issue of unemployed graduate is not new. The variation of unemployment among graduates reflects the demand-and-supply situation. An explanation for unemployment is the lack of demand and excess of supply for some types of graduate which lead to mismatch phenomenon due to lack of linkage between institution and employers. The extent of graduate unemployment is rising each year due to the number of graduates every year exceeding the job offers in market. They have to compete with each other in order to place themselves in the industry. This phenomenon results in wastage in the workforce where this labor sources actually can be used effectively in various fields that need them.

Unemployed graduate phenomenon is caused by many factors as discussed by many party. Some of the factors involve the industry, company and employer, while other factors relate to the graduate themselves. The lower labor costs in Cambodia, Vietnam and Indonesia attracted foreign investors to open up their factory and company there (Information Unit of Welfare Student of Penang Egypt, 2016). This situation leads to decreasing employment opportunities to Malaysians and thus affecting graduates who seek employment.

Ministry of Education Malaysia (2016) stated that about 40,000 graduates are unemployed within 6 months after graduation. JobStreet.com ranked 7 factors which affect graduate unemployment. These are poor command of English language, followed by poor character or attitude, asking for unrealistic salary or benefits, skill mismatch with labor market, choosy about a job or company, lack of problem-solving skills and lack of wide knowledge. this finding was obtained from a survey involving 216,048 graduates and are presented in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Percentage of Unemployed Graduate (Source: JobStreet.com)

Factor of unemployment	Percentage
1. poor command of English language	56%
2. poor character or attitude	37%
3. asking for unrealistic salary or benefits	33%
4. skill mismatch with labor market	30%
5. choosy about a job or company	28%
6. lack of problem-solving skills	26%
7. lack of wide knowledge	24%

From the factors stated, we can conclude that, some of graduate are unemployed not because they have no job opportunity, sometimes they reject the opportunity. From the job offer because graduates look for job in specific field of specialization. Next, it may be caused by low salary offered by employer. Thus, it can be observed that unemployment is caused by many reasons which are come from industry and the graduate itself.

Roshilawaty and Marina (2016) discussing about unemployment issue can be avoided from an early stage where fresh graduate need to provide themselves with soft-skills and hard-skills. Soft-skills refer to personality traits, social attractiveness, language skills, personal norms, attitudes of sensitivity or concern and a person's optimistic attitude. Meanwhile, hard-skills refer to skills related to technical skills in work and knowledge that are closely related to the latest system. The opportunities to be in university should be the best way for student in shaping their personality.

One of the reason for unemployment is graduate lack of preparation before stepping out of university. In the final year of their study, student should start looking

for appropriate job. Usually, they will search vacancies that related to their field of study. But, not all graduate too selective in finding a job, some of them will accept what they being offered. For them, it is necessary to start from bottom instead of to be promoted based on the education level.

Besides, Jennifer (2017) gave several useful advices for graduate in looking for employment. At first, she points out that graduate should not delay the job search process, graduate should start it early. They should begin building their networks by attending club events, networking with faculty members, securing leadership roles within campus organizations and lining up internship. Next, graduate have to show what they have learned. Even though lacking work experience, graduate can improve employment opportunity if they have undergone internship training and involved in volunteer initiative.

Other than that, she stated networking, which refer to job opportunity from people around graduates. Networking is one of the way to set graduate apart from crowd. keep up-to-date the resumes and business cards because graduate never know when an opportunity to network will happen. Next, the most important point is graduate have to recognize where they want to go. Graduates was encouraged to create their personal road map for next five and ten years. It may be changed over time, but at least it is a guide to start with clear goals. All the advices are to make students marketable to employers and enhancing graduate employability.

According to Eddy Ng *et. al* (2016), company should study about what are the characteristic of company graduates are looking for, how they seek out the information about potential employers and how graduate make career decisions. In addition, Cable and Turban (2001) cited by Eddy S. W. Ng *et al* (2016), agreed that it is important for employer to have knowledge about job seeker and what they expect from the organization. Graduate's determination influence how they pursue job and their decision to accept the job offer by potential organization.

The appropriate job search strategy will enhance the graduate employability which lead to job search success. In the long-term, graduate will have desire to pursue their career in life by staying engaged to the current job. In order to make a career, the job must be satisfied by the employees. The Gen Y value the leisure time during work hour and high security of the working environment. According to Hwee Ling Lim (2012) cited from Twenge et al. (2010), there are five motivational dimensions to measure work preference which led to job satisfaction among Gen Y as stated in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3: Five Motivational Dimensions (Hwee Ling Lim, 2012)

Work motivator	Description
Extrinsic	Tangible rewards such as income, promotion opportunities & status.
Intrinsic	Intangible rewards that reflect an inherent interest in the work leading to being motivated to work by itself.
Leisure time	Rewards that enable a work-life balance such as flexible work hour.
Social/affiliation	Emotional awards that satisfy the need to be connected to others.
Altruistic	Intangible rewards that satisfy the need to help others and contribute to society.

The definition of career success is very personal. For one it may be the prestige of a title, while for another it may be the amount of money earned. If one cannot define what makes a successful career, how can one know if one are happy with the career right now? According to Ruaidhri Horan (2016), career success may be defined as follow.

At the early stages of the career, career success may be defined by a few aspects such as the relationship with the co-workers, the relationship with the employer, the relationship with other departments within the organization and the learning curves. Next, the idea of what makes career success might change significantly including such things as the movement up the corporate ladder, the amount of income made, the prestige within the organization and the prestige outside the organization.

A general societal view of successful career is that must be high-earning, high-achieving, and be well-respected by the other workers. The most important thing is to recognize our own individuality and to think long about how one would determine their personal career success.

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Many employers point that graduates are ill-prepared and are not ready for the effort to secure a job. Plus, graduate do not plan and strategize their effort.

Graduate do not prepare themselves well to get into employment. They only promote their expertise based on their study and expecting the company will accept them without being aware on requirement from the industry. Employers have an expectation from the graduates and highly prefer graduate who have ability and skills that meet their requirement for the offered position.

Besides, graduate lack of knowledge about an appropriate platform that can be used to find related job that suit them. They tried to find a vacancy from the internet or ask their relatives and friends in order to save time and energy. Plus, recommendation of relatives or friends might be the effective way to be recruited. This kind of recruitment is biased in favors of those who have connection in the company. But, not all of them succeeded to get the job using this strategy.

1.3 PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this research is to study the preparation taken by graduate to secure their first job. From this research, final year student can make it as a guide to be prepared in seeking a job right after they graduate. Next, this study will identify the link between preparation of job search strategy will career success. This research will guide final year student to focus on what they desire and lead to the most strategic job search strategy in order to pursue their career. At the end of the study, they will apply strategic plan to hunt a job and enhance their employability.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

The research questions of this study are:

1. What are strategies used by young employee to find their first job?
2. How effective are the strategies used to secure employment?
3. Is there a link between career success with job search strategy?

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this research are:

1. To identify the strategies used by young employee to find their first job.
2. To investigate the effectiveness of strategies used by graduate to lean employment.
3. To identify the link between job search strategy with career success.

1.6 SCOPE OF LIMITATION

For this research, the data will be collected by interview session with selected respondent or potential interviewee. The respondent chosen are fifteen people whose graduated from Bachelor of Technopreneurship (BTEC) of Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM). They are graduate who have a less than 5 years' work experience in various field. This research will focus on the strategy they use in hunting their job.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

This research may benefit several entities which employer are, unemployed graduate and UTeM's final year students. Employers may review the needs of the Y generation as they will be employed. employers can customize the company's condition with the needs of employees in order to avoid employee turnover and reduce employee costs. Next, unemployed graduates can use this study as a guide to formulate a more effective strategy in finding jobs. Besides, they can improvise their skills and knowledge about the suitable industry to avoid mismatch of skills in the industry. A more precise preparation can be made based on relevant situation by the informants' cases from this research. Lastly, this research will help UTeM's final year student to prepare themselves in the early stage find employment. Thus, they may start to produce a resume as a first strategy of find job even though they are still study. Students can use this research as a guide to plan their career success.

1.8 SUMMARY

This chapter explain about the important aspect of the study. It clearly stated the direction of the research which include the background of study, the problem statement, research questions and the research objectives. In short, this chapter give a description of the research purpose.