"Employer's Perception on Graduates Soft Skills, Employability"

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

Over the past 20 years organisations have been increasingly influenced by the forces of internationalisation and globalisation. Hence, universities across the globe including Malaysia increasingly required to produce highly skilled graduates who are able to respond to the ever changing and complex needs of the contemporary workplace in term of employment (Weil, 1999; Sleezer et al., 2004; Possa, 2006). Graduates are not only evaluated interm of their academic performance but skills and working experiece are required in order for them to be employable and marketable.

However, there has been a major concern raised by the employers that they are not able to find graduates with the required skills (Hesketh 2000). In a survey reported by the BBC, four out of 10 large employers in the United Kingdom struggled to fill graduate vacancies because of a shortage of applicants with the right skills.The competitiveness level in the graduate recruitment market is therefore increasingly and will probably continue because of the increased mobility of graduates who are willing and able to go wherever the best opportunities with their limited skills (Andrews & Higson 2008).

Hence, many universities nowadays, have adopted an outward-looking approach, and work closely with industries and employers for an example giving the student opportunities to attend practical training in order to gain knowledgeable skills needed by them in job- seeking requirement.

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CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Employer's Perception

Perception is a process by which an individual selects, organizes and interprets stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007). Specifically, it means that neither the incompatibility nor the goals, the rewards or the scarcity, or the interference have to be objectively present. They only need to be perceived by one or the other party in order to facilitate conflict.

Today's employer demands graduates who are great thinkers, bold visionaries, entrepreneurs, good communicators, excellent planners, effective leaders, good negotiators and skilful diplomats (Kretovics, 1999). Employers are also increasingly seeking graduate to be recruited with a wide variety of skills apart from those associated directly with their area of studies (Rawlings et al., 2005).

Empirical studies that related to employers perception on the graduates cover many aspects and demonstrate various findings. Most studies find that the highest rating criteria from employers' perception is communication skills (Scheetz, 1977; Dean et al., 1981; Henry and Raymond, 1982; Dench et al., 1998; Ducoffe and Ducoffe, 1990; Kim et al., 1993; Scott and Frontezak, 1996) which the importance of communication skills is found from studies in developed and less developed countries. Other important criteria are team work and learning skills followed by technical skills.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHADOLOGY

3.1.1 Data Collection

There is two type of method that will be use in this research to determine the research which is mainly primary and secondary data. Primary data will using survey method to obtain information required based on questioning respondents (employer). A set structured questionnaire is prepared and given to a sample population selected.

Mean while, secondary data obtained through in house information which the data will be readily available and provide useful inside. It will gather published from material on-line databases, or syndicated services. The published materials are obtained from magazines, articles, journals, libraries, newspaper cutting and other printed material related to the research study. The computerized databases included documents from internet, web page and other material. This will help the research

3.1.2 Sample Design

Research design is a framework or blueprint for conducting marketing research project. This research based on descriptive research whereby it being conducted in order to get more information for the purposes of this research. In descriptive research, methods of research used are quantitative analysis and surveys. Survey conducted through questionnaire that will be given to the customer that has an experience on retail store.

3.1.3 Sampling Technique

Quota sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where the assembled sample has the same proportions of individuals as the entire population with respect to known characteristics, traits or focused phenomenon. In addition to this, the researcher must make sure that the composition of the final sample to be used in the study meets the research's quota criteria.