

FINAL RESEARCH REPORT
ON

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF SECRETARIES' WORK, TRAINING AND CAREER
DEVELOPMENT WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SECRETARIAL CURRICULUM

PRESENTED TO

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ABSTRACT

The revision of the secretarial curriculum requires a good account of the practice and the many skills needed to function effectively. This empirical study of the secretarial vocation is an attempt to build such a databased approach to curriculum revision. A sample of 175 secretaries and 89 bosses participated in this study. Typical secretarial duties are still important. However, use of shorthand appears less extensive and use of PC is more pervasive than is embodied in the curriculum. Systematic career development for the secretary is generally absent. On the basis of the findings, several recommendations for secretarial curriculum are proffered.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The Malaysian economy has long past its status as a primary agricultural goods producer. We are now a major industrial economy with the manufacturing sector being the biggest contributor to the economy, growth, employment, and exports(Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers, 1995:A32). The rapid growth and transformation has generated demand for different types of workers. Skilled knowledge workers are required in increasing numbers to staff the new businesses. Although the spotlight appears to be on the professional disciplines of engineering and information technology, the secretary is undoubtedly a scarce commodity looking from the endless stream of advertisements for employees. Their efficiency and effectiveness makes the difference between a well organised or ill-organised manager and through him/her transmit the image of the business. Therefore, he/she forms an integral part of the team that keeps the manager informed, organised and effective(Harvey,1993).

The demand for competent secretaries is rising following the impressive corporate expansion and creations. Contrary to popular belief, rapid advances in