



**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA
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POLICY STUDY**

**RESEARCH ON GRADUATE STUDENTS:
DO EMPLOYER EMPHASIZE ON EXPERIENCE SKILLS
OR ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS**

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Abstract

This study was done to observe and analyse the required academic requirements, intellectual skills and personal skills for fresh graduates from the perspective of the employers. As commonly understood, academic qualifications are not enough for graduates in current job market. Some employers prefer hiring graduates that has more experience and personal skills which are proven important for current workplace. It is argued that, some employees who excel academically do not necessarily give positive outcomes for the organization development. Also, because of the changing nature of skills needed for today's competitive marketplace means that qualitative considerations play an increasing role in the selection of graduates. Because of this, there was an increased level of competition between the graduates for available jobs in the market. The objective of this study is to determine the skills possessed by fresh graduates today from the perspective of the employers in order to be able to meet the current job market.

The outcome of this research was that employers find both academic qualifications and experience skills plays an important role for producing graduates that are employment-ready.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In today's world, industries are experiencing changes more rapidly. Various factors are propelling these changes such as globalization, internationalization, rapid changes in technologies and intense competition and most work needs to operate globally in order to survive the competition which exists in this world today. This change has created an impact on the nature of work where a high level use of technology is a necessity to compete in the global arena. Hence, a more flexible workforce with advanced technical skills coupled with well generic skills such as creative thinking, problem solving and analytical skills, is greatly needed by the employer in industry in order to meet the challenges faced by business.

These changes also have profound impact on the higher education institutions, as education is the foundation on which a competitive workforce is built. Despite some impressive improvements in performance in the higher education institutions, many students still emerge from the education system ill-equipped to meet the challenges of life and employment. Educational institutions have come under intense pressure to equip students with more than just academic skills. A number of employers has urged universities to make more explicit efforts to develop the 'key', 'core', 'transferable', 'soft', 'employable', and 'generic skills' needed in many types of employment. Therefore it is important for educational institutions to have working relationship with industry to meet the requirement and needs of employers. In the era of a new revolution in which knowledge and applied intelligence is rapidly becoming the key to national survival and success, "knowledge" workers are needed to help their organizations gain competitive advantage through the application of skills in technology, innovation, production and service (Gregory, 1996).

Industries are in constant need for a consistent and reliable supply of educated and skilled business graduates. On the other hand, universities have the responsibility to produce graduates that will meet the requirements of the

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Literature review

2.1.1 Definition of Experience skills and Academic skills

There are no substitute for skills and experience. Having a paper qualification is just an additional advantage. Work experience is valuable because employers want efficient employee who can make sense of complex information, solve problems, work in a team, communicate effectively, manage their time and cope with pressure. Employers want to see that you have experienced getting to work on time, have learnt how to work with a diverse range of people and understand customer service skills. Work experience is valuable in building a successful career and fosters the ability to assume greater responsibilities and sometimes can also be an opportunity to learn new ones. There's no substitute for skills developed in real workplace environments.

Academic or intellectual skills are the skills necessary to do well in an educational setting. They include reading, writing, math and other study skills. Academic skills are necessary for being successful in school, and in many cases, in a professional career. Basic academic skills are the cornerstone for a complete education and this area of skills is essential for further academic success, allowing students to better learn the material presented to them, as well as giving them the opportunity to learn new things on their own. Some may argue that academic skills are important for a student's success in school, but the same skills can also be used in work environments. These are skills that, once they have been learned, can be beneficial to someone throughout the course of his lifetime which can lead to success years after graduation.

2.1.2 Definition of Education

Education is an on-going process of learning whether formal or informal. Basically, in terms of physical and mental. Physical learning is a process of technical and manual aspect, meanwhile mental learning is about concept, theories, philosophy and others. Formal education can be gained through schools in classroom,