

To Investigate the Factor of Self-Efficacy Against the Employability Among University Graduates in Penang, Malaysia with Internship as Intervening Variable

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Abstract

The research study had been conducted with the intention to investigate the factor of self-efficacy against the employability among the university graduates in Penang, Malaysia where the study will include the internship factor as the intervening variable. The self-effacement had been highly referre as the major driving factors among the university graduates which potentially will lead to creating positive contribution towards the ability for the individuals to gain better prospects and opportunities to be employed in the competitive market. It is also known that Penang, Malaysia had been identified as the geographical location for the target population which is been a fitting choice where the competitiveness of the employability of the job market had been very high. The study continues in delivering the quantitative study research design by conducting the data collection through the questionnaire distribution towards 150 respondents that had recently joined the employment market in Penang. The result had shown the outcome where the findings had provide the supporting evidence showing no existence of the significant relationship between the self-efficacy among the university graduates affecting the employability in the job market. Besides, the intervening variable of internship had not shown the significant in the intervening role in the regression model suggesting that the internship factor appears to be irrelevance when comes to affecting the employability opportunity in the job market in Penang. The conclusion of the study had opened doors to new research scope and area of interest which can be proceed by the future researchers.

Keywords- Penang, Malaysia, self-efficacy, employment, internship.

INTRODUCTION

Employability has become increasingly competitive in recent years as the size of the workforce grows and a more skilled and talented workforce emerges. This was creating challenges for young graduates to enter the workforce due to lack of work experience and background knowledge of work skills (Rasul et al., 2013). Late graduates face more competition, especially due to the increasing number of postgraduates and postgraduates in the labor market, making academic level irrelevant and providing the golden ticket to employment (Chen, Shen & Gosling 2018). Graduate studies are also becoming more popular as more potential employees and job seekers find opportunities to improve their personal skills and knowledge.



A highly competitive labor market creates disadvantages and challenges for graduates as their resumes are in short supply relative to those already in the work environment (Helena & Kena, 2019). This presents graduates with the question of how to visualize their employability potential so that they can differentiate themselves in the current market. We need not just employees, but graduates with thinking skills such as decision making, reasoning, creative thinking and teamwork (Smith & Krüger, 2011). In fact, employers tend to prioritize hiring over specific technical knowledge and professional skills (Abas-Mastura, Imam & Osman, 2013). Therefore, it is very important to find out how well graduates are meeting employers' expectations. In addition, self-efficacy is related to students' beliefs and confidence in their job prospects.

The challenge of this research study is to understand the potential contributions to the factors that influence the employability of graduates. It helps future graduates understand the preparation they need to improve their marketability in the job market and gain an edge in finding their first job (Griffin & Coelho, 2019). As the study helps us understand the requirements and characteristics that organizations are looking for in the current job market, it also helps us identify the relevance of factors that can have a significant impact on the employability of our graduates. Increase (Jackling & Natoli, 2015). We also include an internship component in the research study to further examine the importance of face-to-face internships for graduate employability. This had delivered to the address of the research objective to study the significant of the relationship between the self-efficacy against the employability in the employment market.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital competence is defined as the capacity to utilize this knowledge to adapt to digitization and operate digital technologies and devices. It has been believed that the significance of advanced education will increment with the period of digitalization. In the time of digitization, pretty much every workplace is vigorously connected with the utilization of innovation gadgets like PCs, programming and machines (Bejaković and Mrnjavac, 2020). Be that as it may, computerized proficiency exposures are reflected in a few scholastic trains and can make a computerized education hole among graduates. According to Vrana (2017), digital competencies are regarded as additional knowledge that will eventually become a basic requirement for employment. Digital literacy competencies were found in some of employers' job application criteria, indicating the importance of digital literacy in improving employability (Kim, 2019).

According to Bejakovi and Mrnjavac (2020), governments and businesses have a significant impact on employability, and research has shown that governments and businesses tend to look for more digital literacy talent because the knowledge and skillset will assist in developing more innovative and creative operation models. Pirzada & Kahn (2013) agreed that the digitalization era had become more important for business growth because the way of working had been digitalized, such as switching from paper to softcopies and system applications, requiring employees to have the same skillset expected of them in order to complete the required task using the digital approach. According to Valds, Soriano, and Ivarez (2018), graduates are now expected to receive fundamental training on how to use fundamental digital



software in their future employment. In order to prepare them for employment, the need to acquire undertraining in navigation and digital device use should be incorporated into their academic studies. Kim (2019) said that digital literacy is going to be necessary because of the growing use of digital technology in the workplace. She stressed the importance of developing digital literacy skills to market this skill to the job market, which will improve employability. The literature review's discussion and reflection have revealed that the results so far strongly support the contribution of digital competencies to workplace modernization. This has implications for graduates' employability, particularly in the digital age. implies that into the twenty-first century. This aided give a name to the speculation by bringing up that there is a critical relationship between computerized proficiency and graduate employability.

H0: There is no significant positive relationship between the self-efficacy towards the employability for the university graduates.

H1: There is significant positive relationship between the self-efficacy towards the employability for the university graduates.

Since not all academics required students to have an internship as a mandatory graduation module, the internship has always been the mediator for all graduates seeking employment. The term "internship" refers to a type of opportunity for students to work in a real company and gain experience in the workplace. It also serves as a platform for preparing students for employment after graduation. Although the internship is not required for every academic requirement at the university, some academic modules have substituted other final-year projects and business simulations for the internship.

The presence of entry level position is considered as an or more point in acquiring perceivability and opportunity when comes to the employability after graduation. According to Chen, Shen, and Gosling (2018), employers have shown positive signs of having more faith and confidence in those who complete an internship than in those who do not. This is because the internship experience will demonstrate to graduates that they have relevant experience adapting to the real business world, giving them a distinct advantage over other applications for jobs. According to Jackling & Natoli (2015), the internship enhances graduate confidence and readiness, both of which will be significant contributors to the graduate's ability to demonstrate that they meet employment requirements. The internship is regarded as a form of work experience that is difficult to obtain during academic study; including the internship on a resume will become the most persuasive argument for employability among employers. However, Kapareliotis, Voutsina and Patsiotis (2019) referenced that temporary position is generally excessively short to turn into the refence on the functioning openness where graduates won't be given any critical job inside the association that will help in building the essential experience for their future business. Griffin & Coelho (2019), on the other hand, emphasize that the internship will be valued equally to the work experience, which will serve as the graduate's primary mental preparation for the workplace without major hiccups. As a result, this internship is determining as the primary mediator in influencing graduates' chances of finding work.



H0: There is no significant intervening factor of internship the self-efficacy towards the employability for the university graduates.

H2: There is significant intervening factor of internship the self-efficacy towards the employability for the university graduates.

METHODOLOGY

The quantitative analysis approach will be applied to the numerical data that will be used to provide objective measurement for the research study in this study, which will adopt the research design. According to Sekaran & Bougie (2016), the advantage of a quantitative analysis study is that it can efficiently analyze a large amount of data in a short amount of time. This will show the higher capability of inclusion through the bigger size of information to give more broadened contribution of the information input for the review. In addition, numerical data will be used in the quantitative analysis, whereas static output will provide more precise and objective results for determining which data are significant for the study (Apuke, 2017). This study will use deductive reasoning because it will use logical reasoning to define the significance of the results and data findings and reach the conclusion necessary to achieve the study's research objective (Sharela, 2016).

For this study, the primary data market will be the primary focus of the data collection process. The primary data market is new information gathered from firsthand sources that will help guide the data collection in order to accomplish the research's goals (Krosnick, 2018). The upside of utilizing the essential information assortment is to give the adaptability to alter the information assortment contribution to be tweaked to address the prerequisite and the issues of the exploration and giving the right inclusion of the estimation on the factors for the examination concentrate on which is absurd through the auxiliary information market (Cooper and Schindler, 2014). The questionnaire design, which is thought to be one of the typical methods for the data collection process for the research study, will be used for the primary data collection. The purpose of the data collection process will be to investigate the relevant target population, which includes young working adults under the age of 30, in order to comprehend the current trend of academic graduates seeking employment.

The convenience sampling method will be preferred in this research study, while the non-probability sampling method will be used. According to Sekaran & Bougie (2016), the advantage of choosing convenience sampling as the sampling method for the research is that it allows for more efficient selection of sample sizes because samples are chosen based on the convenience of the researchers. The convenience sampling method had also been suggested in previous research (Song, Son, & Oh, 2015) if there were no special requirements for dividing the study's target population.

The quantitative data analysis will hold the major component for the results and findings of the data for the current study where the SPSS tool will become the fundamental tool to assist in the statistical output generation. The reliability test is conducted for the data set collected through the data collection process to ensure the high quality and consistency of the data to be



included for the quantitative analysis to generate reliable results to draw the conclusion for the study (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015). In addition, the correlation analysis will be conducted to provide the analysis to understand the correlation significant and direction between the two variables. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient will become the measurement benchmarks to explore the significant of the correlation direction between the two variables (Gogtay & Thatte, 2017). Moving on, the regression model will be constructed to identify the testing for the presence of the significant of the relationship between the independent variable against the dependent variables including the intervening variable to construct of the regression model for the study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). For the quantitative testing, the p-value significant of 5% will be tested to identify the significant of the relationship to conclude the hypothesis testing for the study (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015).

DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1: Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.918	4

The results of the reliability test that were conducted on the independent variables are presented in Table 1. These elements include self-efficacy in relation to employment, and they are present among graduates of universities and colleges in Penang, Malaysia. According to the findings, the Cronbach's Alpha for these variables was 91.8 percent, which is significantly higher than the minimum criterion of 70 percent that is deemed to be acceptable. Hence, the reliability test had validated the quality and consistency of the data set for the independent variable. Because of this, the green light has been provided to proceed with the further stages of the data analysis for this research study. The reliability test had demonstrated that the data set for the independent variable was of a high quality and was consistent throughout.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis

Correlations			
		SE	Emp
SE	Pearson Correlation		.377
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N		150
Emp	Pearson Correlation	.377	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	150	
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).			



The Table 3 had been showing the outcome in the correlation analysis where the correlation analysis had induced the need to understand the correlation between two variables including the study the self-efficacy against the employability for the university graduates. The result had shown that the Pearson Correlation Coefficient had recorded 0.377 which means that both variables are sharing weak positive strength of correlation. The p-value test is 0.000 that appear to be lower than 5% tolerance level which means that there is proven significant for the existence of the positive correlation between the two variables.

Table 4: ANOVA Stats

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	29.187	4	7.297	11.677	.000 ^b
	Residual	90.606	145	.625		
	Total	119.793	149			
a. Dependent Variable: Emp						
b. Predictors: (Constant), SE						

The results of an analysis of variance (ANOVA) and a linear regression analysis of self-efficacy vs employability for recent graduates of universities are presented in Table 4. The fact that the p-value for the ANOVA was reported as 0.000, which is significantly lower than the tolerance limit of 5%, is the empirical evidence that the model is significant for the research investigation. In addition, Table 4 demonstrated that the p-value was less than the tolerance level of 5%, which indicates that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the regression model is significant for the purpose of the application of quantitative analysis.

Table 5: Regression Analysis

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.780	.771		2.309	.022
	SE	.151	.161	.103	.938	.350
a. Dependent Variable: Emp						

The regression model as refernce to Table 5 had been used to test the relationship between the self-efficacy of graduates and their employability after graduation. The p-value that was recorded in the model showed 0.350, which was higher than the tolerance level of 5% and the p-value of 0.05. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the relationship between the self-efficacy of graduates and their employability after graduation. Because of this, the research study's assumption that the null hypothesis in H₀ is correct will be accepted and rejecting the alternate hypothesis in H₁ derived from the literature review.



H0: *There is no significant positive relationship between the self-efficacy towards the employability for the university graduates.*

H1: *There is significant positive relationship between the self-efficacy towards the employability for the university graduates.*

Table 6: Regression Analysis (Internship as Intervening Variable)

Model		Coefficients				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.780	.771		2.309	.022
	SE	.151	.161	.103	.938	.350
2	(Constant)	1.594	.774		2.059	.041
	SE	.140	.160	.096	.876	.382
	Internship	.229	.137	.122	1.674	.096

a. Dependent Variable: Emp

The Table 6 had been demonstrating the result on the regression model had tested the internship as the intervening variable between the independent variables of self-efficacy against the dependent variable on the employability for the graduates. The p-value recorded in the model showing 0.096, which is above the tolerance level of 5% and p-value of 0.05, therefore indicating that there is internship factor showed no significant presence as the intervening variable between the independent variables of self-efficacy. Because of this, the research study's assumption that the null hypothesis at H0 is correct will be accepted and rejecting the alternate hypothesis as drawn in H2.

H0: *There is no significant intervening factor of internship the self-efficacy towards the employability for the university graduates.*

H2: *There is significant intervening factor of internship the self-efficacy towards the employability for the university graduates.*

DISCUSSION

According to Coetzee and Oosthuizen (2012), the idea of self-efficacy centers on an individual's ideas about their own talents, which can have a beneficial impact on the employment opportunity. Those who have a high career self-efficacy have significantly more confidence and drive in their careers, have a more optimistic attitude, and are more predictable of their own success, according to empirical research conducted by Anderson and Betz (2001). However, the empirical evidence on the research findings show indication and evidence to support the significant inn the relationship between self-efficacy and the employability of the graduates. This is supported by the significant inn the relationship between self-efficacy and



the employability of the graduates. This demonstrated that the self-efficacy factor may help to improve the performance of an individual, particularly when it comes to an interview; however, it will not be able to bring a true value of advantage to increase the visibility when it comes to the judgement of the employer in the job opportunity.

Chen, Shen, and Gosling (2018) noted that employers had shown favourable sign to have more faith and confidence in the persons that undergo the internship rather than those individuals that do not have one. This is a significant improvement over those individuals who do not have one. On the other hand, Jackling and Natoli (2015) highlighted that the internship helps to improve the confidence and readiness among the graduate, which will help to significantly help the provide the evidence on meeting the criteria for the employment. Jackling and Natoli (2015) also emphasised that the internship helps to improve the confidence and readiness among the graduate. On the other hand, the outcomes of the research reveal that there is no benefit to the data to imply that the internship will become significant as an intervening variable for employability. It was mentioned by Kapareliotis, Voutsina, and Patsiotis (2019) that an internship is relatively too short to become the reference on the working exposure, and that graduates will not be provided any significant role within the organisation that will assist in building the necessary experience for their future employment. This appears to be a true and relevant point to become the highlight for the potential reasoning on the insignificant observation in this research study.

CONCLUSION

The research study had reached the outcome to provide major contribution in a variety of different aspects and points of view, which offer to the necessary parties so that they can benefit from it. In the first place, the research study had been targeted to make a contribution to the understanding in the academic field, thereby producing additional understanding and new knowledge for the literature review. This outcome of the research study will also be able to be used in the future as a reference for research on topics that are comparable to the one being researched.

In addition, incoming graduate students will benefits from the research study because it will assist them in better comprehending the significance of the components that will contribute to an increased probability of employment. This will assist the graduate in preparing for the necessary individual development that is required, where the research will help to identify the appropriate consideration of the factors that will provide a higher chance on the employability, and it will also assist the university in preparing to provide the appropriate exposure and training for the graduate in order to prepare for the future employment opportunity.

The research study will also provide the significant in the study to understand what it is that businesses and recruiting managers are seeking or expecting from potential employees, in particular from recent graduates who do not yet have any professional experience. This will be helpful in determining the qualities and characteristics that should be displayed by the graduates in order to guarantee them a place in the labour market of the future.



SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Over the course of carrying out this research study, a number of restrictions came to light that required additional attention for the purpose of providing a reference for potential future research. To begin, the sample size that was chosen for this study was sufficient; nevertheless, it is possible that the sample size may benefit from some additional expansion in order to achieve greater uniformity in the data pattern during the process of data collection. A research study that makes use of a larger sample size will be able to contribute to the development of results that are more reliable thanks to empirical evidence. In addition, the amount of time allotted to complete the research project was relatively limited, which raised the limitations to further conduct the research with a more in-depth analysis because of the need to meet the requirement of the time allotment in order to fulfil the timeline for the academic requirement. In addition, during the course of the research process, a few occasions on access limitations were encountered. These limitations were caused by a lack of access to private and confidential data, which included certain academic journal articles that have the potential to provide additional insight on the literature review for the research study.

The findings of this research study provide a few recommendations for other lines of inquiry that should be pursued by subsequent researchers. To begin, it is possible to suggest conducting the research project with a larger sample size if there is enough time and money available to do so. Doing so will assist in improving the proportion of the target population that is represented by the findings. This will assist in raising the accuracy of the empirical analysis performed on the data that was collected, which will lead to a higher significant level in the study. In addition, the research study had been carried out utilising the approach of quantitative analysis, although it is possible to propose that future research make use of qualitative analysis rather than quantitative analysis to provide a new perspective into the research findings. The employment of a qualitative technique, which includes interviewing participants and holding focus groups, will be of great assistance to the research in better comprehending the logic that lies behind the significance of the findings of the study. In addition, the upcoming research study may also think about other possible aspects to include in the research framework. This will help to increase the understanding of the potential in the components for the research's scope.

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