

Malaysia Private Higher Learning Institutions' Graduate Employability: An Analysis of the First-Degree Graduate Tracer Study Reports

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The graduate employability issues have given rise to many policy implications in many developing countries' higher learning institutions, such as Malaysia. Among the graduates, the percentage of unemployed is higher as compared to the ones without tertiary education. In 2020, of the 5.36 million graduates with tertiary education, 3.78% were unemployed. The number of unemployed graduates rose by 22.5% in 2020 to 202,400 from 165,200 in 2019. In the context of first-degree graduates of private higher learning institutions in Malaysia, there was an average of 20.6% unemployed in 2020 and 21% in 2019. However, 17.3% of graduates preferred further study because the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in challenging job market conditions. The Graduate Tracer Study reports from 2011 to 2020 were the primary source of this study. This study used frequency, percentage, and ranking to describe the data. This study made some recommendations to the private higher learning institutions and the Malaysian government to improve graduates' employability. There are also factors examined and discussed before recommendations put up from employers as industry players to provide jobs and opportunities to graduates. The literature on graduates' employability integrated into a conceptual model: (1) graduates' factors, (2) demand-supply factors, and (3) employer factors. Based on literature review on the incident, duration and determinants and discussion on some yearly statistics of graduates' unemployment problems in Malaysia, there are some recommendations as the suitable policies to address the graduate unemployment, in the short run and long run: (A) For government policies, (1) Launch a particular financing call to kick-begin activities, (2) Share best practice and standards resources, (3) Position employability skills as a driver of quality, (4) Standardize the process for placements and work experience, and (5) Support the transition between second level and third level. (B) From employers to support government policies, (1) Provide work placements and work-related projects, (2) Advise on curriculum design and delivery, and (3) Contribute the business perspective in career clinics to help and nurture graduate employability.

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