

Assessing the Survey Dataset on Employment Status of Students Before Graduates in Malaysian Public Higher Learning Institutions in Selangor

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Abstract

Employment status of student in Malaysian Public Higher Learning Institution play significant role in identified the marketability of university student in the industry. However, there are also a group of university students who began their employment before graduating from university. The increase of tuition fee charge, insufficient financial support, experience, and networking are the factor contributed towards the employment of student before graduation in Malaysian Public Higher Learning Institution, particularly in Selangor. Therefore, the purpose of this study to examine the employment status of student before graduates in various sector at Malaysian Public Higher Learning Institution in Selangor. The quantitative research approach has been adopted in exploring the topic of this study by using the survey dataset approaches. Almost 2,489 university students have participated in this study. The findings show 593 university students actively have occupations during their study either undergraduate or postgraduate student. Through the findings, the university student has actively sought the job opportunities before graduation in university for their livelihood especially after the post-pandemic Covid19 who affected all group of community particularly in Malaysia. The finding of this study will contribute to the government and private organizations to strategizing the action plan by providing the flexible time for the working student in adapting their study and career.

Keywords: *Information Science, Socioeconomics, Employability, Higher Learning Institution.*

Introduction

Every dream of a university student is to be hired by an employer. Unfortunately, the outbreak of pandemic Covid19 in 2020 has shown the decline in the status of employment when the worker during that period faces layoffs and suspension of workers. This scenario automatically was affected by the graduates from the university who were seeking jobs and getting placement in the industry. After several years of lockdown because of the pandemic Covid19, the percentages of employment status increase among graduates of the around the worlds. According to Siddharta (2023) at the Statista website, in 2022, the employment status of higher education institutions shows 69.1% were in employment while 16.1% were in pursuing further studies. The positive and stability of the economy show the increase in employment status among graduates of university. Employment status of students not only covers the group of students after graduation but there are also small groups that have secure the position before graduate from the university.

Socioeconomic factors play a major role in a student's ability to succeed and enjoy their time at college or university. Students from less wealthy backgrounds may struggle to pay for tuition and other costs, often needing to work long hours or multiple jobs, which can hurt their academic performance and campus involvement. This financial strain might also make it hard to afford basic needs like housing, food, and transportation, leading to issues like housing instability or food insecurity that affect their focus and participation in campus life. Additionally, these financial challenges can negatively affect mental health. The stress of balancing financial pressures with academic demands can increase anxiety, which might lead to

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social isolation (Abu et al., 2024). Students facing financial difficulties may feel excluded from social activities that require money, causing feelings of loneliness and negatively impacting their overall well-being.

Recently, the employment status showed the university students begin their career as early as before graduating from the Higher Education Institution in sustaining their livelihood. Several causes the student began their career early because of the increase of tuition fee charge, insufficient financial support, experience, and networking. In Japan, the major causes are the increasing cost of tuition fee and reduction of government subsidies to the university and tuition increase both public and private sector make the university student work while attending college and university (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan, 2020). In Indonesia, the economic condition that quite difficult for some group of society has encouraged the student to find solution in overcoming the financial insufficient by working (Meilan & Mariani, 2023). This kind of difficulty has made the university student work while attending their study in college or in university.

Some of the Malaysia Higher Learning Institution's student also start working while attending the college or university in overcoming the difficulties that has face during study especially to pay for the tuition fee and additional financial support for their study. Therefore, this study purposely explores the employment status of the student while attending the college or university. This study has examined the sector either public/government or private sector that has been involved by working student in Malaysia. The household income status of working students also will further discuss to know their socioeconomic status of working student in survive during working and studying in the college or university. This study significantly for government or university to strategizing the action plan by providing the flexible time for working students to attend the class and working in the organization. This action plan indirectly could help the working study to be more efficient and systematically to generate income while attending college and university.

Literature Review

Concept of Employment

Employment is defined as an act of working or being employed by the organization or individual in help on the creation or product and services (Ashford, Hall, Ashford, 2012). That is a little contradict by Can and Doğan (2017) that state employment is the agreement between employee and employer in which the employee will provide certain services on the job. While employment also refers to the fact that individuals being paid to work for an organization or company (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024). Adiguzel (2024) mentions that employment refers to the situation where the individual works for the wages. Based on the definition above show that the employment refers to the act of working for the organization and will receive a certain number of wages based on the certain provided. Employment is significantly important for the university student to get a placement or position within the industry to gain experience as well to sustainable individual living and for their comfort life.

Employment status is significantly important for the university in producing a graduate with great capability who can handle the task given, be a leader, risk taking, critical thinking, problem solver, be responsibility to the workload in achieving the organization vision, mission and direction. People will view individual's capability based on the university that they are attached. The employee will invest his/her skills, expertise and knowledge that they learn in university to the real working environment and indirectly to provide the profit for the organization. However, this scenario will be different with the working student, which the student is working while attending college and university. According to Chantrea, Chansophy, & Chantya (2017), working and studying at the same time can be seen as common trends over the past decades. Over the years, there has been an increased number of students who began their career before graduation. However, there are pros and cons regarding these matters. The positive and significant impact for the university student working and studying at the same time will gain experience for future career especially the job that related with what the program attaches by the student in the university. Meanwhile, there are also the negative impacts when students work while studying like poor academic performance, time management and balancing time. Setiawan et al (2022) agree that working will provide the positive and

negative consequences that need to overcome by the student itself. The working student should know how to balance their life when studying and working at the same time.

Scenario of Working Student

Commonly, working students will start their career by working part time. After that, when the student is comfortable with those routines, they may be offered a full-time worker. However, there are small number of students who will work full-time unless those working students are in postgraduate program which have flexible time in managing their work and study at the same time. Working students may have limited skill and knowledge to doing their job but have high willingness to learn regarding the job received. The lack of skills and knowledge from the working student will be a huge obstacle for the student in adapting to the real working environment. However, this category of student could overcome in dealing with the working and studying environment. It may be hard for the student, however over time the student could adapt with this kind of situation.

For the student who choose to work while attending college of university, there are various kind of reason that led for this kind of commitment such as financial issues, gain experience, work market pressure, networking and many more (Chantrea, Chansophy, & Chantytta, 2017). The working student usually will pay their tuition fee from the wages or salary that received from the organization that they attached. Besides that, student who is working while attending the universities may have additional financial assistance in which to cover any deficiencies that face by those students in supporting their study such as supplement income to get the better knowledge (Amada et al, 2023) like buy the reference book which related with their studies. Other than that, the working student also wants to gain new experience by working while attending school. The working student will explore and discover the real working environment that indirectly will benefit during their study especially career that relates with their program. The outcome of working while studying will give the student an unidentical kind of resume with their classmate when the group of students has experience on the reality of working environment. This scenario will be beneficial to working students in the future.

Part-time or Full-time Employment Status of Working Students

Previous literature has discussed engagement of working student either as part-time or sometime full-time employment while study as normal phenomenon (Pregoner, et al, 2020; Darolia, 2014). Sanchez-Gelabert, Figueroa and Elias (2017) mentioned that the trends have been detected where the number of full-time employment decreases while the number of part-time is increasing among working students in Philippines. While, in United States show that 74% part-time and 26% full-time among university student have employed in 2020 (Summer et al, 2023). In Poland, most student has chosen the part-time employment by the young (Matysiak, 2005). This situation occurs when the student selects part-time employment to have sufficient time to study in the university.

In Malaysia, the employee while attending the college and university also existed. However, most of the Malaysian's student will have part-time worker rather full-time employment in balancing their work and academic performance. Based on study by Rong et al (2022), 62% of working student as part-time while 38% not working student in northern region of Malaysia. Meanwhile, according to Sani (2018) in News Straits Times, 53% of students in Malaysia has venture into part-time work to boost their employability in a highly competitive job market. It shows that the part-time employment has been chosen by the Malaysian's student in supporting their study. However, there are limited study discuss on the sector either public/government, private or self-employed chosen by the Malaysian's student in their part-time or full-time employment. For that reason, this study will reveal the sector that has been chosen by the working student in Malaysia.

Research Methodology

In assessing the employment status of working students in Selangor, the survey research design has been selected as a method in gathering quantitative data. Survey research refers to the collection of information

from a sample of individuals through their response to the questions (Check and Schutt, 2012, p.160). According to Ponto (2015), the main purpose of this survey research is to collect a large sample of individual of interest relatively quickly. The samples size that has been obtained in this study is 593 active students in Selangor who also working in various sectors in the industry. The survey consists of several section which are:

- Section 1: Demographic of Respondents
- Section 2: Student Employment Analysis

The purpose of this survey is to assess the employment status of the student before graduating from the university. The data that has been collected will be analyzed in exploring the employment status of the student in Malaysian Public Higher Learning Institutions particularly in Selangor, Malaysia. Ethical consideration also will be taken into consideration based on their willingness to respond to this survey. Through this survey, it will be useful to explore the selected sector chosen by the student in Malaysian Public Higher Learning Institutions. Besides that, this data could strategize the involvement of the student within industry as well as could assist the student to performance well during their student especially related with the industry that they attached.

Analysis and Findings

In examining the employment status of student before graduates in various sector at Malaysian Public Higher Learning Institution particularly in Selangor, the researcher conducts the dataset survey in identified the research status of employment of student before graduates. From the data that has been analyzed by the researcher, the findings will be used to identify the household income of the working student in sustaining their life by balancing their career and academic performance. As following are the analysis as well as findings to achieve the purpose of this study.

Number Of Respondent Involved Based on Faculties

In this study, the number of respondents involved in answering this survey came from various faculties. A simple random sampling technique has been chosen in exploring the employment status of students who are working before graduation in Higher Learning Institutions at Selangor. The table below shows the number of students participating in this data survey on household income of students in Selangor.

Table 1. Number Of Respondents Based On Faculties

NO	FACULTIES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
1.	Academy of Language Studies (APB)	16
2.	Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies (ACIS)	15
3.	Arshad Ayub Graduate Business School (AAGBS)	18
4.	Faculty of Film, Theatre & Animation	3
5.	Faculty of Communication & Media Studies	31
6.	Faculty of Music	3
7.	Faculty of Education	5
8.	Faculty of Hotel & Tourism Management	8
9.	Faculty of Information Management	23
10.	Faculty of Business Management	162
11.	Faculty of Accounting	88
12.	Faculty of Applied Sciences	16
13.	Faculty of Health Sciences	5
14.	Faculty of Computer Science & Mathematics	29
15.	Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies	41

16.	Faculty of Sports & Recreation Science	22
17.	Faculty of Art & Design	24
18.	Faculty of Architecture, Planning & Surveying	25
19.	Faculty of Law	19
20.	College of Engineering Studies	35
21.	Foundation Centre	5
Amount		593

Table 1 above shows the number of respondents based on the different faculties involved in this dataset survey in exploring the employment status of working students before graduation particularly in Selangor. The most respondents involved in this survey come from the Faculty of Business and Management with 162, followed by Faculty of Accounting with 88 and College of Engineering Studies with 35 respondents. From this dataset survey revealed that the Higher Learning Institutions student from fields of business and management already has higher number of employments status in government sector, private sector as well as other (self-employed). Previous studies show that business school has keep on failing student in the way their offered their program and only focused on developing students' discipline specific knowledge and skills (Abassi et al, 2018) however the findings from this study are contradict with that statement, and it show the student in fields of business has capability and place their position within the industry.

Employment Status Based on Sector

In exploring the employment status of Higher Learning Institutions students, the researcher has conducted the survey in getting the reliable information from the respondents. The analysis will explore the descriptive analysis on the employment status of students of the Higher Learning Institutions based on three sectors which are government/public, private sector and other (self-employment). The table below show the analysis of this study:

Table 2. Employment Status Based on Sector

NO	SECTOR	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGES
1.	Government	285	48%
2.	Private	274	46%
3.	Others (self-employment)	34	6%
Amount		593	100%

Table 2 revealed the employment status of students based on sectors consisting of government, private as well as others. The table shows the employment status of students coming from the government sector which is 285 respondents with 48%. It shows the government sector with private sector has a small gap in term of employment status where the involvement of working student in private sector is 274 respondents with 46% lower than government. Then, others represent the student who is self-employed show only 6% far than government and private sector. The findings above show that most working students (undergraduate and postgraduate) work in the government sector either full-time or part-time workers. The benefits provided by public employment have attracted working students to the government/public sector. According to Heong and Tuan (2019) mention that the public employment could provide sufficient benefits such as rewards and work-life balance has made main attraction of public employment among working students. The study conducted by Ooi et al (2021) in medical fields, the most preferred career option from both public and private universities is public hospital because of working environment, job security as well as professional. Through statement from previous literature has supported the analysis and findings of this study which the sector involves by working student in Selangor.

Household Income of Working Student

The household income of working students could influence the student to endure work during their study. The increase of tuition fee and insufficient financial support could be important indicator to student stay work even during study. The overall household income of working students in Higher Learning Institutions show below:

Table 3. Household Income of Working Students

SECTOR	INCOME HOUSEHOLD	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
Government	Below RM2,500.00	185
	RM2,500.00 – RM3,169.00	44
	RM3,170.00 – RM3,969.00	31
	RM3,970.00 – RM4,849.00	16
	RM4,850.00 and above	9
Private	Below RM2,500.00	191
	RM2,500.00 – RM3,169.00	60
	RM3,170.00 – RM3,969.00	0
	RM3,970.00 – RM4,849.00	14
	RM4,850.00 and above	9
Others	Below RM2,500.00	27
	RM2,500.00 – RM3,169.00	5
	RM3,170.00 – RM3,969.00	2
Amount		593

Table 3 shows the number of working students, either in government, private and self-employment possess the income below RM2,500.00. The number of working students in the government sector is 185 respondents, followed by the private sector with 191 respondents and other or self-employed is only 27 respondents. The respondents in private sector show a greater number of working student who household income below RM2,500.00. Meanwhile, the household income RM2,500 to RM3,169.00 for government sector is 44 respondents, private sector with 60 respondents then self-employed is 5 respondents. The third highest household income within RM3,170.00 until RM3,969.00 with the government with 31 respondent and the private sector with 60 respondents. However, no respondent from other or self-employed category in this study.

Through this data survey show that the student in Malaysian Higher Learning Institution has start generating basic income to survive during their study as well as for supporting their daily expense. According to Yusri (2021) state that the average income of the working student per week around RM256.83 equivalent with minimum RM1,027.32 (monthly). This statement could support the finding of the study that the working student generate income below RM2,500.00 either public or private sector. Meanwhile, the working student with the income more than RM2,500.00 commonly working student for the category of postgraduate who already have bachelor's degrees or self-employment. Through this data, the working student could cover their study based on income received when the student works. This has been supported by Tok and Cheah (2024) mention that the student has spent the money for their student within RM201.00 until RM400.00. However, it still significantly important for the working students to have a knowledge especially in managing their financial. Therefore, it is important for working students to be equipped with the financial literacy during their study in college of university. Financial literacy program could indirectly will assist the working student to manage their income appropriate way so that the student not been burden with the tuition fee.

Conclusion and Recommendation

As a conclusion, the findings show that the employment status of the student before working to survive for their sustainability in life. The number of students who are involved in the government sector is higher than in the private sector as well as self-employed. However, the students are still new in the working world, therefore their household income is still below RM2,500.00. Through this study show the positive culture of their university students in securing their job before graduation. The working student could apply the knowledge and skill that they gain during in working into their study could indirectly have positive effect on their academic performance where they could apply it during the class. However, this study lacks several components such as the conflict working student, balancing work and academic, working student academic and others could be suggested for future research. Other than that, the multiple case study by involved the large number of populations could be extend in exploring the employment status as well as household income of student in Malaysia Learning Institution in Malaysia.

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