

Factors Influencing Unemployment Rate Among Hospitality Industry Graduates in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Unemployment cases among hospitality graduates throughout Malaysia cause economic, social and political harm. The number of students who have graduated has increased year by year. This study aims to determine the relationship between attitudes of graduates and the unemployment rate among hospitality industry graduates. This study was conducted in Malaysia. The total sample size for this study was 384 respondents, who were randomly selected to answer 31 questions. The results show that the dependent variable (unemployment rate among hospitality industry graduates) is influenced by independent variables (attitude of graduate, style of employment and level of interest and commitment). Overall, based on Pearson's correlation analysis, the attitude of graduates scored a value of *0.692, followed by employment style with *0.794, and level of interest and commitment with *0.422. There was a strong positive significant and weak positive significant. The findings of this study can be used as a guide for hospitality operators and academics looking to understand the problem of the unemployment rate among hospitality industry graduates in Malaysia.

Keywords: Attitude Graduates, Style employment, Level of Interest and Commitment, Unemployment.

INTRODUCTION

The issue at hand is one of the unemployment graduate's hospitality industry in Malaysia. Unemployment is an undesirable problem that can affect any country in the world. As long as the person is employed, they may become unemployed at some point (Razak, M.I.M., Ahmad, I. & De Mello, G. 2014). If the unemployment issue is not resolved, the contribution to the problems of the unemployed graduates, the nation, society and even the country will undoubtedly grow. Furthermore, if the nation's unemployment continues to be severed, riots and insurgency will happen across the country and uncertain the country's trading. A significant loss to the nation will arise due to this dangerous problem (Alom et al., 2019). As a result, it can be seen as a source of unemployment. According to the Malaysia Labour Force Survey, the unemployed are people who are willing to work but unable to find one in a reasonable amount of time.

This study investigates how these elements interact to influence hospitality graduates. It is also solves that problem so that they know the reason why unemployment happens. The finding shows that this study is divided into three categories: attitude of graduates, style of employment and the level of interest and commitment. The research design, population and sample size, sampling procedure, data collecting, research instruments, and data analysis were all described in this study. Validity and reliability are critical in determining if the samples collected are valid and predictable. As a result, the reliability test will be conducted using Cronbach's alpha approach. Additional analysis and exploration of the link between the variables will be conducted using Pearson's correlation test.

The first section explores and highlights the results supporting the analysis's main objective.

1. To determine the relationship between attitude graduates and the hospitality industry graduates' unemployment rate.

2. To determine the relationship between style employment and the unemployment rate among graduates in the hospitality industry.
3. To determine the relationship between the level of interest and commitment to the unemployment rate among hospitality industry graduates in Malaysia.

Researcher

This research aims to provide more precise information and address the entire existence of information to new researchers. Researchers can see that this issue is prevalent in our country. This topic is very synonymous and is a hot topic right now. The conclusions that have been studied also prove that the unemployment rate among the community, especially graduates is very high compared to others. Therefore, the researcher can see that in this study, the emphasis is on the factors that cause a very high unemployment rate and what the impact will be if this issue is not curbed quickly. The policy implications of this case have also proved that it has affected our country in a wave of extremely high unemployment. Finally, it shows that this matter can be more controlled if all play a high role in ensuring that cases and unemployment rates among university graduates can be controlled.

Authority

The further importance of this study is how to handle unemployment in Malaysia. The further importance of this study is how to address unemployment in Malaysia. This study also raises awareness about the occurrence of unemployment among graduates in Malaysia. This research will inform authorities who want to improve or address these unemployment cases. Implementing an appropriate approach for such a scenario can help graduates in a highly competitive market improve various elements such as graduate attitude, job style, level of interest and commitment. The finding shows that this study is divided into three categories: attitude of graduates, style of employment and the level of interest and commitment.

Graduates

This study is also important to graduates. Graduates are influenced by external market changes and their own personal characteristics. Graduates' attributes and unemployment have a strong relationship. Almost all the respondents strongly agreed that they were too picky about the position offered by an organization. It is because the graduates want to live in comfortably life. Furthermore, the fresh graduates are exposed to a high standard of lifestyle, and another reason is the high cost of living.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Attitude of graduates

The attitude of graduates who like to choose jobs is a factor in the unemployment problem among hospitality graduates. The attitude of an individual depends heavily upon different stimuli. This is said so because, Ajzan (1998) consider attitudes as a disposition to respond favourably or unfavourably to an object, person, institution or an event, while attitudes as a hypothetical construct used to explain the direction and persistence of human behaviour. It is said so because, they would rather stay at home without doing any work than work not in their field. They are also more willing to be unemployed than working as clerks or in other positions that are felt to be less equal even though they work better than being unemployed. Such thoughts need to be removed from the minds of every graduate as it not only harms them but also harms the sector that needs human resources. Graduates' attributes are the quality or skills that need to be gained by the graduates and need to be developed when they are at higher educational institutions. For graduates' attributes, the focus is channelled on two types of skill: technical and employability skills. Technical skill is an important aspect that should be mastered by graduates, as it is the core that enables them to get jobs. While employability skill refers to the quality and personal insight a graduate should have. This is to help with the graduate's marketability and to help the graduate become a competent and competitive worker.

Style employment

The style of employees is also one of the essential things and should be considered in choosing them to join us in a particular scope of work. Too many examples researcher have seen that many university graduates find it difficult to find a job due to their own attitude of choosing a job too much and not daring to try something challenging. They assume that they will continue to get the desired job with a high certificate. Graduates need to take the example of the community and seniors before venturing into any field of work. Graduates should also not be too spoiled in choosing a job and have a healthy and open mind in choosing a job. One of the factors to job vacancies in a company is the attitude of some employees who are too picky and want to get a good job. Many graduates now consider the tail of their attitude of over-choosing the scope of employment space. Yet it is undeniable that employers are also one factor making it difficult for employees to get the job they want. Employers who are too picky and picky will also cause job shortages and create a lot of unemployment among university graduates.

One factor contributing to graduate unemployment in Malaysia is the quality of graduates. Some employers in the industry make negative comments about graduates, claiming they lack the necessary skills and qualifications.

Level of interest and commitment

Graduates' attributes are the quality or skills that need to be gained by the graduates and need to be developed when they are at higher educational institutions. Qualities acquired by the graduates prepare them for their future undertakings. For graduates' attributes, the focus is channelled on two types of skill: technical and employability skills. Technical skill is an important aspect that should be mastered by graduates, as it is the core that enables them to get jobs. While employability skill refers to the quality and personal insight a graduate should have. This is to help with the graduate's marketability and to help the graduate become a competent and competitive worker. Employability and technical skills should be obtained by graduates, as those are important criteria that can help them get jobs. The study's findings revolve around the technical and employability skills among the graduates that became the factor for the unemployment issue.

Unemployment rate among hospitality industry graduates

The unemployed include persons who were available for work but did not work during a reference period. They could either be actively looking for work or not during the said period. The unemployment rates have been on the rise again, although the increase was not as high as in the mid-1980s. Malaysia experienced several years of rapid growth in the 1990s, which began to slow down at the end of the decade, and it registered its lowest growth rate in 2001. Between 2002 and 2005, the average GDP growth was 5.74%. However, changing the economic structure may cause a rise in unemployment. For many years, manufacturing had been the most substantial sector in the country and the main contributor to employment creation until the financial crisis in mid-1997. From this period onwards, the agriculture sector was progressively replaced by the manufacturing and services sector. The services sector, in particular, requires people who possess the right soft skills such as communication and interpersonal skills but acquiring graduates with those qualities has been quite tricky. First, graduates may only be trained in the right technical knowledge and not soft skills. Secondly, since the official language of Malaysia is Bahasa Malaysia and the teaching of almost all subjects in primary and secondary schools and public universities are not in English, local graduates may find it very difficult to communicate in this language when they go out into the real world.

Research Hypothesis

The literature review highlighted that the independent variables like the attitude of graduates, style of employment, level of interest and commitment affect the unemployment rate among

hospitality industry graduates in Malaysia. Therefore, the study planned to examine 114 the level of effect among these variables. Based on the literature discussed, the hypotheses of this study were summarized in the following manner:

- H1** There is a relationship between salary and the unemployment rate among hospitality graduates in Malaysia.
- H2** There is a relationship between personnel development and the unemployment rate among hospitality graduates in Malaysia.
- H3** There is a relationship between working atmosphere and the unemployment rate among hospitality graduates in Malaysia

Research Framework

The Figure 1 below shows the research framework use for this study

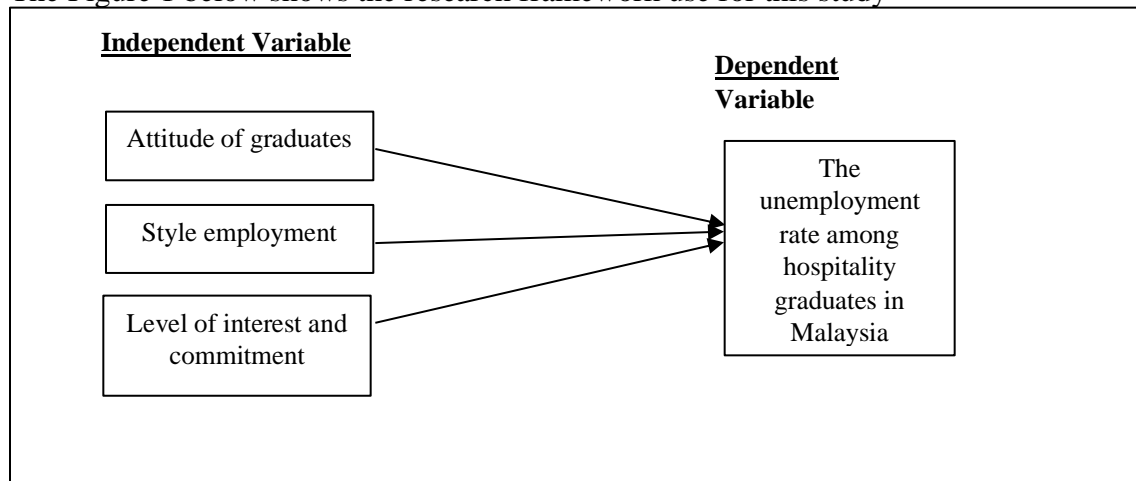


Figure 1: Research Framework

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study uses a quantitative method in which a questionnaire was distributed to 384 unemployed respondents. In this study, the selected target population is Malaysian citizens. In addition, a set of questionnaires were distributed to the population to collect data on unemployed graduates. This questionnaire uses a multiple-choice format and a 5 -point agreement Likert scale. The researcher divided the questionnaire into 4 parts, namely: Part A, B, and C. For Part A, the questionnaire asked for general information on the household demographics of Malaysian citizens, such as the gender, age, race, marital status, education level, and type of place of study. For Sections A, B, and C, the questions elaborate further on the dependent and independent variables, namely (i) attitude of graduates, (ii) style of employment, and (iii) Level of interest and commitment, that have been studied in the survey.

Data Collection

They were collecting and measuring information of gathering and evaluating information from various sources in order to create a complete and accurate picture of a subject. Data collection aids a person or organization answer important questions, evaluate outcomes, and forecast future probability and trends. The purpose of the study, the research objectives and the confidentiality of the data produced by respondents are outlined in the questionnaire. An online for this investigation, a questionnaire will be employed to collect data. An entire survey will be circulated through social media platforms such as Google Forms, WhatsApp, and Facebook. It was very convenient to minimize cost, and save time and significantly applicable during this pandemic outbreak.

Sampling

The sampling method used in this study was non-probability sampling which was convenience sampling. The questionnaire was distributed to the respondents who are among the household living in three urban areas in Peninsular Malaysia through online and social media. The study used this method because questionnaires were prepared and distributed online or posted them to on social media pages to gather information from the respondents.

$$s = \frac{x^2 N p (1 - P)}{e^2 (N - 1) + x^2 p (1 - p)}$$

n= sample size

N= population size

e = the degree of accuracy expressed as proportion (0.05)

x^2 = chi-square of degree of freedom 1 and confidence 95% (3.841)

p = proportion of population (if unknown, 0.5)

Data Analysis

The range of mean tables is used to measure how likely the respondents would agree or disagree with the statements of the questionnaires. Computers assisted the researchers by reducing the work necessary to gather data and facilitating quantitative analysis. Four types of data analysis were used in this study: frequency analysis, descriptive analysis, reliability test and Pearson correlation analysis. The data obtained was analysed by using SPSS version 26.

FINDINGS

Result of Frequency Analysis

Table 1: Frequency Analysis

Demographic	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	132	34.4
Female	252	65.6
Race		
Malay	278	72.4
Chinese	75	19.5
Indian	20	5.2
Others	11	2.9
Age		
21-30 years old	257	66.9
31 - 40 years old	114	29.7
41 - 50 years old	12	3.6
51 years old and above	1	0.3
Marital Status		
Single	216	56.3
Married	168	43.8
Education Level		
Diploma	128	33.3
Degree	248	64.6
PhD	8	2.1

Type Place of Study		
Public University	192	50.0
Private University	161	41.9
College of Skills	23	6.0
Others	8	2.1
Total	384	100.0

A total of 384 questionnaire sets were assigned through the online platform. This portion contained the respondents' contextual profiles. This section focuses on the demographic profile and background of the respondents, including gender, race, age, marital status, education levels, and type of place of study. Table 1 shows the summarized demographic results of the respondent's profile. The total number of male respondents is 132, while the total number of female respondents is 252. Male respondents comprised 34.4% of the total 384 respondents, while female respondents made up 65.6%. With 278 responses, the data shows that Malays form most of those who participated in the race (72.4%). Chinese came in second with 12 replies, accounting for about 3.1% of the total. The Indians were next, with 20 replies representing 5.2 percent of the total and 11 respondents representing 2.9 percent of the total from other races.

As shown by table 1, the data revealed that most of those who answered the questionnaire were between the ages of 21-30 years old, with 257 people answering and a response rate of 66.9%. Then came the 31-40 age group, which had 114 responders and a 29.7% response rate. The age group of 41-50 years old had 12 respondents and a response rate of 3.1%. Finally, 1 person in the 51 years old and above group answered the survey, accounting for 0.3% of all respondents. According to the table, the total number of single respondents is 216, while the total number is 168. Single respondents comprised 56.3% of the total 384 respondents, while married respondents made up 43.8%.

At the educational level, most respondents are from the diploma, with 128 respondents and a value of 33.3%. Respondents from the degree with 248 respondents and a value of 64.6%, followed by respondents from the PhD with 8 respondents and a value of 2.1%.

According to the table, the type place of study for the public university has the largest percentage of respondents (50.0%) with 192 respondents. For the private university, 41.9% came in second with 161 replies, College of skills, about 6.0% of the total with 23 replies. The others were next, with 8 replies representing 2.1% of the total.

Furthermore, all 384 respondents have had replied to the sample with 100 percent.

Result of Descriptive Analysis

Table 2: Descriptive Analysis

Variable	Items	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Attitude of graduates	I am demanding for higher salary.	4.39	0.768
	I am to choosy about the position offered by an organization.	4.18	0.758
	I am unable to work in a teamwork	4.16	0.760
	I need to choose a job that has a similar employment scope to my greatest level of study.	4.16	0.708

	I have a qualification that does not match the employer's recruitment for admission into the hospitality industry,	4.17	0.702
	The attitude of employers who are too calculating and want employees with cheap wages.	4.17	0.729
Style of employment	I do not have any leadership abilities.	4.21	0.734
	I have a poor communication skill.	4.18	0.697
	I do not prefer to work overtime.	4.23	0.717
	I am prefer working in structure.	4.32	0.580
	I am prefer working alone.	4.26	0.630
	There are sufficient employees to serve the customers.	4.28	0.582
Level of interest and commitment	I am not very interested in the field or hospitality.	4.22	0.643
	Do you feel you have personally been discriminated against by a potential employer, or not.	4.09	0.811
	I do not understand how to contribute to organization goals	4.16	0.766
	My organization not inspire me to give my best shot at work.	4.13	0.790
	I want to work in the hotel sector, but my command of the English language is limited.	4.13	0.779
	The workplace does not have a pleasant atmosphere.	4.15	0.780
Unemployment rate among hospitality industry graduates	Graduates work in a field that did not match with heir qualification	4.45	0.676
	Growing in a job vacancy are only occupied by selected workers.	4.45	0.632
	The employment demanding for higher salary are to meet the ever-growing cost of living	4.52	0.587
	Lack of work experience in the hospitality field.	4.49	0.638

The employment is too choosy about the company or job offer to them.	4.49	0.613
Unemployment occurs due to lack of communication and English language skills.	4.45	0.738
Employees are less interested in the field of hospitality industry jobs	4.49	0.642

The descriptive analysis that showed independent variables verified a moderate mean score (M = 4.4788, SD = 0.49853). The mean score for all dimensional variables was moderate, with the attitude of graduates at 4.2075 (SD = 0.62715), style of employment at 4.2519 (SD = 0.50115), and level of interest and commitment at 4.1458 (SD = 0.67323). Furthermore, the dependent variable verified the middle mean score (M = 4.4788, SD = 0.49853), with unemployment rate among hospitality industry graduates of 4.4788 (SD = 0.49853) as a sub-variable.

Result of Reliability Analysis

Table 3 below shows the result of the reliability analysis

Table 3: Reliability Analysis

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha
Attitude of graduates	6	0.923
Style of employment	7	0.886
Level of interest and commitment	7	0.953
Unemployment rate among hospitality industry graduates	7	0.888

In this variable, the number of items is as follows: attitude of graduates (6), style of employment (7), level of interest and commitment (7), and the unemployment rate among hospitality industry graduates (7). This analysis used the reliability analysis to determine Cronbach's Alpha values for all variables. The values are as follows: attitude of graduates (0.923), style of employment (0.886), level of interest and commitment (0.953), and the unemployment rate among hospitality industry graduates (0.888). All the reliability was above the 0.8 and 0.9 average, usually considered excellent (Matkar, 2012).

Result of Pearson Correlation Analysis

Table 5 below shows the Pearson Correlation Analysis

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Analysis

Hypothesis	Result	Findings of Data Analysis
H1: There is a relationship between salary and the unemployment rate among hospitality graduates in Malaysia.	r = 0.692, p = 0.000 Strong positive	H1: Accepted
H2: There is a relationship between style of employment and the unemployment rate among hospitality graduates in Malaysia	r = 0.794, p = 0.000 Strong positive	H2: Accepted
H3: There is a relationship between working atmosphere and the unemployment rate among hospitality graduates in Malaysia.	r = 0.422, p = 0.000 Weak positive	H3: Accepted

Hypothesis 1 (H1) proposed that the attitude of graduates positively correlates with the unemployment rate among hospitality industry graduates. The finding reported in this study revealed that the attitude of graduates recorded the value of Pearson Correlation, which is $r = 0.692$, $p = 0.000$. Thus, the result accepts hypothesis 1 (H1), whereby the attitude of graduates is strong and positively significant to the unemployment rate among hospitality industry graduates.

Hypothesis 2 (H2) proposed that style of employment positively correlates with the unemployment rate among hospitality graduates. The finding reported in this study revealed that the style employment recorded value of Pearson Correlation, which is $r = 0.794$, $p = 0.000$. Thus, the result accepts hypothesis 2 (H2), whereby style employment is substantial and positively significant to the unemployment rate among hospitality graduates.

Hypothesis 3 (H3) proposed a level of interest and commitment that positively correlates with the unemployment rate among hospitality graduates. The finding reported in this study revealed that the level of interest and commitment recorded value of Pearson Correlation, which is $r = 0.422$, $p = 0.000$. Thus, the result accepts hypothesis 3 (H3), whereby the level of interest and commitment is weak and positively significant to the unemployment rate among hospitality graduates.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Graduates' attitudes should be obtained, as those are important criteria that can help them get jobs. Through the findings, it is revealed that most of the respondents agreed that most graduates are having problems applying what they learned at the educational institutions in the working places. Besides, most of the graduates are having problems from the aspect of employability skills. This includes problems in communication skill, especially in the English language; the graduates are not well-disciplined and do not have leadership skills.

The study's findings revolve around the technical and employability skills among the graduates that became the factor for the unemployment issue research continuation. Consequently, these graduates are facing problems getting a place in a working world, as they cannot compete and give commitments to work. The Graduate Tracer Study Report in 2009 found that about 81.7% of the unemployed graduates stated that they are in dire need of additional training. These include training in English language skills, career development, ICT skills, communication skills and entrepreneurial skills (Graduates Tracer Study System by Ministry of Higher Education, 2009). Lack of high-levelled skills, especially in technical and employability skills, influence the concept of employability and becomes one of the factors to the unemployment problem among graduates (Susima and Sunanda, 2003).

For recommendation, Abd Hair et al. (2007) mentioned that technical and employability skills become a determining factor for a graduate to get a job. Therefore, it is important to include technical and employability skills elements in the curriculum for each course or field of study offered in educational institutions. The current world of development in this technological era emphasizes mastering technical skills (hard skills) and employability skills by every graduate. Employers and industry associations commonly associate the lack of soft skills such as a positive work ethic, communication skills, team working, decision-making skills and leadership as a key factor affecting the employability of Malaysian graduates.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has been accomplished to discover the impact of graduates in the hospitality industry in Malaysia. Four independent variables, namely attitude of graduates, style of employment, and level of interest and commitment been chosen to examine their relationships with the dependent variable, which is the unemployment rate among hospitality industry graduates in Malaysia. A total of 363 respondents from the age of 21 – 30 years old were selected from all states in Malaysia to examine themselves the unemployment rate in the hospitality industry in Malaysia. Overall, based on Pearson's correlation analysis, the attitude of graduates scored a value of *0.924, followed by style of employment with *0.885, and level of interest and commitment with *0.953.

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