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Islamic Development Management

Recent Advancements and Issues

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Employability and Performance of Islamic Studies Graduates in UNISHAMS



Rahayati Ahmad, Rafidah Abdul Rahman and Zaridah Zakaria

Abstract Employability is an important key performance indicator for high education institutions. UniSHAMS as a new high education private university struggle to faced high competitive challenge in education industries with other well-established IPTS and IPTA in Malaysia. The aim of this study is to assess the employability of KUIN graduates who graduate in 2016 by examining the level of employability, job position and government fund of KUIN's graduates from Islamic studies from 2016 across all sectors in private and public sectors of all industries across Malaysia, and to identify the level of employability, job position and government fund of KUIN's graduates towards their achievement in education throughout the year (CGPA). The results show that most of the UniSHAMS graduates prefer to work in Professional Education Services and self-employed. Almost 52% graduates employed as full-time workers compared to 32% work as a part-time workers. In order to compete, UniSHAMS need to improve the current programme offer by upgrading them to suit with The Industrial Revolution 4.0, which is introduced by the Ministry of Education such as double degree programme, twining programme with other international universities and joint venture education programme with industries.

Keywords Employability · Performance · Islamic education

Introduction

The employability of graduates in high education institution is one of the important factors that contribute to institutional achievement in producing quality graduates and chatters the need of industries (Harvey, 2001). Employability development is an

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ongoing process that cannot be achieved in short period, because it relates to human capital development in producing graduates with high knowledge capabilities and solid employment skill required by the industries (Majid & Corresponding, 2009). Malaysian public Universities such as University Malaya, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Putra Malaysian, Universiti Utara Malaysia and Universiti Sains Malaysia took several decades to produce a quality graduate employable in various industries. Malaysia private universities, on the other hand, need to work very hard to compete with Malaysian public universities to achieve an acceptable percentage of employability of their graduates to sustain in education industries. College Universiti INSANIAH also face the same problem in sustaining the level of employability of graduates over the years. Therefore, this study will identify the level of employability of KUIN graduates for the year 2016.

Problem Statement

he task to trace and to track graduates from the institute of higher learning has long been the exercises of universities, including UniSHAMS formerly known as Kolej Universiti INSANIAH (KUIN). Graduates gaining employment as soon as they leave universities is one indicator of employability. Employment status and graduates' employment are the assurances of their survival that have undergone human capital development process while learning to fill the various positions required for national development. To ensure the continuity of the nation's success, human capital plays an important role in determining the competitiveness of the country. Many previous studies show that personal characteristics are shown by someone who distinguishes performance excellence in the workplace.

According to a press statement by the Ministry of Higher Education, the average rate of Malaysian graduates' employability increased by 1.1–77.2% in 2016 compared to 76.1% in 2015. The average rate is based on the results of the 2016 Graduate Tracer Study Review report, which has been carried out by the Ministry of Higher Education 22 November 2016. The average rate of graduates' employment in Malaysian Higher Education Institutions (IPTs) in 5 years from 2012 to 2016 also registered an increase of 2.8%. From 224,575 graduates who participated in the study, 126,966 people (56.5%) had been employed within 6 months of graduation, 32,063 people (14.3%) successfully pursuing studies, 5,246 people (2.3%) chose to improve their skills and 9,053 (4.0%) are waiting for job placement. The rest, only 51,247 graduates (22.8%) who are still unemployed. The rapid changes in the employability level among graduates required higher education institution to upgrade their current syllabus to be more quality, well-versed, industrial based, excellence and balance in all respects, especially in graduates in shaping the quality of an Institution of Higher Learning (HEI), as well as influencing market acceptance of the ability of a graduate. Does UniSHAMS as a new IPTS cater the employability need of labour markets in Malaysia? Do the education loan supported by the government such as PTPTN help the graduates to perform and contributes to the employability among the graduates?

Research Objectives

The specific objectives of this study are:

- a. To examine the level of employability, job position and government fund of KUIN's graduates from Islamic studies from 2016 across all sectors in private and public sectors of all industries across Malaysia,
- b. To identify the level of employability, job position and government fund of KUIN's graduates towards their achievement in education throughout the years (CGPA).

Literature Review

International Islamic University Sultan Abdul Halaim Mu'azam Shah formerly known as Kolej Universiti INSANIAH (KUIN) is a university wholly owned by the state of Kedah Darul Aman and registered at the Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia. The establishment of UniSHAMS is to produce more capable professionals in leading Islamic community and expanding knowledge of Islam, as well as to accommodate the application of religious school graduates to pursue a higher level of studies.

UniSHAMS consists of eight faculties and four centres, namely (i) Kuliyyah of Syariah and Laws, (ii) Kuliyyah of Usuluddin, (iii) Kuliyyah of Arabic Language, (iv) Kuliyyah of Al-Quran Wal Al-Qiraat, (v) Kuliyyah of Muamalat, (vi) Kuliyyah of Hospitality and Halal Food Services, (vii) Kuliyyah of Medicine and Health Sciences, (viii) Kuliyyah of Creative Technology Multimedia. The four centres, namely (i) Centre for Counselling and Psychological Studies and Services, (ii) Centre for Foundation Studies, (iii) Centre for Languages and (iv) Centre for General Studies and Co-Curriculum.

As a private Islamic university, UniSHAMS need to ensure the quality and the future graduates produced cater the industrial need and demand for skilled manpower and be able to produce well-versed human capital in the labour market because a systematic and comprehensive process of learning will ensure the quality of the graduates produced involved a good curriculum programmes and good teaching design method that focuses on the ability of the graduates after they graduate.

Nowadays, the increase of public and private institutions of higher learning and the number of students entering the higher education centre has further increased the pressure on competition for employment in the market. If the increase in the number of graduates is balanced with the need of labour market, the graduates will be facing with employability problems (Argentin, 2010). The problem of unemployment and the difficulty in finding employment among graduates is not a new issue. In terms of human capital development, it is a positive indicator of the increase in the number of institutions of higher learning as it provides greater opportunities for the population