

# Conceptualization of Unemployment Factors Among Malaysian University Graduates

**Nur Fatin Izzati Jeffri**

*Department of Postgraduate and Professional Studies,  
Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA,  
Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia*

**Ramita Abdul Rahim\***

*Department of Technology and Supply Chain Management Studies,  
Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA  
Puncak Alam Campus, Selangor, Malaysia  
Email: ramita@uitm.edu.my*

*\* Corresponding Author*

## Abstract

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between graduates' attributes, graduates' skills, job mismatch and unrealistic salary on unemployment among graduates in Malaysia. Therefore, to comprehend the contributing factors in detail, a research framework is proposed to indicate the significant underlying factors relative to improving the unemployment rate of Malaysia graduates.

**Design/methodology/approach:** This paper describes the conceptualization of unemployment factors namely graduate attributes, graduate skills, job mismatch and unrealistic salary. A set of questionnaires adapted from previous study will be used to collect the data. Respondent will be individual who graduated from public universities and experienced unemployment for at least six months from the date they completed their studies. Purposive sampling technique will be used for this study. IBM SPSS 24 will use to analyses the obtained and valid data.

**Findings:** The expected findings of this study were to specify the most significant factors contribute to unemployment among university graduates. Therefore, respective institution and government can respond and equipped graduate with necessary characteristics and qualities.

**Research limitations/implications:** The quantitative method will be used for this study unable researchers to explore beyond the variables that will be tested.

**Practical implications:** The result anticipated beneficial to a few groups such as students, parents, body of government, education institutions and industry sector in planning for future.

**Originality/value:** This study contributes to the factors affect the graduate's characteristic by proposing conceptual framework of unemployment's factors among university graduate in Malaysia.

**Keywords:** Graduates' Attributes, Graduates' Skills, Job Mismatch, Unrealistic Salary, Unemployment, Malaysia

## Introduction

Currently, unemployment is one of the global issues that happen around the world and this situation involves Malaysian graduates aged 15-24 years old. According to Ibrahim and

Mahyuddin (2017), they noted that with the exposure of this segment of the workforce, it shows that there is three times more unemployment than adults occurring. Meanwhile, Halim (2018) stated that, in the context of the research, they are focusing on the two countries such as Malaysia and China. Even though in the global average shows lower percentage, but it still considers high with 10.8 per cent of the Malaysian and Chinese youth being unemployed in 2017. In comparison, the number of unemployment rate graduates in China would appear at least rapidly, to be better than their Malaysian counterparts. The result shows that with only 8.4 per cent of Chinese graduates finding themselves being unemployed (Stapleton, 2017). This research study wants to make a comparison related with issues and rate according to amount of unemployment graduates between Malaysia and others country such as China.

First issues that come from factors that influencing unemployment among Malaysian graduates is graduates' attributes. Besides, graduate attributes also known as the qualities, abilities, and understandings that the university community believes students should acquire while pursuing their education (Bowden, Hart, King, Trigwell & Watts, 2016). If each of the graduates have a quality, skills or talent in themselves, it can attract employer's attention to give a chance for the graduates to get job as soon as possible compared to the others graduates. Therefore, qualities acquired by the graduates prepare them for their future undertakings (Bowden, 2020). According to Hanapi & Nordin (2014), there is a situation where some graduates face difficulties when they are applying their attributes to the workplace. This is because, they believed that graduates without a good attribute could face difficulties in getting jobs in the future, but this is not the most important features for the industry to focus on. As supported by a study of Tahir (2018) most of the employers believe that graduates are too focused on their academic achievements during studying to the point that they have lesser ability to practice and develop the skills in themselves. For graduates, they focused on academic achievement because they believe that having a good grade in examination can help them to get a job as soon possible but instead having a good graduates' attributes is very important for the employer to look forward.

Second issues that come from factors that influencing unemployment among Malaysian graduates is graduates' skills. Graduates skills can be divided into two which are interpersonal skills and personal skills. Interpersonal skills are the skills that use to interact and build relationships with other people. Meanwhile, personal skills are concerned with looking after own well-being which involve both body and mind. Thus, to promote themselves, each of the person will use their own skills to stand out into their employers. Graduates' skills involve the development of an expertise, knowledge base or mindset that makes graduates more attractive to employers. If the graduates having a high graduates' skills in themselves, it will assure the employers on the efficiency of graduates to manage and complete job tasks when they are working. A study done by Wan Zulkifli, Zakaria, Nawawi & Idris (2010) found that employers are strict when they want to select an applicant during interview. Therefore, the employers are more prioritize to the graduates who has experienced, and graduates' skills equipped with employability skills rather than graduates those only with good grades. Besides, a study conducted by Nazron, Lim & Nga (2017) reports that the industrial training is very important because industrial training programs will help graduates gain more practical experience and technical skills to be more work ready. Besides, graduates who perform well during the training in the industry sometimes will get the opportunity to be absorbed into the organization directly. Therefore, the graduates need to perform and work well when they are working in organization. Whereas, a graduate with no industrial training experience after they complete their studies will

face a hard time in job seeking because they are lacking in employability skills. Thus, public and private universities should provide an industrial training program for the graduates at least they have an experience in working environment and can improve their skills in future.

Third issues that come from factors that influencing unemployment among graduates is job mismatch. According to the HRSDC Draft Statement of Work, job mismatch can be defined as a worker in a job that does not correspond with his or her level of education, experience, skills or interests. Besides, job mismatch is a discrepancy between the skills that are sought by employers and the skills that are possessed by individuals. Therefore, job mismatch also contributes to the unemployment issue among graduates. Education-job mismatch is a mismatch between the education acquired. There are two categories of education-job mismatch which are horizontal and vertical mismatch. Vertical mismatch is the level of education or qualification is less or more than required. Besides, individuals who have educational levels in excess of job requirements are termed as overeducated, underemployed and overqualified. Meanwhile, horizontal mismatch is the type or field of education and skills that is inappropriate for the job. In this paper, these are collectively referred to as vertical mismatched. Many studies have found a link between labour market mismatch and unfavorable results on the job market, such as lower salaries, worse productivity, decreased job satisfaction, and more labour turnover. This is true regardless of whether the mismatch is due to excessive education or skill levels. These negative effects are more marked when over-education and over-skilling occur together. This imposes costs on the employer, the individual worker and the state in so far as the last of these has subsidized educational provision. There may be a labour shortage in some industries that forces businesses to upgrade some of their current employees or lower their hiring standards while overcrowding in others that prohibits some people from obtaining jobs at a level commensurate with their level of skills.

Fourth issues that come from factors that influencing unemployment among graduates is unrealistic salary. Unrealistic Salary is demand of salary by the graduates who do not seem fit for the salary where employers are only able to offer salaries ranging from RM2,100 to RM2,500 (Kalra, 2015). Besides, unrealistic salary is where the first-time job-seekers had higher expectations in the beginning but as they got more experienced, they lowered their salary expectations (Abid, 2018). Nowadays, most of graduates will face a problem with applying a job after they graduates from the universities. It is because of limited supply. So, if there are any job offers with salaries less than it should be, most graduates would accept it in order to survive in this current economy. But, for the graduates who are too demand in choosing a job, they are willing to be unemployed rather than paid low. The salary mostly depends on firms since the demand is more than the supply. However, there are some firms that are taking advantage of this situation by offering lower salaries especially for the fresh graduates. Hence, firms should be more relevant in offering a salary to graduates.

Additionally, this study will be conducted by the researcher because it could give a positive impact to the graduates to well-prepared about their future. Besides, it is important to study about unemployment among graduates because it shows the high rate of unemployment among the educated because of both due to the lack of sufficient jobs and poor schooling as well as the unexceptional quality of education on offer at most colleges. Thus, this issue could make large numbers of graduates unsuitable for employment that is commensurate with their degrees.

## **Hypothesis Development**

### **Unemployment**

This study will propose to identify the reasons of unemployment and how its effected among graduates, and at the same time to determined which factor most influenced unemployment among university graduates. Currently, unemployment among the graduates becomes arising issue, not only in Malaysia but also around the world. The Department of Statistics Malaysia (2017) found that the unemployment rate in Malaysia had increased from 3.2 % in 2007 to 3.7% in 2009. Former Minister of Human Resources of Malaysia, Fong Chan Onn stated that the National Economic Action Council with the collaboration of the Department of Human Manpower had conducted a census in 2005 and it is found that almost 59000 graduates were unemployed, and 30000 graduates worked in a field that do not match with their higher educational qualifications. One of the factors that contribute to the unemployment problem among the Malaysian graduates is the quality of the graduates (Rahmah, 2019). Besides, Ranjit (2019) mentioned that ten primary weaknesses of Malaysian graduates are in the aspect of management, problem-solving, communication, leadership, creativity, critical thinking, proactive, self-confidence and interaction skills. According to Zahid (2017) stated that for every year the cases of unemployment among graduates are increasing.

### **Graduates' Attributes**

For the overview of graduates' attributes, the researcher will explain about how graduates' attributes can be as the factors that contribute to unemployment among university graduates. It is the literature review of relationship between graduates' attributes and unemployment among graduates. Graduates' attributes play a main factor of unemployment issue. The disciplinary skill and technical knowledge gathered through university courses differentiates the attributes of graduates compared with those with no high education (Bowden, 2020). Besides, the global, economic, technological and social trends are changing business and graduate attributes are needed for employees to keep on one's job and most of unemployed are from the public university which the graduates have poor attitudes, lack of English proficiency and poor communication skills. According to JobStreet's manager, Chook Yuh Yng, graduates need to improve their attitude and character since there are plenty of jobs which do not require any experience.

Graduate attributes are not a main factor affecting unemployment among youths. According to Hanapi and Nordin (2017) there are also situations where some graduates face difficulties applying their attributes to the workplace. It is believed that graduates who not have good attributes could face difficulties getting jobs in the future, but this is not the most important feature for the industry. Malaysian universities also highlight on the grooming of other important skills and morality of their graduates. As supported by a study by Tahir (2018) employers believe that students are too focused on their academic achievements to the point that they have lesser ability to practice the skills. Focusing more on co-curricular subjects and the academic subjects are far more important than building up good attributes in attaining future employment.

*H1: There a relationship between graduates' attributes and unemployment among graduates.*

### **Graduates' Skills**

For the overview of graduates' skills, the researcher will explain about how graduates' skills can be as the factors that contribute to unemployment among graduates. It is the literature review of relationship between graduates' skills and unemployment among graduates. In recent years, institutions of higher education have begun to focus on employability, but this does not have a well-defined scope for the industry, academics, government agencies and students. Employability skills are the skills and attributes that enable fresh graduates to secure jobs in the future and who are already employed to maintain or advance in their career. Finch, Hamilton, Baldwin, & Zehner's (2013) study in Canada found that when employers hired new graduates, they place the highest importance on soft skills and the lowest importance on academic reputation, the other categories being problem solving skills, functional skills, pre-graduation skills and academic reputation. According to the article, Top 11 Skills Employers Look for in Candidates it stated that having a soft skill can attract employers look for in job candidates no matter what the open position such as having a good communication skill, leadership skills, teamwork skills and interpersonal skills. Besides, by having this skill it can make the graduates more marketable to recruiters by the companies or industries out there.

Nowadays, graduates are more focused on achieving good academic achievement than practically preparing themselves is the main factor of unemployment lack of soft skills among them (Tengku Kamarul Bahrim, Hassan Azahari, Zulkarnal, Sallehudin, & Mohd Yusop, 2019). This finding showed there are positive relationship between lack of skills and unemployment. A serious problem in the training and education system in South Africa is the problem of graduate unemployment which is a concern due to lack of skills (Pauw, Oosthuizen, & Van Der Westhuizen, 2008). This finding showed there is a positive relationship between lack of skills and unemployment among graduates. According to Fairuzza, Mohamad, & Wahid (2011), there are five important soft skills criteria required by employers in the workplace in important order are communication skills, teamwork, decision making & problem solving, creative & critical thinking and program & project management skills. From the results of the study, it can conclude that all the soft skills criteria given are important and necessary by the employer in the search for the current workforce and a graduate with technical skills without enough soft skills will not get a job. This journal showed there is a positive relationship between lack of skills and unemployment.

*H2: There a positive relationship between graduates' skills and unemployment among graduates.*

### **Job Mismatch**

In this section, the researcher will discuss about how job mismatch can be as the factors that contribute more on unemployment among graduates. It is the literature review of relationship between job mismatch and unemployment among graduates. Job mismatch is a potential threat in the new normal and fourth industrial revolution period, which is characterizes by rapid technological progress, stagnant economic growth, low fertility, and aging societies (Dobla-Norris & Haskar, 2015). Moreover, job mismatch can be the causes most of graduates out there does not to apply any job that not related to their qualification. In Malaysia, around 1.4 million job vacancies in 2017 were provided, but only 86.9 percent of those vacancies were for low-skilled job only requiring primary education and are not suitable for fresh graduates as reported by The Star (2018).



However, according to a UK University research, the real problem of job mismatch is the abundance of graduates from the same course resulting in strict filtering employers to find the one who rightly deserves the job (Steed, 2018). In particular, as the growth and application of professional knowledge and information based on ideas and creativity are recognized as a crucial resource, there has been increase in size of demand for skillful human capital with high capability, highlight various discussions on the treatments and conditions for a high-expert workforce which caused job mismatch as the factor of unemployment among graduates.

According to Kadir, Naghavi, Subramaniam & Aâ (2020) there is a positive relationship between job mismatch and unemployment among graduates due to job unavailability and the need for income. In this paper, shows that job mismatch and unemployment have a positive relationship when most of the participants strongly agreed that not many skills that required in the market and there is an imbalance between skills demand and skills supply. The graduates get hired first is who hold the greatest knowledge and skills in their study field (Hossain, Yagamaran, Afrin, Limon, Nasiruzzaman, & Karim, 2018).

*H3: There a positive relationship job mismatch and unemployment among graduates.*

### **Unrealistic Salary**

For the overview of unrealistic salary, the researcher will explain about how unrealistic salary can be as the factors that contribute to unemployment among graduates. It is the literature review of relationship between unrealistic salary and unemployment among graduates. Demand for unrealistic salary by graduates is the top factor for companies to reject applications when graduates applying a job especially for those who do not seem fit for the salary where employers are only able to offer salaries ranging from RM2,100 to RM2,500 (Kalra, 2015). Therefore, around 32 percent of graduates who ask for RM3,000 and above as a starting salary while only 9 percent of employers are willing to offer this (Leo, 2019).

According to Simon Si (2017) the Regional Communication Head of JobStreet.com stated that this demand may root from the financial support from graduates' parents which exposes graduates to high life standards during study years. Bank Negara Malaysia (2017) puts the standard minimum wage to RM2,700 to survive in this country while the Malaysian Trade Union Congress argue that the starting salary for graduates must be from RM3,000. Therefore, according to Department of Statistic Malaysia in salaries distribution Malaysia, it stated that almost everyone earns 29,400 MYR or less and 75 percent of employees earn 17,600 MYR or less. Meanwhile 50 percent of employees earn 6,450 or less and 25 percent of employees earn less than 3,650. According to the article, Unemployment Among Graduates - Is There A Mismatch? the study found unrealistic salary and unemployment among graduates are closely related. Graduates nowadays are desperate to seek jobs due to the limited supply. So, if there are any job offers with salaries less than it should be, most graduates would accept it in order to survive in this current economy.

The salary mostly depends on firms since the demand is more than the supply. However, there are some firms that are taking advantage of this situation by offering lower salaries. Hence, firms should be more relevant in offering a salary to graduates. This can be an issue for universities graduates since both of diploma and degree holders are expected salaries less than RM2,500 and RM2,000 respectively. Meanwhile, Khazanah Research Institute in 2019 stated that employers' statements that graduates frequently request high salaries were unfounded.

*H4: There a relationship between unrealistic salary offered and unemployment among graduates.*

### Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shown above illustrate the conceptual framework diagram of the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables for this study. Both the independent variables and dependent variable framework is adapted from (Hossain, Yagamaran, Afrin, Limon, Nasiruzzaman, & Karim, 2018) and (Kadir, Naghavi, & Subramaniam, 2020) which shows the direct relationship among factors that influencing unemployment among graduates which are graduates' attributes, graduates' skills, job mismatch and unrealistic salary toward the dependent variable which is unemployment.

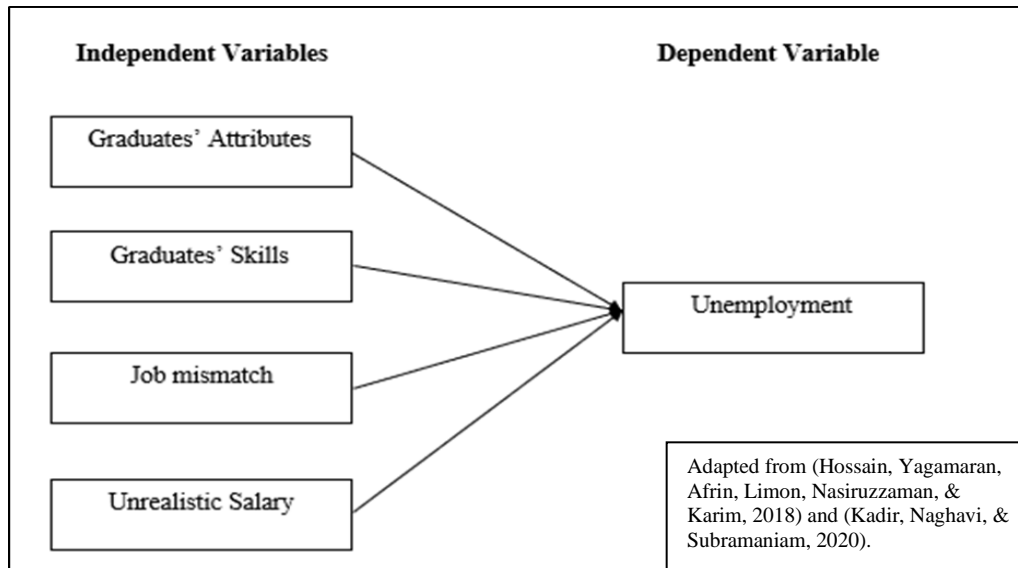


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework Diagram of Factors That Influencing Unemployment Among Graduates

The purpose of the current study is to examine the relationship between graduates' attributes, graduates' skills, job mismatch and unrealistic salary on unemployment among university graduates. Furthermore, the researcher will be focused about the factors that contribute to unemployment among graduates and determine which main factor that most influence unemployed. Therefore, based on the discussion, the researcher has formulated hypotheses for this study. Unemployment was the problem that was unexpected that can be emerged in any nation across the world. According to Hanapi and Nordin (2014) there are also situations where some graduates face difficulties applying their attributes to the workplace. As supported by a study by Tahir (2018) employers believe that students are too focused on their academic achievements to the point that they have lesser ability to practice the skills. Therefore, based on the discussion above, this study has shown there is relationship between graduates' attributes and unemployment among graduates.

A serious problem in the training and education system is the problem of graduate unemployment which is a concern due to lack of skills (Pauw, Oosthuizen, & Van Der Westhuizen, 2008). Therefore, this finding showed there is a positive relationship between lack of skills and unemployment among graduates. Moreover, based on the studied done by Hossain

et al., (2018), the finding shows that job mismatch and unemployment have a positive relationship when most of the participants strongly agreed that not many skills that required in the market and there is an imbalance between skill demand and skill supply. The research indicates that half of jobless diploma level and half of unemployed degree levels, respectively, anticipated salary of less than RM 2,500 and RM 2,000 (Zahid, 2018). Therefore, based on the discussion, the researchers have formulated hypothesis as there is a relationship between unrealistic salary and unemployment among graduates.

### **Methodology**

Research design used for this research is descriptive study which the researchers want to determine the factors that influenced unemployment among university graduates. The respondent's target for a survey is the entire set of units for which the survey data are to be used to make inferences. The respondent of this study will be all unemployed graduates located in Klang Valley who had graduated from public universities and experienced unemployment for at least six months or more from the date they completed their studies.

The sampling technique that will be used is non-probability techniques which is purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling method refers to a group or unit that selected by the researcher because they have characteristics that the study needed in research sample. Sample size is an important design decision (Ali A. Al-Subaihi, 2003). This study will be using G\*Power analysis (Faul, 2007), to determine the sample size as G\*Power analysis is most significant in identifying the sample size. Reliability test will be conducted to find out the reliability of the questionnaire whether the questions are reliable or instead. This study will use descriptive statistics and multiple regression which is linear regression for data analysis. Linear regression will run in this study to the determine the relationship between dependent variable which is unemployment and independent variables which are graduates' attributes, graduates' skills, job mismatch and unrealistic salary. A set of questionnaires was designed for the respondents. This study will use google form to distribute to the target respondents. All the questions were adapted from the past researchers. The questions were in the English language and some of the question in the negative form. The questionnaire consists of a few sections namely Graduates' Attributes (4 items), graduates' skills (5 items), and job mismatch (5 items) which adapted from (Hossain et al., 2018). Last section is about unrealistic salary demand (3 items) which was adapted from Kadir, M.J. et al. (2020).

### **Conclusion**

In a nutshell, graduate employability and unemployment have become a global issue in the world. Even though, job vacancies are always available in the market, but it concentrated more on low-skilled jobs. Thus, because of this can causes the number of unemployment among graduates increase year by year. This issue was giving a significant to the people such as students, parents, body of government, education institutions and industry sector. It is important to study about the factors that influencing unemployment among graduates because the result will contribute to the students in planning for their future. Therefore, it was a crucial for the parents to pay attention of their children lifestyle such as in giving an education. Next, a government is an organization that can lead the country in terms of financial, rules, economy and others that gave benefits to the country and education institution subsector also important in taking responsibility for the youth enrolled in universities. For example, government can open more job vacancies especially to the fresh graduates in order for them to gain more experience to



adapt with the new working environment. From that, they can show their talents and skills that they have to promote themselves in carrier to be hired by company. The Central Bank of Malaysia's latest annual report has devoted a section to the unemployment among youths, touching on Malaysia's position compared to other countries, and what the possible long-term implications are and measures that need to be taken (Law Chong Seng, 2018). As the result, issues of unemployment should emphasize by government or educational institution to avoid the number of unemployment among graduates increasing year by year and this issue could give negative impact to the world.

### Acknowledgments

The researcher would like to thank Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) for the opportunity and support of this paper publication.

### References

- Department of Statistics Malaysia (2018). Graduates Statistics 2018. Retrieved from [https://www.dosm.gov.my/v1/index.php?r=column/cthree&menu\\_id=UEg1NkpJUFYzRzBKclE4V2JEB2I3QT09](https://www.dosm.gov.my/v1/index.php?r=column/cthree&menu_id=UEg1NkpJUFYzRzBKclE4V2JEB2I3QT09)
- Department of Statistics Malaysia (2019). Graduates Statistics 2019. Retrieved from [https://www.dosm.gov.my/v1/index.php?r=column/cthree&menu\\_id=UEg1NkpJUFYzRzBKclE4V2JEB2I3QT09](https://www.dosm.gov.my/v1/index.php?r=column/cthree&menu_id=UEg1NkpJUFYzRzBKclE4V2JEB2I3QT09)
- Department of Statistics. (2019). Labor Force Survey Report 2019. Kuala Lumpur: Jabatan Perangkaan Malaysia. Retrieved from [https://www.dosm.gov.my/v1/index.php?r=column/cthemByCat&cat=126&bul\\_id=TIVMbEtBVXBGTi80VjdqZ1JUdVRHdz09&menu\\_id=U3VPMldoYUxzVzFaYmNkWXZteGduZz09](https://www.dosm.gov.my/v1/index.php?r=column/cthemByCat&cat=126&bul_id=TIVMbEtBVXBGTi80VjdqZ1JUdVRHdz09&menu_id=U3VPMldoYUxzVzFaYmNkWXZteGduZz09)
- Ghani, E. K., Rappa, R., & Gunardi, A. (2018). Employers'perceived Accounting Graduates'soft Skills. *Academy of Accounting and Financial Studies Journal*, 22(5), 1-11.
- Ghani, I. A. G. A. A. (2020). Employers' Expectation and Preference of Graduates in Malaysia. *Journal of Human Capital Development (JHCD)*, 13(2).
- Gurr, T., & Jungbauer-Gans, M. (2013). Stigma consciousness among the unemployed and prejudices against them: development of two scales for the 7th wave of the panel study "Labour Market and Social Security (PASS)". *Journal for Labour Market Research*, 46(4), 335-351.
- Hanapi, Z., & Nordin, M. S. (2014). Unemployment among Malaysia graduates: Graduates' attributes, lecturers' competency and quality of education. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 112, 1056-1063.
- Hossain, M. I., Yagamaran, K. S. A., Afrin, T., Limon, N., Nasiruzzaman, M., & Karim, A. M. (2018). Factors influencing unemployment among fresh graduates: A case study in Klang Valley, Malaysia. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 8(9), 1494-1507.
- Kadir, J. M. A., Naghavi, N., & Subramaniam, G. (2020). Unemployment among graduates-Is there a mismatch? *International Journal of Asian Social Science*, 10(10), 583-592.
- Keiling. H, (2021). 7 Examples of Important Teamwork Skills. Retrieved from <https://www.herzing.edu/blog/7-important-teamwork-skills-you-need-school-and-your-career>

- Lee, C. C., Huang, S. H., & Zhao, C. Y. (2012). A study on factors affecting turnover intention of hotel employees. *Asian Economic and Financial Review*, 2(7), 866.
- Mouhammed, A. H. (2011). Important theories of unemployment and public policies. *Journal of Applied Business and Economics*, 12(5), 100-110.
- Seng, L. C. (2018). Malaysia public universities' graduate employability policies: an analysis of first-degree graduates' unemployment and underemployment issues. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research*, 6(4), 480-489.
- Shakur, E.S.A., Sa'at, N.H., Aziz, N., Abdullah, S.S., & Rasid, N.H.A. (2020). Determining unemployment factors among job seeking youth in the east coast of peninsular Malaysia. *Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 7(12), 565-576.
- Teng, W., Ma, C., Pahlevansharif, S., & Turner, J. J. (2019). Graduate readiness for the employment market of the 4th industrial revolution: The development of soft employability skills. *Education+ Training*.
- Tengku Kamarul Bahrim, T. A. I., Hassan Azahari, H. I., Zulkarnal, N. A. A., Sallehuddin, N. A., & Mohd Yusop, R. (2019). High rate of unemployment among graduates in Malaysia. *e-Journal of Media & Society (e- JOMS)*, 3, 1-15.
- Ting, S. H., Marzuki, E., Chuah, K. M., Misieng, J., & Jerome, C. (2017). Employers' views on the importance of English proficiency and communication skill for employability in Malaysia. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 7(2), 315-327.
- Unemployment by Country 2022. Retrieved from <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/unemployment-by-country>
- Yusof, N., & Jamaluddin, Z. (2017). Graduate employability and preparedness: A case study of University of Malaysia Perlis (UNIMAP), Malaysia. *Geografia-Malaysian Journal of Society and Space*, 11(11).

**APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRES****Variables****Items****Demographic**

## Gender

- Male
- Female

## Age

- 20 – 22 years old
- 23 – 25 years old
- 26 – 27 years old
- 28 – 30 years old

## Qualification

- STPM/Diploma
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree

## Duration Unemployment

- 6 months – 12 months
- 12 months – 18 months
- 18 months – 24 months
- 24 months and above

## Year of graduated

- 2016
- 2017
- 2018
- 2019
- 2020
- 2021

**Unemployment**

I am personally afraid of being unemployed.  
The presence of foreign workers in Malaysia contributed to fewer job opportunities.  
My education and skills are not enough in order to be competitive in the current job markets.  
I would rather be unemployed than accept a job that does not match my qualifications.

**Graduates' Attributes**

I am too selective about the position offered by an organization.  
I am lacking communication skills,

**Graduates' Skills**

experience and self-motivation.  
I am unable to demonstrate problem-solving ability.  
I am unable to work in a team (group).

I don't have the relevant working skills.  
I have poor command in the English language.  
I have poor communication skills.  
I am lacking problem-solving skills.  
I am lacking in leadership qualities.

**Job Mismatch**

There are no appropriate or relevant jobs offered.  
The job that is offered is irrelevant to my qualification.  
There is an imbalance between skill demand and skill supply in the economy.  
There are too many skills that are required in the market.  
Overqualified skill is a cause of difficulty for me to get a job.

**Unrealistic Salary**

The starting salary for graduates is too low.  
The firm offers me a salary that irrelevant to my position.  
I am interested in a highly paid job.