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UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA MANAGEMENT GRADUATES**Academic Session : **2013/2014**

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MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCE IN EMPLOYABILITY AMONG
UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA
MANAGEMENT GRADUATES

NOORAZILAH MOHAMED

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the
requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Science (Human Resource Development)

Faculty of Management
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JULY 2014

I declare that this thesis entitled “*Multiple Intelligence in Employability Among Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka Management Graduates*” is the result of my own research except as cited in the references. The thesis has not been accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature of any other degree.

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Date : 6th July 2014

Specially dedicated to *Mak*

I really miss you.

Al-Fatihah

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“In the name of God, the Most Gracious and Most Merciful”

Alhamdulillah, thank to Allah the Almighty as I have managed to complete this academic exercise. In preparing for this study, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the people who have contributed during this journey. First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Siti Rahmah Awang who always believe in me, and give me endless support and encouragement. With her guidance and assistance, I was able to complete this dissertation successfully.

Next, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Associate Professor Dr. Md. Nor Hayati bin Tahir, Dean of Faculty Technology Management and Technopreneurship, Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka and the university's administrative staff, who had given full cooperation in providing the data for the study. Without this data, my study would not be completed. Then, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Ministry of Education and Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka for granting me the scholarship to study at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. This scholarship has significantly assisted me in attaining my educational goals as well as advancing for career in future.

Last but not least, I am also grateful and thankful to my beloved family, Abah, Tok Ha, Angah, and my beloved husband and child, Aziq, Zahirah and Zafirah who have always been there and supported me in all means. Without them, I would not have the strength to stand tall today. Thank you very much.

ABSTRACT

In this study, graduates multiple intelligences profile are the main interest in order to enhance the opportunities of the management graduates for employability. In order to measure and classify the multiple intelligences of graduate, Two Step Cluster Analysis is applied. The cluster is based on their demographic background and Howard Gardner's nine intelligences which are musical, spatial/visual, verbal/linguistic, mathematics/logical, bodily-kinaesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist and spiritual. A psychometric test which is Ability Test in Employment (ATIEm) has been used as the instrument to measure the level of nine intelligence types of management graduates for job placement purposes. This study was conducted at Faculty of Technology Management and Technopreneurship (FPTT), Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM). Therefore, 137 surveys were answered and these were considered to be legitimate data. The results represent the dominant intelligence of graduates which majority of the respondents obtains high score in spiritual $n=37(27\%)$, followed by mathematical/logical $n=24 (17.5\%)$ and interpersonal $n=23 (16.7\%)$. In addition, another result also shows high score for each level of intelligences which majority of graduate has high level in interpersonal skills $n=130 (94.8\%)$. The mediocre level $n=41 (29.92\%)$ and weak/none level $n=10 (7.3\%)$ are both in musical skills. The analysis from the Two Step Cluster presents four main clusters. The composition of clusters formed significant variables for Cluster 1: $n=49 (35.8\%)$ Malays, Islam, Musical and Verbal. Cluster 2: $n=56(40.9\%)$ Musical, Spatial and Verbal, Cluster 3: $n=11(8\%)$ Malays (Islam), Non Malays (Buddhism), Musical, Kinaesthetic, Spatial, Verbal, Intrapersonal, Naturalist and Spiritual. Cluster 4: $n=21 (15.3\%)$ Non Malays and intelligences are insignificant variable. Based on the Two Step Cluster analysis, a competency model which is Competency Model is constructed namely Cognitive Intelligences Cluster (Cluster 1), Social Intelligences Cluster (Cluster 2) and Foundation Intelligences Cluster (Cluster 3). Cluster 1 and 2 are likely to be employed because of the combination different of ability, the probability of graduate to be employed is enhanced and they are likely to assume higher position at the workplace.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini dijalankan bagi mengenalpasti profil kecerdasan pelbagai graduan bagi meningkatkan peluang graduan pengurusan untuk mendapatkan pekerjaan. Untuk mengukur dan mengklasifikasikan kecerdasan graduan, Dua Langkah Kluster Analisis digunakan. Kluster ini adalah berdasarkan latar belakang demografi dan Sembilan Kecerdasan Howard Gardner iaitu muzik, ruang, lisan, matematik/logik, kinestetik, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalis dan rohani. Ujian psikometrik iaitu Ujian Keupayaan dalam Pekerjaan (ATIEm) digunakan sebagai instrumen untuk mengukur tahap sembilan jenis kecerdasan graduan pengurusan bagi tujuan penempatan pekerjaan. Kajian ini dijalankan di Fakulti Pengurusan Teknologi dan Teknousahawanan (FPTT) Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM). Sebanyak 137 soalselidik telah dijawab. Hasil dari kajian menunjukkan kecerdasan pelbagai yang dominan bagi graduan pengurusan adalah rohani $n=37$ (27%), diikuti dengan matematik/logik $n=24$ (17.5%) dan interpersonal $n=23$ (16.7%). Selain itu, hasil analisa menunjukkan kecerdasan pelbagai graduan pada tahap tinggi adalah kemahiran interpersonal $n=130$ (94.8%). Manakala bagi kedua-dua tahap iaitu tahap sederhana $n=41$ (29.92%) dan tahap lemah/tiada kemahiran $n=10$ (7.3%) adalah bagi kemahiran dalam muzik. Analisis yang diperolehi daripada Kluster Dua Langkah membentuk empat kluster utama. Komposisi kluster yang mengandungi pembolehubah signifikan bagi Kluster 1: $n=49$ (35.8 %), Melayu (Islam) Muzik dan Lisan. Kluster 2: $n=56$ (40.9 %) Muzik, Ruang dan Lisan. Kluster 3: $n=11$ (8%), Melayu (Islam), Bukan Melayu (Buddha), Muzik, Kinestetik, Ruang, Lisan, Intrapersonal, Naturalis dan Rohani. Kluster 4: $n=21$ (15.3 %) Bukan Melayu dan kecerdasan pelbagai adalah pembolehubah yang tiak ketara. Berdasarkan hasil analisis ini juga, Model Kompetensi berdasarkan kluster yang diperolehi telah di bina iaitu Kecerdasan Kognitif (Kluster 1), Kecerdasan Sosial (Kluster 2) dan Kecerdasan Asas (Kluster 3). Bagi Kluster 1 dan 2 peluang graduan diambil bekerja adalah tinggi berdasarkan kombinasi kecerdasan pelbagai yang berbeza dan diandaikan graduan mempunyai peluang yang lebih baik untuk menjawat jawatan yang lebih tinggi.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ATIE [®]	Ability Test in Epilepsy
ATIEm	Ability Test in Employment
BIC	Schwarz's Bayesian Criterion
BITM	Bachelor of Technology Management (Innovation Technology)
BTMM	Bachelor of Technology Management (High Technology Marketing)
BTEC	Bachelor of Technopreneurship
FPTT	Faculty of Technology Management and Technopreneurship
MI	Multiple Intelligences
MOE	Ministry of Education Malaysia
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
UTeM	Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into several sections. They consist of background of study, statement of problem, research questions and objectives, scope of study, significance of study, research limitations, conceptual and operational definitions, research framework and a summary of this chapter.

1.1 Background of Study

According to Scurry and Blenkinsopp (2011), graduates refer to individuals who have completed a university or college degree, typically three or four years in duration, generally termed a Bachelor's degree. Approximately, 180,000 students graduate with diplomas and degrees from institutions of higher learning (Ministry of Higher Education, 2012) each year. The subject of graduate employability in recent years has become an issue of concern (Ministry of Higher Education, 2012). As for Yorke (2008) graduate employability is a set of achievements skills, understandings and personal attributes that enables graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, in which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.

Past research revealed that employers looked for certain skills, behaviours and attitudes in their potential employees. In Malaysia, employers are looking for graduates who are well-balanced, with good academic achievement and possess soft skills like communication skills, problem solving skills, interpersonal skills and the ability to be flexible (Juhdi, Yunus and Abu Samah, 2006). Besides, they are also

looking for employees that have personal qualities that include being responsible, having self-confidence, self-control, social skill, honest, having integrity, adaptable and flexible, having team spirit, being punctual and efficient, self-directed, possessing good work attitude, being well-groomed, cooperative, self-motivated and self-management. However, most of graduates are unaware of this current requirement. This is a loss especially when they want to further succeed in their job upon graduation (Shafie and Nayan, 2010).

Employability in this study refers to the possible career for graduates in term of job placement purposes and chances to be employed by an employer based on Gardner's nine intelligences which are musical, bodily-kinaesthetic, mathematics/logical, spatial, linguistic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist and spiritual. By identifying graduate's potential intelligence, it will match them well with suitable occupations that benefit themselves, the workforce, the community and the country's economy. Therefore, understanding multiple intelligences is an important aspect of educating graduates. These are the intelligences that employers expect their employees to have together with the specific technical skills required for the job they are applying for.

It has been 30 years since the conceptualisation of multiple intelligences by Howard Gardner in 1983. Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences is a psychological and educational theory espousing nine types of intelligence exist in humans, each relating to a different sphere of human life and activity (Foong, Shariffudin and Mislán, 2012). In his ground breaking book, *Frames of Mind* (Gardner, 1983) defines seven intelligences namely linguistic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, spatial intelligence, musical intelligence, bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, and intrapersonal intelligence. Two more additional intelligences theorised in another Gardner's book *Intelligence Reframed* which are naturalist intelligence and spiritual intelligence (Gardner, 1999) and he argues that the concept of intelligence should be broadened.

According to the Theory of Multiple Intelligences, an individual is unique from one another in the specific profile of intelligences that he or she exhibits. In addition, Gardner implies that everyone has the capacity for all of the intelligences but develops each intelligence to varying levels (Gardner, 1991). The definition of Multiple Intelligence in this study is more focused on the intelligence profile of management graduates for job placement purposes based on Gardner's nine intelligences namely musical, bodily-kinaesthetic, mathematical/logical, spatial, linguistic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist and spiritual (Gardner, 1999). Besides, it would assist management graduates to identify their potential multiple intelligences and to enhance the chances of being employed. Logically, each job does not focus on a single responsibility but it requires many kinds of intelligences to accomplish given tasks. Thus, it is important to nurture and polish all of the intelligences of graduates in order to be successful especially at the workplace (Awang, Aripin, Rafia and Ahmad, 2011).

Theory of Multiple Intelligences enables graduates to recognize their unique intellect. Recognizing unique intellect will help to boost confidence, improve academic performance, strengthen intelligences, and examine recommended careers. Multiple intelligences have been used successfully by career development professionals and they are also used by academicians to improve academic performance. In addition, Multiple Intelligence provides valuable information about an individual's intelligence levels and reveals ways to increase learning and employment potential (Hatch and Gardner, 1993).

In this study, graduates multiple intelligences profile is the main focus in enhancing the opportunity for graduates' employability. In order to measure and classify the multiple intelligences of graduate, Two Step Cluster Analysis is applied. The cluster is based on their demographic background and Gardner's nine intelligences namely musical, spatial/visual, verbal/linguistic, mathematics/logical, bodily-kinaesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist and spiritual.

A psychometric test which is the Ability Test in Employment (ATIEm) will be used as the instrument to measure the level of nine intelligence types of management graduates for job placement purposes. (Appendix A). ATIEm, is an extension of the Ability Test in Epilepsy (ATIE[®]2008). ATIE[®] 2008 was developed based on Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory to measure the level of eight intelligence types of epileptic patients. The purpose of ATIE[®] is to identify multiple intelligences in People with Epilepsy (PWE), which quantitatively measures the level of intelligence of PWE and to improve the skills of PWE tangibly, in which increase their chances of securing suitable employment (Awang, 2008).

In the end of the study, ATIEm Competency Model will be developed based on the multiple intelligence characteristics of the derived clusters. With Two Step Cluster Analysis method being employed, this study seeks to place graduate into groups that are identifiable with their employment probabilities.

1.2 Problem Statement

It is necessary to highlight that the issue of graduate unemployment is not new in Malaysia. What is new and worrying, however, is the persistent nature of the unemployed graduate problem within last one decade in Malaysia (Ismail, 2011). According to the definition of the Malaysia Labour Force Survey, the unemployed include persons who are available for work but do not work during a reference period. They could either be actively looking for work or not during the said period (Labour Force Statistics, Malaysia, 2013). Graduate unemployment is a serious concern because of its long term political and social implications. It is commonly argued that the large number of unemployed graduates serve as breeding ground for discontent and political unrest. Furthermore, graduate unemployment is a waste of productive resources. It brings negative results and contribution to the economic growth in Malaysia. As the unemployed graduates of Malaysia increase gradually, it weakens the rate of human capital and labour force from skilled workers in Malaysia (Baharin, Ishak and Ismail, 2012).

The high number of graduate unemployment has attracted many researchers to investigate and study the problem (Bakar and Hanafi, 2007; Khir, 2006). Based on the research done, it showed that 24.6% Malaysian graduates were not able to find a job six months after graduation in 2010 (Sim, 2013). Many scholars argue that graduates leave universities without sufficient soft skills and understanding which are necessary to succeed in the working world (Singh and Singh, 2008; Khir, 2006).

During the past few years there have been a substantial number of studies conducted dealing with the employability skills that students must acquire in order to obtain and keep entry level jobs (Omar *et al.*, 2012; Shafie and Nayan, 2010; Singh and Singh, 2008). Most of these studies have analysed the perceptions of employees concerning the workplace skills they need in order to maintain entry level jobs. The lack of knowledge and skills amongst graduates has been described as one of the reasons why graduates struggle to find employment after graduating (Ismail, 2011). The research showed that having good grades did not guarantee employment for Malaysian graduates. The graduates must have a good command of English and other soft skills such as analytical thinking, intelligence, independence, leadership, communication and computer skills and work experience (Ismail, 2011). Thus, there was very little variation in CGPA between the employed and unemployed graduates. This explains why the overall academic performance does not affect the chance of becoming employed graduates. The general consensus among Malaysian employers indicates that Malaysian graduates are well trained in their areas of specialization but unfortunately they lack the soft skills (Nurita and Ainon, 2004).

According to Gaundare (2012), many experts are proposing that graduates should plan their career by realizing the required employability skills and intelligences they have. This can help graduates to build an affective career plan for themselves. Howard Gardner's Theory Multiple Intelligences is ideal for personalized learning initiatives, boosting confidence and strategies for graduate to leverage and strengthen every intelligence (Hobsons, 2006). Research on intelligence in Malaysia has also applied Gardner's Multiple Intelligences. Awang *et. al.*, (2011) research was carried out to identify the intelligence profile of epilepsy patients for job placement purposes using cluster analysis. The classification was based on

Gardner's eight intelligences which are musical, bodily-kinaesthetic, mathematics/logic, spatial, linguistic, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalist. The study also seeks to identify determinants of employability based on the identified clusters and classifications. Awang *et. al*, (2011) has explored the attitudes and perception of human resource personnel toward the epilepsy and unemployment of PWE and classified PWE's intelligence patterns and characteristics based on a developed intelligence scale namely Ability Test in Epilepsy (ATIE[®]).

Based on Graduate Tracer Study 2012 done by Ministry of Education (MOE) Malaysia, formerly known as Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), the latest statistics of unemployed students according to the fields of study has been released. This study stated that there were 184,581 students graduated in 2011 and 44,391 or 24% of these graduates, mostly bachelor 's degree holders were unemployed. Arts and Social Sciences had the highest number of unemployment, contributing 44.5% or 19,784 from the total number of unemployed graduates. Trailing behind are graduates from Technical fields with 12,321 which account for 27.7% and Science graduates with 7,321 which account for 16.49% of the total (Ministry of Higher Education, 2012). This study is supported by other researchers such as Allen (1998) and Drewes (2002) who believe that social science graduates may initially be disadvantaged by the lack of technical content and inability to relate to their programs of study and occupations although they do as well as graduates of applied courses of study once established. In general, graduates in science and technology seem to have fewer problems in getting a job compared to those in humanities and social science (Kougioumoutzaki and Kalamatianou, 2008).

The social sciences are a group of academic disciplines that study human aspects. Thus, management include as interdisciplinary fields related to the social sciences. According to Drucker (1954) in his book "*The Practice of Management*", management is a multi-purpose organ that manages business and manages managers and manages workers and work.

This study is conducted at the Faculty of Technology Management and Technopreneurship (FPTT), Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM). FPTT offers three undergraduate programs namely Bachelor of Technology Management (Innovation Technology), Bachelor of Technology Management (High Technology Marketing) and Bachelor of Technopreneurship with interdisciplinary in social sciences field. Initially, FPTT offered undergraduate management programmes.

Kumar (2013) revealed that the employability of management graduates is on a decline, considering the fact that economy is growing at the lowest pace. In addition, the financial sector is also expressing slow growth rate (Baisya, 2012). This finding is consistent with Singh and Singh (2008) whereby most unemployed graduates are majoring in business studies or information technology. Therefore, the Faculty of Technology Management and Technopreneurship (FPTT) should be concerned with these findings. This is because the faculty produces graduates who are majoring in areas of business studies. Hence, there is a need for a study to be carried out on the employability of this faculty graduates. This is supported by UTeM researchers Hassan (2011) and Md. Saad, Rabani, Jano and Abd Majid (2013). A previous study conducted on UTeM graduates employability only focuses on the engineering and information and communication technology (ICT) graduates.

Up to date, there are literally no research conducted to classify graduates potential abilities either UTeM or in Malaysia. Hence, this study fills in the gap by focussing on multiple intelligences in employability among UTeM management graduates. Moreover, this study will assist UTeM to produce graduates who meet the needs of employers based on their multiple intelligences profile. This study is essential since there is no research done on UTeM graduates for employability. Shafie and Nayan (2010) shows that for 100 graduates, universities such as University Teknologi MARA (UiTM) has 77 employability, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) 74, Universiti Islam Antarabangsa (UIA) 71, other overseas franchise universities 65, Universiti Malaya (UM) 63, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) 61, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) 38, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) 35, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) 34 and Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) 8 employability.