

**DEVELOPMENT OF SITUATIONAL JUDGMENT TEST (SJT)
INSTRUMENT TO MEASURE THE EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS
OF GRADUATES**

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Abstrak

Globalisasi membuat pengrekrutan graduan untuk sesebuah organisasi menjadi lebih rumit. Majikan percaya bahawa tenaga kerja yang berdaya saing adalah kunci kepada kejayaan sesebuah organisasi. Dalam situasi semasa, walaupun graduan dikatakan mempunyai kemahiran khusus yang baik, mereka masih mempunyai masalah dengan kemahiran kebolehpasaran, dan hal ini menjejaskan kualiti kerja mereka. Tahap kemahiran kebolehpasaran yang baik adalah penting bagi memastikan bahawa graduan bersedia sebelum memasuki dunia pekerjaan. Oleh yang demikian, tahap kemahiran kebolehpasaran mereka perlu dinilai terlebih dahulu. Di dalam kajian ini, instrumen kemahiran kebolehpasaran untuk graduan Universiti Utara Malaysia merentasi bidang pengajian telah dibangunkan menggunakan kaedah penilaian ujian pertimbangan situasi (SJT). Dua belas (12) item telah dibangunkan bagi mengukur kemahiran komunikasi, etika dan moral profesional, kemahiran keusahawanan, pemikiran kritikal dalam penyelesaian masalah dan kualiti sendiri. Kesahihan instrumen telah dicapai melalui pendapat pakar dan kebolehpercayaan (dari segi kestabilan) adalah berdasarkan ujian Chi-Square untuk kehomogenan dan ujian Mann-Whitney U. Seterusnya instrumen yang telah disahkan tersebut digunakan untuk mendapatkan skor norma bagi setiap kemahiran yang diuji menggunakan kaedah *Bias-Corrected and Accelerated* (BCA) *bootstrap*. Skor norma tersebut menunjukkan bahawa responden-responden memiliki tahap etika dan moral profesional yang tinggi; dan tahap yang sederhana bagi kemahiran-kemahiran yang lain. Berdasarkan kepada dapatan kajian, instrumen yang dihasilkan boleh digunakan oleh graduan, universiti, majikan, agensi-agensi kerajaan dan agensi-agensi pembangunan kerjaya apabila menilai tahap kemahiran kebolehpasaran.

Kata kunci: Kemahiran kebolehpasaran, Ujian pertimbangan situasi, *Bias-corrected and accelerated* (BCA) *bootstrap*

Abstract

Globalization makes graduate recruitment for an organization more complex. Employers believe that a competitive workforce is the key to success of an organization. Currently, although graduates are said to have good specific skills, they still have problems with employability skills, and these problems affect the quality of their work. A good level of employability skills is essential in order to ensure that graduates are ready before entering the work market. Therefore, their level of employability skills should be evaluated. In this study, an instrument of employability skills for Universiti Utara Malaysia graduates across various fields was developed by using the assessment approach of situational judgment test (SJT). Twelve (12) items were developed measuring communication skill, professional ethics and morality, entrepreneurial skill, critical thinking in problem solving and personal quality. Instrument's validity was achieved through expert opinion and the reliability (in terms of stability) was based on the Chi-Square for homogeneity test and Mann-Whitney U test. Next, the validated instrument was used to obtain norm scores for each tested skill using the Bias-Corrected and Accelerated (BCA) bootstrap. The norm scores indicated that the respondents possessed a high level of professional ethics and morality; and a moderate level for other tested skills. Based on the findings, the instrument produced can be used by graduates, university, employers, government agencies and career development agencies when evaluating the level of employability skills.

Keyword: Employability skills, Situational judgment test, Bias-corrected and accelerated (BCA) bootstrap

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List of Abbreviations

BCA	Bias – Corrected and Accelerated
CA	Communication Apprehension
CGPA	Cumulative Grade Point Average
COSTAM	Confederation of Scientific and Technological Associations in Malaysia
EDA	Exploratory Data Analysis
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
K-S	Kolmogorov-Smirnov
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
My3S	Malaysian Soft Skills Scale
NWRC	National Work Readiness Credential
LPQ	Personal Quality Related to Life
CPQ	Personal Quality Related to Work
SJT	Situational Judgment Test
UUM	Universiti Utara Malaysia
WAGE	The Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy Certificate Program
WRC	Work Readiness Credential
WSC	Workforce Skills Certification System

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Today, globalization has made the recruitment of workforce in an organization more crucial. An organization that has a competent workforce is said to have a special asset that can help provide a high return on investment and can guarantee the lifetime of the organization (Curtis & McKenzie, 2001; Quek; Armstrong, 2005; Singh & Singh, 2008). In recruiting professionals in the 21st century, employers prefer to hire fresh graduates as they are the group of candidate that is expected to have potentials to help the organization produce fresh ideas and new techniques in enduring changes in globalization (ACNielsen, 2000).

At present, the number of graduates that exceed the number of job vacancies available each year seems to be favourable to employers (Raybould & Sheedy, 2005). This is because they are said to have flexibility in choosing quality graduates that can meet their demand to fill professional positions in their organization. However, despite the abundance of graduates, most of them have low level of work readiness (Quek, 2005). Hence, while employers find it difficult to hire potential employees (Raybould & Sheedy, 2005), many graduates fail to be employed. For those who did get a job, their work performances are not encouraging and have led them to lose their jobs (Zhiwen & Van der Heijden, 2008). A special committee named The Committee to Study, Review and Make Recommendations Concerning the Development and Direction of Higher Education was commissioned by the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia to study graduate employability. The study indicates that most of the graduates did not meet the requirement of employers.

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