

7th International Economics & Business Management Conference, 5th & 6th October 2015

Perception of Employers and Educators in Accounting Education

Inaliah Mohd Ali^{a*}, Khairunnisak Kamarudin^a, Nur Adila Suriani^a, Nur Zulaikha Saad,
Zati ‘Arifah M Afandi^a

^aUniversiti Tenaga Nasional, Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah Campus, 26700 Muadzam Shah, Pahang

Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the perception of employers and educators on the importance of knowledge taught in higher education and soft skills embedded to the accounting students. The sample consists of 127 educators and 95 employers in accounting and finance related field. The respondents agreed on different value to the employability knowledge and skills of the accounting graduates. Employers place higher value for taxation rather than auditing and services which perceived essential by educators. There is significant difference between employers and educators on importance of the graduate skills. The employers' response that graduates should learn at a faster pace in accounting career. Meanwhile, the educators believed that there is too much reliance on memorization in accounting education. Overall, the highest three skill requirements to accounting graduates are written communication, continuous learning and decision making skills.

© 2016 The Authors. Published by Elsevier B.V. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Peer-reviewed under responsibility of Universiti Tenaga Nasional

Keywords: Employers; Educators; Accounting education; Knowledge; Soft skills.

1. Introduction

Embedding imperative skills despite of accounting knowledge gained through the learning process in higher education institution are essential to be competitive in the rising global challenge of unemployment. Global unemployment is determined to climb in the year 2014, with more than 200million people without work across the world (World Economic Forum, 2014). High levels of joblessness have cost macroeconomic impacts, weaken effective demand in the economy, decreasing economic growth and wasting productive potential. In a climate of increasing unemployment and aggressive competition, graduates should develop the skills earlier rather only in the

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +60-9-4552020; fax: +60-9-4552007.

E-mail address: inaliah@uniten.edu.my

final years in university. Recent study by Ernst & Young researchers for employability uncovered that tendency towards lack of courage, an inability to manage time and low flexibility among the students (Big4, 2013).

Malaysia also through the Strategic Reform initiative (SRI) focuses on enhancing and addressing the human capital capabilities. The policy area commences two approaches to develop a workforce that is sufficiently skilled to fulfil the needs of a high-income nation (ETP, 2013). These measures comprise upskilling National Key Economic Areas (NKEA)-specific manpower and provider the training programmes. Among the mission of the Ministry of Education is to provide quality graduates with added value of soft skills to support the current market demands. This study aims to investigate the perception difference of soft skills in accounting education from the perspective of Malaysia accounting employers and educators. Investigating and bringing this gap are important to reform accounting education. Gabbin (2002) points that accounting education has many criticism and undeveloped because the failure of curriculum in accounting education which is able to plant the seed of success amongst the student.

The issues of the changing roles of accountants have been wide spread many researchers in many countries such as Australia, United Kingdom, United States and Germany (Hancock, Howieson, Kavanagh, Kent, Tempone and Segal, 2009; Jones and Abraham, 2007; Dillon and Kruck, 2004; Grenstein-Prosch and McKee, 2004; Mohammad and Lashine, 2003) and other developing countries (Mgaya and Kitindi, 2008; Chang and Hwang, 2003). In addition, corporate accounting scandals that happened in recent years have proved that some skills and attributes, such as ethics and honesty, and awareness of responsibilities are very important. Professional knowledge alone is not sufficient and is unable to fill the gap emerging from the absence of these attributes.

Feedback from various employers in Malaysia had pointed invariably to the deficiencies of tertiary education in training students; generic competencies to meet the needs of the workplace that resulted in unemployment among graduates (Nazaria, 2003; Quek, 2000). It was reported that many fresh graduates in Malaysia lacked of skills, abilities and attributes for work performance, thus were unable to meet the expectations of the corporate sector (New Straits Times, 1998) and graduates are too choosy and lack of confidence remain unemployed (The Sun, 2015). As a result, a relatively high volume (26%) of graduates remained unemployed six months after their convocation (Ministry of Higher Education, 2013).

Therefore, this study aims to examine the needed soft skills for accounting education as perceived by employers and educators in Malaysia. Hence, the two research objectives are stated as follows:

- to assess the consensus between employers and educators about the importance of knowledge base and skills development in accounting education.
- to examine significant difference in the perceptions of knowledge and generic skills to be incorporated in accounting education among employers and educators.

If the perceptions and importance of knowledge and skills are indifferent place of value between the two big interest groups, some way forward have to be made available other than programmes that currently offered. For example, currently the industries offer internship placement for a few months in companies to prepare the students with better skills before they graduates. Therefore, in order to synergize the role of educators and employers, some mechanisms have to be arranged especially if the perception between the two groups are varied.

2. Employers and Educators

Many studies suggested that the gap between employers and graduates' attributes (Archer & Davison, 2008; Albrecht and Sack, 2002; Bowden and Masters, 1993). The interest groups for employability of accounting graduates include employers, educators, graduates and students in accounting field. Previous studies have indicated different perceptions of employers and the other interest groups (for e.g. Bhanugopan & Fish, 2009). Present employers are looking for graduates not only developed decent knowledge, but also possess good professional and skills. Employer's demanded highly qualified and skilled job applications. Wheeler (2001) stated that many of the challenges facing accounting profession involve personal characteristics of accountants. Therefore, reforming accounting education is crucial to accelerate developing better accountants. This reality forces higher institution to in be in line with the global business demands for graduate's future careers and also expected to provide better equipped graduates to the market. Thus, this study aims to investigate consensus between employers and educators in producing human capital for accounting field.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/979823>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/979823>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)