



# Recruitment Pattern Graduates from Malaysian Technical University

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**Abstract:** Recruitment is a process of identifying individuals who have the potential to create a quality staff that will ensure the achievement of a company's goals and mission. Many employers are interested in recruiting capable graduates. However, there are still employers who do not offer a salary equivalent to the student's qualifications. Accordingly, this study aims to determine the recruitment pattern for Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) graduates from 2015 until 2020. It identifies graduates of UTHM, a public technical university who receive salaries equivalent to their qualifications at the Diploma level. It also aims to identify employers who consistently hire UTHM graduates from the designated years. This empirical study analyzed raw data from the Graduate Tracer Study online system administered by the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia. The respondents consisted of 1302 diploma graduates at UTHM. The results of the study show that only 32% of graduates receive a salary commensurate with their diploma qualification. This shows a high mismatch between the job salaries and qualifications of graduates. Further results also found that there are 43 companies consistently recruiting UTHM Diploma Graduates from 2015 to 2020. Attentively, JST Connector (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd is the most consistent company in recruiting UTHM Diploma graduates with a total of 15 employees in that period.

**Keywords:** Graduate tracer study, pattern graduate recruitment, graduate qualification, job salary

## 1. Introduction

Recruiting and selecting quality employees is to meet the standard requirements of a company. Recruitment practices are related to the number of qualified applicants for an organisation's position (Lievens & Chapman, 2019). Large organizations often hire internal recruiters whose primary focus is to recruit and select qualified candidates for a required position. Recruitment practice is the process of identifying potential individuals to achieve the vision and mission of an organization (Gusdorf, 2008). It is important for employers in selecting quality employees. The selection of employees carefully and following established procedures can provide justice to all parties. In the hiring process, every organization emphasizes time and cost factors. If necessary, employers wish for the shortest possible time and at the lowest possible cost to achieve the highest possible level of efficiency (Grabara et al., 2016). The best recruitment and selection system can minimize discrimination and allow employers to make the right employee selection decisions. Recruiting employees with the level of employability skills is a complex process and aims to create staff who will ensure the achievement of a company's goals and mission (Lajcin et al., 2012).

Employers demand more from potential candidates and graduates who fit their company in terms of skills, abilities, and attitudes. The continued strong demand for graduates will depend on high intellectual quality, but more importantly, they have positive communication skills and work attitudes. Many employers are also looking for flexible employees who can survive in the face of change or adversity. Many employers emphasize their interest in the whole of what the individual has to offer, not just their qualifications or expertise (Pollard *et. al*, 2015). Employer recruitment strategies

often balance fresh graduates with several years of experience and hire more experienced employees. In addition, employers are increasingly interested in recruiting capable fresh graduates (Pollard *et. al*, 2015). According to Grabara et al. (2016), there are passive and active recruitment methods for an organization to recruit new employees. Passive recruitment methods include a re-examination of the CV of candidates who participated in the recruitment process earlier. Active recruitment methods include newspaper advertisements, recruitment agency websites, or social media. These advertisements include the employer's expectations of the applicant's profile.

Human capital development is crucial for national economic development. Students go through various human capital development processes while studying at Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL). The university is one of the producers of human resources that can fill positions in the organization or company. The aim is to boost the level of marketing of IHL graduates. The labour status and employment of graduates are a guarantee of their survival, have been filling various positions in a company (Ahmad et al., 2011). Many improvements ensure that graduates have employability following the desires of employers. Yet, many complaints from employers regarding the weaknesses of graduates' employability (Ismail, 2012). A statistical report from the Department of Statistics Malaysia (2019) found that the number of unemployed graduates in 2018 was 162.0 thousand people, an increase of 4.6 % from 2017 of 154.9 thousand people (Jabatan Perangkaan Malaysia, 2019).

Employers expect graduates to possess a range of employability skills. According to Rowe and Zegwaard (2017), employability is a skill required by graduates to get a job and is crucial to the industry. Examples are career-oriented knowledge, skills, attitudes, personalities, and behaviours (Clarke, 2017). Nevertheless, employers argue that fresh graduates lack these employability skills (Lowden et al., 2011). In addition, employees with fresh graduates are considered less experienced because they never worked before. The study by Lisa et al. (2012) found that low levels of self-awareness have increased graduates' probability of choosing the wrong job. This issue has resulted in there being still employers who do not offer salaries equivalent to student qualification. In this regard, this study aims to identify UTHM Diploma graduates who earn a salary equivalent to their qualification and employers who consistently hire UTHM Diploma Graduates.

## 1.1 MoHE Graduate Tracer Study

The Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) has developed an online system to discover the employment status after graduation. The system's so-called Graduate Tracer Study (Sistem Kajian Pengesanan Graduan, SKPG) must be completed by graduates before their convocation session begins. The system can be reached through the website <https://great.mohe.gov.my>.

Graduate data collection in this system consists of two (2) categories, namely: 1) SKPG1 where data of PhD level graduates, masters, postgraduate diploma/certificate, first degree, advanced diploma, diploma, certificate, and professional is collected; 2) SKPG TVET for graduate TVET institutions which stands for Technical and Vocational Education and Training is collected. Furthermore, graduates could update their latest employment status up to the end of February of the following year using the SKPG2.0 system. In addition, this system also obtains the views of graduates regarding the study programs, facilities, and services of their respective higher education institutions (Kementerian Pengajian Tinggi, 2021).

Through these SKPG systems, the graduate tracer data can be reported using descriptive analysis for future references by providing more comprehensive information and a broad perspective on the marketability of graduates. The reports are Graduate demographics; Graduate employment status; Graduate employment information; Graduates who continue their studies; Unemployed graduates; Focus group (self-employed/disabled/Indigenous people); The overall marketability trend of graduates; Graduate employability trends (focus on the first degree and diploma level); Graduate monthly income trends (Kementerian Pengajian Tinggi, 2021).

## 2. Methodology

This study embarked on a quantitative research methodology using a descriptive research design as shown in Fig. 1. The data was obtained from SKPG the Graduate Tracer Study, a survey administered by the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia to determine graduate employment status (Kementerian Pengajian Tinggi, 2021) which provides information that can describe the scenario and pattern of graduates' employability. This survey was conducted online by using a questionnaire to all graduates in Malaysia. The respondents of this study were selected among diploma graduates from UTHM between 2015-2020 and found a total of 1302 graduates. The data captured from the survey were analysed using descriptive analysis i.e., frequency and percentage.

This study was conducted through several procedures to obtain accurate findings and reliability as a reference to all stakeholders. These procedures start by gaining the SKPG data from the UTHM alumni centre before identifying related data from the SKPG. Next is the cleaning and coding of these data. Then the data is organized, arranged, and sorted using datasheets. The last procedure is conducting data analysis and conclusions.

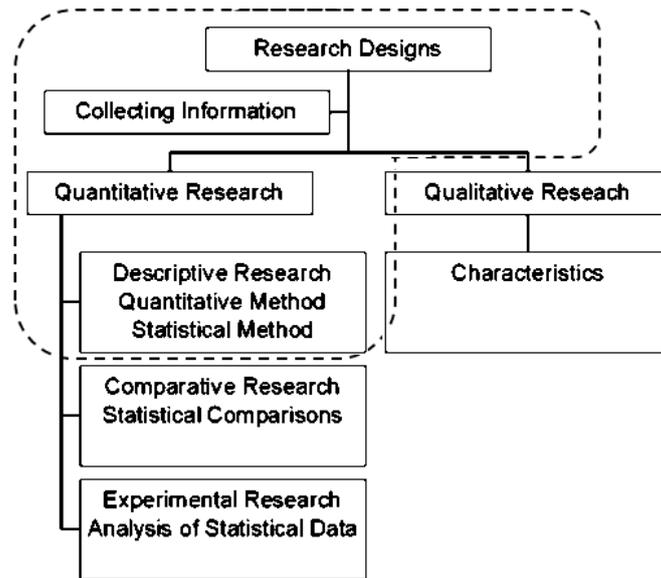


Fig. 1 - Descriptive research design (Harper, 2015)

Diploma studies offered at UTHM are under the field of Engineering, Science and Technology which include the Diploma in Civil Engineering, Diploma in Electrical Engineering, Diploma in Mechanical Engineering, Diploma in Applied Science, Diploma in Chemical Engineering Technology, Diploma in Civil Engineering Technology, Diploma in Electrical Engineering Technology, Diploma in Information Technology and Diploma in Mechanical Engineering Technology. These fields of study accommodate most of the occupations in Malaysia, and there are currently various types of jobs available. But not all graduates have the opportunity to work or get a job following the field of study in which they specialize. But then again, according to Kementerian Pengajian Tinggi (2021) - MoHE, in SKPG system, a working graduate is a graduate who works at least one hour in the reference week for salary, profit, or family profit (employee, as an employer, self-employed or unpaid family worker) regardless of graduates’ specialization.

### 3. Results and Discussion

Fig. 2 illustrates that UTHM graduates do not receive a salary equivalent to a diploma qualification for the years 2015 to 2020. The Diploma in Applied Science program showed a huge gap between 17 per cent of graduates who get a salary equivalent to a diploma and 83 per cent of graduates who get a salary not equivalent to a diploma. Followed by Diploma in Information Technology with 23 per cent to 77 per cent respectively, and Diploma in Mechanical Engineering with 28 per cent and 72 per cent among those graduates with and without an equivalent salary to their qualification.

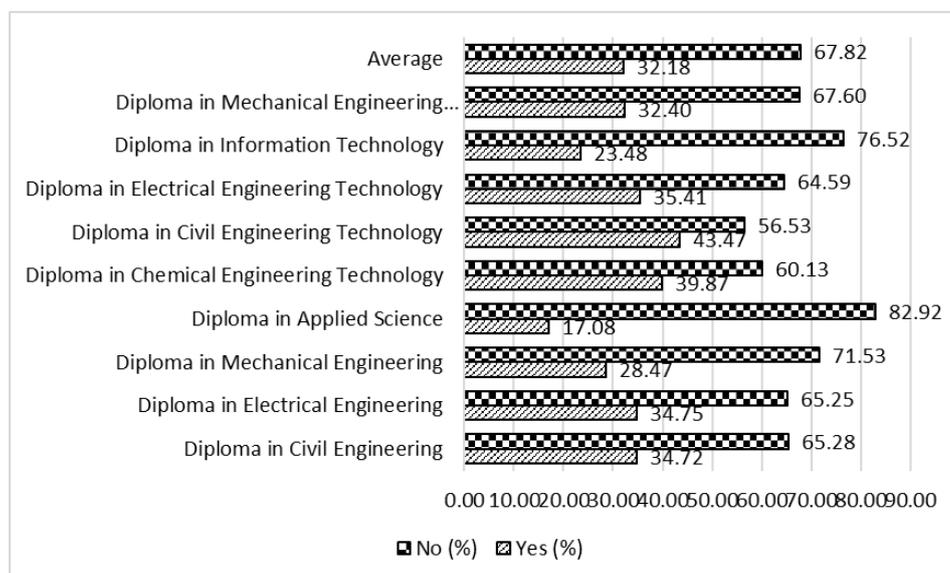


Fig. 2 - UTHM graduates who earn a salary equivalent to their Diploma qualification

The results of this study show that it is consistent with the existing situation as stated by the Central Bank of Malaysia report in Murugasu (2018) that the trend of monthly starting salary for most graduates has been declining since 2010. The results of the research reported by Khazanah Research Institute (2018) found that many diploma graduates expect a salary of RM2,000 per month. Also, Ismail (2012) submits that this starting salary is for new graduates. Other findings from Ang et al. (2003) show that foreign workers receive smaller salaries than local salaries even though their workloads are the same, which is at par with the new graduates. The Ministry of Human Resources (2016) found that the salary rate offered for skills-based jobs was less commensurate with the qualifications possessed.

As for the results in Table 1 show that 43 companies dependably hire UTHM Diploma Graduates from 2015 to 2020 in various fields of studies, namely JST Connector (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd, and Flextronics (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd., Sinkwang Plastic Industries Sdn Bhd, ASM Technology Malaysia Sdn Bhd, Baracho Tech & Services Sdn Bhd, CS Dynamic Specialty Cable Sdn Bhd, Cekap Technical Services Sdn Bhd, Euro Facade Tech Export Sdn Bhd, Evergreen Fibreboard Berhad, Foraypack Industry Sdn Bhd, Foxconn Technology Malaysia Sdn. Bhd., Global View Engineering Sdn.Bhd, GP Batteries (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd., Hartalega Ngc Sdn. Bhd., HI-Manufacturing Industries Sdn Bhd, HP Manufacturing Malaysia, Honda Malaysia Sdn. Bhd., Inari Technology Sdn Bhd, Infineon Technologies, Infinite M&E Sdn Bhd, Intel Technology Sdn. Bhd., Iswarabena Sdn Bhd, Intretech (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd, Kiswire Cord Sdn. Bhd., Kossan Rubber Industries Bhd, Likom Cms Sdn Bhd, Maxim Textile Technology Sdn. Bhd., Panasonic System Networks Malaysia Sdn Bhd, Paysys (M) Sdn.Bhd, Recron (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd, Petronas ICT Sdn Bhd, Quickcon Specialists (M) Sdn. Bhd., Roadcare (M) Sdn. Bhd, Rohm-Wako Electronics (M) Sdn Bhd, Samsung Sdi Energy Malaysia Sdn. Bhd, Sharp Manufacturing Corporation (M) Sdn. Bhd., Sena Traffic System Sdn Bhd, Sime Darby Plantation Berhad, Sony EMCS (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd., Yokogawa Industrial Safety System Sdn Bhd, Yap Engineering & Trading (M) Sdn Bhd, Wuhan City Environment Protection Co Ltd, and Top Glove Sdn Bhd. These companies are mostly multinational and SME's (small and medium enterprises) companies located throughout Malaysia.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic situation, to some extent has impacted companies to continue their operations, causing many other companies, especially those with small and medium enterprises (SMEs), to close down. Data analysis from McLeish (2002) regarding the primary provider of jobs for graduates shows the local private sector and private multinationals contributed as much as 53.8 per cent and 16.4 per cent of employees to graduates. However, this situation does not directly affect the marketability of local graduates.

**Table 1 - Employers who consistently hire UTHM Diploma Graduates (2015-2020)**

No	Company	Program	Quantity of Employees
1	Jst Connector (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Mechanical Engineering	12
		Diploma in Electrical Engineering	3
2	Flextronics (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd.	Diploma in Mechanical Engineering	2
		Diploma in Mechanical Engineering Technology	1
		Diploma in Information Technology	1
		Diploma in Electrical Engineering	3
3	Sinkwang Plastic Industries Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Electrical Engineering	2
		Diploma in Mechanical Engineering	1
		Diploma in Mechanical Engineering Technology	1
4	ASM Technology Malaysia Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Mechanical Engineering	2
		Diploma in Information Technology	2
		Diploma in Applied Science	1
5	Baracho Tech & Services Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Electrical Engineering	2
		Diploma in Information Technology	2
6	Cs Dynamic Specialty Cable Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Electrical Engineering Technology	3
7	Cekap Technical Services Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Electrical Engineering	3
8	Euro Facade Tech Export Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Mechanical Engineering Technology	3
9	Evergreen Fibreboard Berhad	Diploma in Electrical Engineering	2
		Diploma in Mechanical Engineering	1
10	Foraypack Industry Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Electrical Engineering Technology	3
		Diploma in Electrical Engineering	1
11	Foxconn Technology Malaysia Sdn. Bhd.	Diploma in Mechanical Engineering	2
		Diploma in Information Technology	1
12	Global-View Engineering Sdn.Bhd	Diploma in Information Technology	3
13	Gp Batteries (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd.	Diploma in Electrical Engineering Technology	3
14	Hartalega Ngc Sdn. Bhd.	Diploma in Mechanical Engineering	2
		Diploma in Chemical Engineering Technology	2

	Diploma in Electrical Engineering	1	
15	HI-Manufacturing Industries Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Civil Engineering Technology	2
		Diploma in Civil Engineering	2
16	Hp Manufacturing Malaysia	Diploma in Mechanical Engineering Technology	2
		Diploma in Electrical Engineering	1
17	Honda Malaysia Sdn. Bhd.	Diploma in Mechanical Engineering	2
		Diploma in Electrical Engineering	1
18	Inari Technology Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Chemical Engineering Technology	1
		Diploma in Electrical Engineering Technology	2
19	Infineon Technologies	Diploma in Information Technology	1
		Diploma in Mechanical Engineering Technology	2
20	Infinite M&E Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Electrical Engineering	1
		Diploma in Mechanical Engineering Technology	2
		Diploma in Mechanical Engineering	1
21	Intel Technology Sdn. Bhd	Diploma in Electrical Engineering	3
22	Iswarabena Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Civil Engineering	3
		Diploma in Electrical Engineering	1
23	Intrettech (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Information Technology	2
		Diploma in Civil Engineering	1
24	Kiswire Cord Sdn. Bhd.	Diploma in Electrical Engineering	2
		Diploma in Electrical Engineering Technology	1
		Diploma in Information Technology	1
25	Kossan Rubber Industries Bhd	Diploma in Electrical Engineering Technology	3
26	Likom Cms Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Electrical Engineering	1
		Diploma in Electrical Engineering Technology	2
27	Maxim Textile Technology Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Chemical Engineering Technology	3
		Diploma in Information Technology	1
28	Panasonic System Networks Malaysia Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Mechanical Engineering Technology	2
		Diploma in Electrical Engineering Technology	2
29	Paysys (M) Sdn.Bhd	Diploma in Civil Engineering	2
		Diploma in Information Technology	1
30	Recron (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Chemical Engineering Technology	2
		Diploma in Electrical Engineering	1
		Diploma in Mechanical Engineering	1
31	Petronas ICT Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Information Technology	4
32	Quickcon Specialists (M) Sdn. Bhd.	Diploma in Civil Engineering	3
33	Roadcare (M) Sdn. Bhd	Diploma in Civil Engineering	3
34	Rohm-Wako Electronics (M) Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Electrical Engineering	2
		Diploma in Mechanical Engineering Technology	1
35	Samsung Sdi Energy Malaysia Sdn. Bhd	Diploma in Mechanical Engineering	1
		Diploma in Electrical Engineering	3
36	Sharp Manufacturing Corporation (M) Sdn. Bhd.	Diploma in Electrical Engineering	3
		Diploma in Mechanical Engineering Technology	1
37	Sena Traffic System Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Information Technology	2
		Diploma in Electrical Engineering	1
38	Sime Darby Plantation Berhad	Diploma in Mechanical Engineering	3
		Diploma in Electrical Engineering	1
39	Sony Emcs(Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd.	Diploma in Mechanical Engineering Technology	3
		Diploma in Electrical Engineering	2
40	Yokogawa Industrial Safety System Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Electrical Engineering	3
		Diploma in Electrical Engineering Technology	1
41	Yap Engineering & Trading (M) Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Electrical Engineering	2
		Diploma in Electrical Engineering Technology	1
42	Wuhan City Env. Protection Co Ltd	Diploma in Mechanical Engineering Technology	3
43	Top Glove Sdn Bhd	Diploma in Information Technology	1
		Diploma in Mechanical Engineering	2
		Diploma in Chemical Engineering Technology	2

The field of the industry requires human resources that are skilled and competitive. Human capital is an important investment for the development of a country and is at the core of innovation and a productive high-income economy (Kementerian Pengajian Tinggi, 2021). Consequently, in line with developments in rapid globalization, there is a growing demand for human resources that possess the knowledge and skills with the right attributes required by the current job market (Row & Zegwaard, 2017; Clarke, 2017). Employees are a crucial asset to an organization. Productivity and profitability are influenced by the quality of the employees in the organization. Every employer is responsible for the quality of its employees (Lisa et al., 2019). Employability is the skill to get a job and successfully develop a career in an organization (Ang et al., 2003). Thus, Diploma graduates have successfully applied the employability they have to obtain employment. Remarkably, this study found that JST Connector (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd is the most consistent company in recruiting UTHM Diploma graduates with total recruitment of 15 employees.

#### 4. Conclusion

Along with the demands of progress in the 21st century, industries need to improve the quality of individual employability. Employers in the industrial sector argue that job skills are essential, and their employees must have the skills to make them proficient. Employers are responsible for ensuring that employees can increase their employability to improve the quality of productivity in line with the demands of the industry in this era of globalization. In conclusion, the finding of this research concluded that these recruitment patterns for the years 2015 to 2020 show a significant difference between the diploma field of study and the salary earned according to the qualification by specified companies. Thus, the results of this study are expected to assist all stakeholders in formulating development policies and strategies for the more complete and holistic human capital of fresh graduates, especially diploma students. Further research will look at graduate attributes to meet the needs of the industry from various fields.

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