The Effectiveness of a Job Search Skills Training Program on the Job Readiness of Undergraduate Malaysian Students Enrolled at Western Michigan University

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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A JOB SEARCH SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAM ON THE JOB READINESS OF UNDERGRADUATE MALAYSIAN STUDENTS ENROLLED AT WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

by

Ibrahim bin Hashim

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of The Graduate College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology

Western Michigan University Kalamazoo, Michigan June 1992

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The relevant body of research and literature applicable to this area emphasized the importance of job readiness among college students. Job seeking skills program can be rendered more effective and efficient by using a combination of several behavioral procedures.

The primary purpose of the study was to examine the effectiveness of a job search skills training program on the job readiness of the undergraduate sponsored Malaysian students enrolled at Western Michigan University. Specifically the problem centered on the ability of the treatment program to help Malaysian students to become clearer and to increase their understanding about the importance of self-awareness, job analysis and interview preparation on job readiness.

The sample consisted of 98 subjects. The subjects were randomly assigned to one of two groups: (1) job search training group that served as an experimental group, or (2) a no treatment group that served as a control group. The Job Search Readiness Instrument (JSRI) (Schlossman, 1977) was used to collect post-test data. The instrument consists of three important components of job readiness: (1) self-awareness, (2) job analysis, and (3) interview preparation. Besides
this instrument, the subjects also responded to the demographic questionnaire and at the end of the training workshop, members of the experimental group were asked to fill out the workshop evaluation questionnaire.

The \( t \) test for two independent samples was used to determine whether the criterion means for the experimental group and control differed significantly. The results of this investigation indicated that the training workshop for the experimental group was effective in providing those students with job readiness skills. Therefore, the findings strongly support that undergraduate students can significantly increase their job readiness scores by being systematically trained with a job search skills training program. The results of this investigation clearly established the need for replication of the research in different settings such as Malaysian students in local universities and in other countries. It is important to expand the training program so its effect on different populations could be compared and evaluated.
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The effectiveness of a job search skills training program on the job readiness of undergraduate Malaysian students enrolled at Western Michigan University

Hashim, Ibrahim bin, Ed.D.

Western Michigan University, 1992

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Ibrahim bin Hashim
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Background and Need for the Study

In 1971 the Malaysian government formulated and launched a national policy known as the "New Economic Policy" which sought to remedy the distinct imbalances in various economic areas such as income, employment and ownership among the major races in Malaysia: the Bumiputera (the indigenous people), the Chinese and the Indian (Malaysia, 1971).

Since then, the Malaysian government has been intensifying its efforts to offer better educational opportunities to educationally disadvantaged youth by sending them overseas for their tertiary education. These selected students are chosen based on their performance on the Malaysian Certificate of Examination which must be taken at the end of their secondary school education. The purpose of this program is to meet the national manpower requirements of the country. Moreover, it is also a part of an overall plan of the policy which has two major goals: (1) to eradicate poverty, and (2) to restructure Malaysian society.

As stated in the Sixth Malaysia Plan report (Malaysia, 1991), between 1986 to 1990, there were about 53,000 graduates at the degree level produced by local institutions and about 43,000 were pursuing degree level courses overseas in such
places as the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada. The Malays, who form the majority of the Bumiputeras, are considered backward economically. Therefore, the majority of the recipients for further studies from the government and its sponsoring agencies are the Bumiputeras. At the beginning of this program, those students who were selected to further their studies in various colleges in the United States started their first degree program in their freshmen year. However, since 1985, all sponsored students have undergone two years of study known as the "American Associate Degree Program" in various Malaysian government institutions. They then continue their third and fourth year of study in the United States. According to the Principal Development Officer, Majlis Amanah Rakjat (MARA) office in the United States, the majority of the Bumiputera students who come to the U.S possess sufficient academic and language skills for undertaking their first degree program and are sponsored either by the government or government agencies. Malaysian Students Departments were established at various locations to look after the interests and welfare of these students in particular, and Malaysian students in general (Wan Harun, 1992).

In terms of employment opportunity after graduation, generally these students have been told that a university degree serves as a launching pad to acquisition of the material good life. Unfortunately, since 1981, there has been a slack in Malaysian economic growth which has affected employment growth, resulting in increasing unemployment. This is clearly stated in Fifth Malaysia Plan report (Malaysia, 1986) and in view of the slower growth of the economy, the manpower
development efforts during this period were directed towards increasing the productivity of the workforce. The demand on a productive and technically oriented workforce is expected to be fulfilled through the upgrading of skills, particularly managerial, scientific and technical skills. Furthermore, greater efforts were made to increase the supply of trained and skilled manpower at all levels to ensure that they are effectively allocated to meet the manpower needs of the economy.

The difficult experiences of graduates of higher education in obtaining satisfactory employment in the 80s have attracted national interest. Highly deserved attention and concern have been focused principally upon the employment and underemployment of these graduates. Each year thousands of young people face the frustrating problem of not being able to secure employment after graduation. Each year the number of university graduates who have been disappointed and frustrated by a slim, sometimes nonexistent job market increases. Upon graduation these graduates soon discover that their degrees are no "passport" to getting a job and that they are in fierce competition with hundreds of others for a few available job opportunities. Moreover, the graduates have seen that while they have to compete fiercely in their occupational areas, other areas are open and in great need of qualified college graduates.

Some of the more obvious elements that contribute to the employment problem for these, the most highly trained of Malaysian youth, are the recently depressed economy, the dwindling demand for professional and postsecondary graduates, and the superabundant numbers entering the labor market. In the 80s
the supply of college graduates had outrun the demand for their services. Salih and Ling (1987) reported:

estimation of the extent of graduate unemployment range from 46,000 (MIER's estimate) to 30,000 (Ministry of Labor) to 13,000 (Department of National Unity). Unemployed graduates who held scholarships totaled 3,700 (Public Service Department and Ministry of Education) as of September 1987. These figures will increase with the addition of new graduates from the local universities and from overseas flooding the already saturated graduate labor market annually. (p.8)

Another interesting point made by the Malaysian Institute of Economic Research (MIER) reported in a local newspaper is that:

a large number of the registrants now were degree and diploma holders in liberal arts and pure sciences, as opposed to high number of graduates with professional qualifications, registering with the scheme known as National Clearing House for Graduates and Skilled Employment ("Fewer Jobless Grads," 1990).

These data on the supply-demand picture will permit employers the opportunity to be selective in choosing employees. The available openings will go to the best qualified candidates. This is the beginning of a new era in the recruitment process. In other words, a university graduate has no longer assured a job and he or she will have to compete for positions. Therefore, the candidates must realize that preparation and practice are the keys in the job hunting strategy.

Malaysian employers have been reporting negative remarks in newspapers that many university graduates are not prepared for job interviews and that the quality of graduates has dropped ("Enam Sebab Punca Siswa Tak Bermutu," 1990; "Punca Gagal Dapat Kerja," 1990; "Siswa Kini Mengecewakan," 1990; "Towards Producing Marketable Grads," 1990). It seems that graduates have
problems when responding to interview questions and cannot communicate effectively. With jobs difficult to obtain and becoming more competitive, university students must be taught how to prepare for job interviews and to be ready to compete for jobs.

Students are critically questioning the investment of their time, money and effort in a college education when they are unable to understand or find the correlation between such education and the work world. They also need to be aware that an important aim of higher education is the development of the whole individual which implies something beyond the classroom. It means education for life, and a very real part of life is earning a living.

They need a well-planned program to stimulate their career development plan, to acquaint them with the career options available to them, and to counsel them in self-assessment and adaptability to the world of work (Herrick, 1976). Thus, the career and placement program can be a significant element in higher education. It is the responsibility of the organizers of this program, through education, counseling, guidance and advisement, to help students become aware of their own potential and how that potential may be used productively in the world of work. The placement office, through career counseling and job search skills workshops, supplying occupational information, helping the student secure part-time employment or a practicum experience, and through the employer campus interview program, can assist students to put their classroom learning into a realistic perspective (Stephens, 1970).
If colleges and universities are to help students in the career development process, the placement office must focus on the self-development, career development, and specific job hunting skills and growth of the students themselves. The major objectives of the office would be assisting students to evaluate themselves, to determine their career objectives as well as planning a systematic career search (Simpson & Harwood, 1973).

There is a need to increase education’s relevance to later life, to make educators aware of a tightening economic situation, and contribute to the total development of the student. Many sponsors begin to realize that they must see themselves as advocates for the job-hunters (students), with the students as the primary focus of consideration. Once this change in role and perspective is accepted, career development officers must have proper training so that they can train their students in basic skills and to be effective, independent job-hunters and job-changers for the remainder of their working lives.

Statement of the Problem

The current problem appears to have been caused in large part by two primary factors: (1) university students suffer from a general lack of knowledge about job search skills, and (2) these students have an acute lack of knowledge about career planning processes.

What must be found is the means to make these graduates more aware of the work world, sensitive to employers’ perspectives, and more competitive in the
employment marketplace. As mentioned earlier the number of graduates finding themselves unemployed has been increasing at an alarming rate in the past few years. Many have become aware that career counseling and placement programs in various sponsoring agencies are badly in need of modification and revision.

A career counseling program's effectiveness is directly related to its ability to recognize and keep up with new trends in counseling, new guidance techniques, motivational approaches, and new types of occupational classification in terms of psychologically meaningful dimensions (Tolbert, 1974). Based on this premise, career guidance programs should be given priority in order to help those graduates secure employment. Recently there was a statement made by the Chief Secretary General of Malaysia ("Kaunseling Dalam Pengurusan Organisasi," 1991) that guidance counseling in the 90's must move in new directions and use a variety of procedures to increase productivity and quality of government agencies as well as the corporate sector. At this point, many sponsors do not provide proper guidance services because they do not have well trained officers and therefore are not aware such programs can offer significant help. The amount of help students feel they need with regard to career planning and job readiness is in sharp contrast to what they receive from those sponsors. For example, sponsors offer little or no sequencing in the training of job-seeking skills. Many sponsors or employers ignore the importance of such training and, moreover, there seems to be a general lack of knowledge among employers as to the exact or precise meaning of "job-readiness or job seeking skills" training.
A review of available literature related to current hiring practices, job preparation and various other job-seeking skills revealed several important facets about job readiness. First, most of the literature provides new concepts and strategies pertaining to job hunting and career development. Second, most were concerned primarily with the "do's" and "don’t's" for job applicants. Third, employers and personnel interviewers were using systematic evaluation during the interview or when making hiring decisions, and generally were able to explain or describe why one individual was selected over another. Finally, career counselors seemed to have a general understanding with regard to aspects of program and job preparation (Allen, 1990; Chapman, 1988; Cohen, 1983; Drake, 1991; Krannich, 1991; Rust, 1990; Shingleton, 1990).

This research study attempts to address the importance and the effectiveness of job-seeking skills. The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of a job-seeking skills workshop and to provide information that would point out ways that will best help students prepare for job searching strategies.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of the study was to examine the immediate effect of the job seeking skills training program on the job readiness of undergraduate Malaysian students enrolled at Western Michigan University. The study also attempted to determine if specific areas measured by the Job Search Readiness Instrument (Schlossman, 1977) differ in the effect of the job seeking skills training
program on job readiness. Specifically, the problem centered on the ability of the treatment (training program) to help undergraduate students become clearer about job hunting process, to increase their self awareness, to increase their understanding of job analysis and to better prepare for job interviews. An experimental group served as a treatment group to help increase the level of job readiness. A control group received no treatment.

Importance of the Study

This study has value in a number of ways. First, it will help students understand job selection procedures and ultimately get the job they want. Second, this study will make the students aware of what personnel agencies are looking for and ultimately develop personal placement programs to find the jobs that fit their individual values, capabilities and needs. Third, this study will highlight the inconsistency between what is perceived, understood and assumed by students and what is required by the employers or hiring agencies in terms of job readiness. These differences and implications could yield material for job readiness training programs.

Limitation of the Study

As is the case in much of the research that has been done in the field of education, a true scientific approach is difficult. Some limitations of the study were:
1. The researcher's active role as a trainer in the job searching skills training workshop. There is a tendency that the personality of the researcher might affect the study. This study assumes that the researcher's direct involvement had no significant effect upon the outcome.

2. The population to be studied was restricted, consisting of Junior and Senior Malaysian students at Western Michigan University. Consequently, the population is more homogeneous than if an equal number of cases were selected at random from other types of institutions. Therefore, the results of the study cannot be generalized to an unlimited population.

3. With regard to the issue of generalizability, any effects of a job readiness training program would be generalizable only to those undergraduate students who have participated in this type of specially designed one day training workshop which focused on three major aspects: (1) self awareness, (2) job analysis, and (3) interview preparation.

Definitions of Terms

The following terms are defined for the purposes of this research.

**Job-seeking skills**: Those skills needed to seek employment successfully in a competitive job market.

**Job Search Readiness Instrument**: The instrument used in this study has 38 items to test the hypothetical questions as mentioned earlier. The instrument consists of three parts: (1) self awareness, (2) job analysis, and (3) interview preparation.
Research Questions

General questions related to the study are:

1. What is the effect of the job seeking skills training program on job readiness of undergraduate Malaysian students at Western Michigan University?

2. Will there be a significant difference in the effect of job readiness in three areas as measured by the Job Search Readiness Instrument (JSRI): self-awareness, job analysis and interview preparation?

Specific research questions are as follows:

1. Will there be a positive change in self-awareness as measured by the self-awareness scale of the JSRI for the experimental group?

2. Will there will be a positive change in the job analysis as measured by the job analysis scale of the JSRI for the experimental group?

3. Will there will be a positive change in the interview preparation as measured by the interview preparation scale of the JSRI for the experimental group?

4. Will there be a positive change in job search readiness as measured by the total score of the JSRI for the experimental group?
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, the career development literature which pertains to job readiness is organized into three related areas in order to provide the background and structure necessary to understand the basis of the study: (1) the importance of career planning and placement services, (2) job search skills training programs, and (3) issues concerning job recruitment practices in Malaysia.

The Importance of Career Planning and Placement Services

Career planning and placement offices play a very significant role in providing services to assist students when they: (a) consider and make proper career selection, (b) review employment opportunities, and (c) prepare them to get ready to compete for jobs. Tolbert (1974) suggested that college students should begin to get involved in career planning and placement activities as early as possible and continue until graduation. Based on this premise most university career planning and placement offices try very hard to "sell" their students by using various resources and strategies.

Brown, Brooks, and Associates (1984) stated that in the Parsonian model there are three broad factors to consider in the choice of a vocation: (1) a clear understanding of self, aptitudes, abilities, interests, ambitions, resources,
limitations and their causes; (2) a knowledge of the requirements and conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities, and prospects in different lines of work; and (3) true reasoning on the relationship between these two factors. The roots of career development theory and practice can be traced to Frank Parsons, who started the Vocation Bureau in 1908 in Boston. This established the first conceptual framework for career decision making and thus became the first guide for career counselors.

Krumboltz, Mitchell, and Jones (1976) viewed job selection as a result of the complex interaction of genetic components, environmental events and conditions, and learning experiences which result in the development of various task approach skills. They state that people select and are selected by occupations, through a mutual process influenced not only by decisions made by individuals, but also by the social forces which affect occupational availability and requirements. Based on this complex interaction between learning experiences and genetic and environmental influences, an individual brings to each new task or problem a set of skills, performance standards and values, work habits, perceptual and cognitive processes, mental sets and emotional responses. In other words, finding the right job is not just based on luck, but it is the result of planning and learning about the job hunting process. Petit (1981) stressed that since today's job market is very competitive, a planned approach to job hunting is very important. Crowther and Wilson (1990) stated "careful preparation is the key to a successful job search, and the necessary skills and knowledge can be acquired through
thoughtful planning and thorough research" (p. 13).

The major question that this research will address is how to account for the individual reaching a state of readiness in seeking a competitive job. Crites (1981) stated that career counseling is more difficult than psychotherapy. This is because career counselors must be prepared to help the individual deal directly with the external reality of the world of work as well as with his or her internal reality. Dunphy (1981) reported that they were surprised to find the changes that have taken place in the previous decade; demands for workers in certain areas have decreased and increased in other areas, specific jobs and job clusters have been changed substantially in content and there has been a growing emphasis on career development education at every level. The Dictionary of Occupational Titles (U.S. Department of Labor, 1977) lists approximately 20,000 separate jobs titles. Each title is unique and classified based on function, field and method.

Due to the increasingly competitive job market, more and more emphasis is being placed on the interview as a means of determining qualifications for a job. According to Cohen and Enthredge (1975), the interview is the single most important factor in bringing together the college graduate and employing organizations. Riggio and Thomson (1987) mentioned that college students are unlikely to have directly relevant experience for the first position after graduation. Therefore, employers must base their hiring decisions about college students on interview performance and other information that indicates their strengths and potentials.
Zunker (1986) pointed out that there are many training programs offered to college students through seminars and minicourses which focus on skill identification such as job-search strategies, interview-skills and resume writing. This is important because of the fact that many college students have never experienced a job interview. However, it is well understood that most employers give significantly more weight to the interviewer's rating during the selection process than references and resumes. Since the employers' decisions are very heavily based upon impressions gained during the interview, there is a great need to provide training programs designed specifically to increase interview skills for college students. Moreover, due to the competitive job market, training programs have been developed by career and placement offices in order to assist students. Most placement offices offer a variety of seminars, workshops and programs to assist college students in planning for a career as well as job hunting skills.

Generally, the training programs involve lectures, discussions, role-playing, videotapes and mock interviews. There are many videotapes on job search skills and the content focuses on the importance of research and how to prepare effectively for the job interview. In other words, the videotapes make the job hunters aware that the interview begins long before it takes place face to face. In fact, it begins with the application form, letter, or the first contact with the recruiter. Wegmann, Chapman, and Johnson (1989) found that the use of a combination
of behavioral procedures and traditional lectures or discussion methods are most effective for job interview-skills training. With regard to interventions for improving job-interview performance, which have been a programming target for some time, a number of studies have evaluated these interventions and programs intended to improve the job-interview performance of college students. All these studies report positive results and suggest the importance of such training programs (Austin & Grant, 1981; Einhorn, 1981; Harrison, 1983). Moreover, the types of training programs and the need for improving interview skills for the college student population has been well documented (Driscoll & Hess, 1974; Forrest & Baumgarten, 1975; Prazak, 1969; Raanan & Lynch, 1974; Shaw, 1973; Walker, 1974).

Cohen (1983) wrote about job hunting skills that students must know in order to succeed in any job interview. This knowledge will enable students to maximize their potential to get the best job that they are capable of handling. He feels very strongly that candidates must know every method of job seeking. He explains how to maintain control of the hiring situation and make students expert interviewees so that they will get the superior job that they want. The objective is to free the candidates from all fear in the future about their ability to get any job for which they are qualified. He said "A job campaign is like business itself. Job hunting is a sales position. Your potential employer is the customer. You are the product. Other candidates who are seeking the same job are your competition" (Cohen, 1983, p. 76).
In other words to be a successful job hunter, the candidates must be able to sell themselves and learn how to satisfy their customer and beat the competition. In fact, he looks at job finding as one of the most important of executive skills.

Cohen (1983) also elaborated on the important ingredients to be a successful job hunter. First, candidates must have a positive mental attitude evidenced through the resume and during the interview. They must demonstrate that they have a lot to offer and have the right qualifications stemming from years of study and experience. In other words, by knowing their strengths and remembering their accomplishments gives the candidates tremendous self-confidence. Second, they must be thoroughly prepared or make it their business to learn as much as possible before the interview. For example, they must know their job goal; know exactly what position they want; know the company they are interviewing with; and know the company’s history, products, financial position and why this employer is seeking their services. With this preparation they will be able to communicate their outstanding qualifications better than their competitors. Third, they must know how to plan a job hunting campaign. Basically any job campaign consists of three phases: (1) the preinterview, (2) the interview, and (3) the post-interview. As stated in the College Placement Council Annual (1991/92) (which has been helping graduates in winning a job interview for more than 30 years) "finding a job doesn't happen. You have to make it happen" (p. 1). Chapman (1988) presented various strategies and techniques specifically designed to help
job hunters "do it their way" so that they will have a full opportunity to put all of their personal creativity into the search and interview process. He stated that the job hunters must establish their "life goal" or direction in order to motivate themselves in job-hunting procedures until they win the right job. Lipman (1983) pointed out that job hunting is a big job, requiring a plan of action and a lot of serious preparation time. He stressed that "proper planning and preparation will shift the odds in your favor. As in all major undertakings, we must plan the work - and work the plan" (Lipman, 1983, p. 13).

Keller, Mayfield, and Piotrowski (1983) explained that since career choice involves a complex interaction between personal goals, career aspirations, and the changing job market, many college students apparently experience ambiguity in choosing majors as well as directions for specific career paths. To help resolve this problem, career planning and placement programs specialists should assist interested students not only in the acquisition of necessary information and skills but with decision-making strategies for effective life-long career development as well. Career planning strategies are particularly important in view of the likelihood that students will experience career decisions, job competition and several career changes throughout their working lives. Keller (1990) also indicated that career-planning and placement programs at the college level are imperative and need to stress self-awareness, personality-job compatibility, basic job-seeking skills, and the importance of practical, hands-on experience.
In Malaysia, job recruitment processes seem to be very formal, especially at the executive or officers level. This level requires a college degree as a minimum qualification. Every candidate has to go through at least five selection procedure steps before the job is offered: (1) fill out an application form, (2) take an aptitude test, (3) be part of a group interview, (4) have an individual interview by middle management, and (5) have an individual interview by top management. In some cases, the candidates also have to go through a short training program. Only those candidates who manage to pass all these steps will be offered a permanent job. This recruitment practice is true for government jobs as well as large firms in the private sector. As mentioned earlier, some employers have made negative remarks in local newspapers regarding these graduates facing several problems during the job recruitment process. Some of these problems include lack of identification of academic and career plans, unrealistic goal setting, and lack of preparation and self-confidence during the interviews.

Many employers have begun to use psychological tests in the selection process to evaluate the candidates' capabilities and limitations. They measure, or attempt to measure, almost everything including intelligence, personality, as well as manual and mental proficiency. Some firms that use various tests in hiring give so much weight to the tests that the hiring decision is determined almost solely by the test results.
Therefore, in Malaysia, more research on the career planning and placement services is urgently needed. The purpose of the current study is twofold: first to identify how college students perceive job readiness, and second to investigate relevant career planning behaviors and specific job searching skills.

Most Malaysian undergraduate students decide on specific careers early in their academic training. This is because they were offered scholarships based on certain major fields of studies required by their sponsoring agencies. Therefore, Branyon (1988) suggested that those students who have to decide their career right at the beginning of their college education should begin to take career orientation and planning courses during their freshmen year. Furthermore, they also need to improve practical job-seeking skills which include resume-writing and job-interviewing strategies prior to their senior year. These basic skills not only foster self-confidence but also make the career selection process a serious undertaking.

Healy (1989) emphasized that regardless of college students' ages and gender, leaders in career development, such as Herr and Cramer, mention that college students always need help in areas such as selecting majors, experiencing self-assessment and analysis, understanding the world of work, making decisions, and accessing work. Among Malaysian students these needs seem to vary significantly across subgroups. However, research has not yet indicated how much variance to expect. Many Malaysian students seem very passive and reluctant to ask colleges to give them direction and access to work-related learning. They also do not take advantage and make use of professional services provided by various
departments on campus such as career planning and placement centers. With the latest announcement and movement made by Malaysian public service officials regarding the importance of guidance counseling, there is likely to be a pressing need for experiential opportunities and information about the content of courses and their utility in career selection ("Kaunseling Dalam Pengurusan Organisasi," 1990).

Summary of Review of Literature

The literature supports the importance of job readiness among college students. Job seeking skills programs can be rendered more effective and efficient by using a combination of several procedures. Presently the level of career and placement services provided by most Malaysian sponsors seems to be inadequate.

There is an apparent need, however, for further general investigation of career development and placement methods for Malaysian students. In fact, there is very little research that has been designed to directly focus on the effects of job search skill training programs or the importance of career and placement services for Malaysian students. The need for research investigating the general effectiveness and efficiency of present career and placement programs is evidenced throughout the literature.

This study was designed to investigate the effectiveness of a specific program on job readiness and hopefully to add further empirical data to this area. The results of this study will provide a useful resource to aid in the development of
university placement programs, especially to assist Malaysian students to be more prepared to compete for jobs.
CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This section is divided into eight areas: population, sample, procedural methodology, research hypotheses, experimental design, instrumentation, treatment, and data analysis.

Population

The population from which the sample was drawn consisted of 120 currently enrolled and sponsored Malaysian undergraduate students at Western Michigan University who sought assistance with their concerns about getting a job in Malaysia after graduation. Sponsored student refers to individuals who have received loans from the Malaysian government or government agencies to study at United States colleges and universities. Under this award, undergraduate students are paid a monthly subsistence allowance, book allowance, registration and tuition fees pertaining to approved courses, annual premium for health insurance, and travel to and from the place of study. Since it will normally take two years to complete their studies, the total loan for each student is about $30,000 U.S. (Wan Harun, 1992). They have to pay back their loan when they secure a permanent job. However, the amount of loan they have to pay will be conditional--based upon their cumulative grade point average (CGPA). The higher their
CGPA the more discount they will receive for their study loan. This is the latest study loan scheme policy implemented by the Malaysian government to motivate sponsored students to excel in their studies. A comprehensive list of Malaysian undergraduate students at Western Michigan University was available at the International Student Office and the Malaysian Student Organization directory. The characteristics of the subjects in terms of their gender are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Sponsored Malaysian Undergraduate Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample

Undergraduate Malaysian students enrolled in the 1992 Winter Semester at Western Michigan University were used as subjects. One hundred students were randomly (using a table of random numbers) chosen to participate in this study. Fifty of them were randomly assigned to be in the experimental group and another 48 were in the control group (two students chose not to participate in this study). The subjects were from various fields of study and their ages ranged
between 20 and 25. A total of 98 students participated in this study. Table 2 describes the sample by group and gender.

Table 2
Sample by Group and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Methodology

Since there were 50 subjects in the experimental group, they were divided equally into two groups. Each group experienced the same intensive workshop from 9 a.m to 5 p.m. on two separate days. The reason for the two groups was to assure the effectiveness and convenience of conducting workshops for not more than 25 participants at a time.

The experimental group was contacted one week before the workshop by letter and telephone and was invited to come to the workshop. The workshops were conducted on February 22 and 23 at Sangren Hall, Western Michigan University. When subjects arrived for the workshop session, they were asked to be seated, and an explanation of the purpose of the workshop and the related
research study was provided. The researcher gave them the informed-consent forms and assured them that significant personal information would be kept confidential. Before the workshop began all subjects signed the consent forms.

At the end of the workshop they responded to the Job Search Readiness Instrument (JSRI). The researcher was responsible for the content and presentation of the workshop which was a job search skills training program. The program was intended to provide basic skills and information about job readiness (see Appendix A).

There was no treatment for the control group, they were to respond only to the Job Search Readiness Instrument which was given to them approximately at the same time as the experimental group. Informed-Consent forms and the JSRI were distributed to each of the subjects, asking for their cooperation to participate in this study. As anticipated by the researcher, the response was very positive, especially the experimental group because this kind of workshop will help them in their career preparation. All the participants were given the opportunity for an interpretation of their scores—either a group interpretation or a personal interpretation. Twenty students in the experimental group and twenty-five students in the control group received an interpretation of their JSRI scores.

Hypotheses

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the immediate effect of the job-seeking skills training workshop on the job readiness of sponsored
undergraduate Malaysian students enrolled at Western Michigan University. The study also attempted to demonstrate if specific areas measured by the Job Search Readiness Instrument, differ in the effect of the job seeking skills training program on job readiness.

The specific null and alternative hypotheses which were tested in the present study were as follows:

H_{10}: There will be no significant difference between the experimental and control groups in self-awareness as measured by the self-awareness scale mean score of the JSRI.

H_{1a}: There will be significant difference between experimental and control groups in self-awareness as measured by the self-awareness scale mean score of the JSRI.

H_{20}: There will be no significant difference between the experimental and control groups in the job analysis as measured by the job analysis scale mean score of the JSRI.

H_{2a}: There will be significant difference between experimental and control groups in the job analysis as measured by the job analysis scale mean score of the JSRI.

H_{30}: There will be no significant difference between the experimental and control groups in interview preparation as measured by the interview preparation scale mean score of the JSRI.
**H₃a:** There will be significant difference between experimental and control groups in interview preparation as measured by the interview preparation scale mean score of the JSRI.

**H₄₀:** There will be no significant difference between the experimental and control groups in the job readiness total mean score as measured by the JSRI.

**H₄a:** There will be significant difference between experimental and control groups in job readiness as measured by the JSRI, total mean score.

**Experimental Design**

As shown in Figure 1, the design in this study was a posttest-only equivalent-groups design:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental group</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>O₁</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>R</td>
<td></td>
<td>O₂</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R = random selection  
X = Treatment  
O = observation

**Figure 1.** Posttest-Only Equivalent-Groups Design.

This design required two randomly assigned groups of subjects. Each was assigned to different conditions. There was no pretest because the randomization assured that the groups were equivalent (Campbell & Stanley, 1966). The most
important point was that only the experimental group was exposed to the experimental treatment. The protocol is shown in Figure 2. There were 50 subjects in the treatment cell I (n = 50), 48 subjects in the treatment cell II (n = 48) and a total of 98 subjects in the study. The JSRI was used to provide scores concerning four of the dependent variables: (1) self-awareness, (2) job analysis, (3) interview preparation, and (4) total score.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variable</th>
<th>Dependent Variables (Job Search Readiness Instrument)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>Self awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(I) Workshop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(II) No Workshop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. A Protocol.

Instrumentation

The Job Search Readiness Instrument was used to provide scores concerning the effectiveness of the job search skills training program on job readiness. On December 7, 1991, 11 students (5 male and 6 female) at Western Michigan University formed the field testing group. In a follow-up interview, these students found that they had no difficulty in responding to all items on the JSRI and as well as the demographic questionnaire. The JSRI is based on the Job Search
The Job Search Barometer employs a dichotomous (yes-no) scale, while the JSRI uses a five-point Likert type scale. The instrument consists of 38 items, divided into three parts: 10 items on self-awareness, 12 items on job analysis and 16 items on interview preparation. The possible score range for each part is 10 to 50 points, 12 to 60 points and 16 to 80 points, respectively. The total possible score range is 38 to 190.

According to Schlossman (1977) the reliability of this instrument was assessed on 450 undergraduate students through a test-retest coefficient of correlation method. He reported the mean correlation coefficient for the total score was .735 with a standard deviation of .17. The median correlation coefficient was .735 with a range of .34 to .96 across the scales. The validity was assessed by the content method. Six experts who were directly involved in the college career development field as professional staff and faculty members were asked to evaluate this instrument. The response scale used consisted of a five-point Likert scale, one (1) being very poor and five (5) being very good. The mean scores for each part obtained from the six experts were 4.0 in self-awareness, 4.5 in job analysis, and 4.5 in interview preparation. These experts concluded that this instrument did possess adequate content validity. Therefore, this instrument possesses sufficient reliability and validity to be used in this study.

Besides this instrument, the subjects responded to a questionnaire on
background and personal data. They also completed a workshop evaluation form which was developed by the researcher (see Appendices B and C).

The Training Workshop or Treatment

A brief description of the topics covered in this one day workshop is in Appendix A. Basically this workshop addressed three important components of job readiness: (1) self-awareness, (2) job analysis, and (3) interview preparation. The topics were as follows: (a) understanding the purpose of interviewing; (b) getting the interview; (c) mental, physical and emotional preparation; and (d) conducting a successful and winning interview.

Data Analysis

At the conclusion of the experimental period the difference between the mean test scores of the experimental and control groups were subjected to a t-test for independent groups. The assumption was that the means of randomly assigned experimental and control groups from the same population will differ only to the extent that random sample means from the same populations will differ as a result of sampling error. If the difference between the means is too great to attribute to sampling error, the difference may be attribute to the treatment variable effect. The minimum level of significance for these analyses was $p < .05$. 

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CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

A total of 98 students enrolled at Western Michigan University participated in the study. Of the 98 students, 50 were in the experimental group and 48 were in the control group. Subjects randomly assigned to the experimental group participated in the job seeking skills training workshop. Subjects randomly assigned to the control group were not exposed to any treatment.

The results of the present study will be presented in this chapter. They will generally focus on three aspects: (1) demographic information about the subjects, (2) hypothesis testing on the effectiveness of a job seeking skills training program on job readiness, and (3) the workshop evaluation feedback.

Demographic Information

The sample can be characterized as follows: (a) curriculum: 67% were Business majors, 25% Engineering majors, and 8% Computer and Statistics majors; (b) college level: 42% were Juniors and 58% were Seniors; (c) Expected graduation: 54% will graduate in 1992 and 47% will graduate in 1993; (d) Exposure to job search: only 2% had related exposure and 98% had no exposure; and (e) Working experience: 39% had working experience and 61% had no working experience. Table 3 shows the demographic information on the subjects.
Table 3
Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business studies</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer/Statistics</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Level:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Graduation:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1992</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1993</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to Job Search:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had Working Experience:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hypotheses Testing

The instrument used to measure the variables in this study was the Job Search Readiness Instrument (JSRI), which was described in Chapter III. The procedures for scoring this instrument and the various scores it yielded are presented in this chapter to provide a full understanding of the statistical data to be discussed later in this section.

The Job Search Readiness Instrument was administered as a posttest to the experimental and the control groups at the end of the workshop. Scoring of the JSRI yielded separate scores for four specific areas: (1) self-awareness, (2) job analysis, (3) interview preparation, and (4) a total score which is a composite of all of the separate scores. For each item, the respondent chooses one of five response options labeled from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Therefore, the higher the mean scores, the more positive the subject's attitude toward job readiness. The posttest data of the JSRI were analyzed by t tests for independent groups. The data were collected for 50 participants in the experimental group and 48 participants in the control group. In all cases the 0.05 level of significance was established for the rejection of the null hypotheses.

The difference between the mean test scores of the experimental and control groups were subjected to t tests for independent groups and are reported in Tables 4 to 7. Findings related to the specific null hypotheses are as follows:
Hypothesis 1:

There will be no significant difference between experimental and control groups in self-awareness as measured by the self-awareness scale of the Job Search Readiness Instrument.

Table 4 shows posttest means and standard deviations of the self-awareness for experimental and control groups. The purpose of Hypothesis 1 was to determine the effectiveness of the treatment on the subjects' self-awareness. The result shows that the observed value of $t$ (3.28) exceeds the critical value (1.980). Therefore, there was a significant difference at the .05 level of confidence between the experimental and control groups mean scores on self awareness. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Differences Between Experimental and Control Groups on the Self-Awareness: $t$-Test Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pooled variance estimate</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>No. of Cases</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>$t$ value</th>
<th>2-tail prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exp</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>45.38</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>.002*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-awareness</td>
<td>Cont</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>43.02</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .05 level.
Hypothesis 2:

There will be no significant difference between experimental and control groups in the job analysis as measured by the job analysis scale of the Job Search Readiness Instrument.

Table 5 shows posttest means and standard deviations of the job analysis for experimental and control groups. The purpose of Hypothesis 2 was to determine the effectiveness of the treatment on the subjects' job analysis skills. The result indicates a mean score significant difference because the observed value of $t$ (5.08) exceeds the critical value (1.980). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected at .05 level of confidence.

Hypothesis 3:

There will be no difference between experimental and control groups in interview preparation as measured by the interview preparation scale of the Job Search Readiness Instrument.

Table 6 shows the posttest means and standard deviations of the interview preparation scores for experimental and control groups. The purpose of Hypothesis 3 was to determine the effectiveness of the treatment on the subjects' interview preparation. Since the observed value of $t$ (4.51) exceeds the critical value (1.980), the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, the result showed that there were significant differences at the .05 level of confidence.

Hypothesis 4:

There will be no significant difference between experimental and control
### Table 5
Differences Between Experimental and Control Groups on the Job Analysis: t-Test Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>No. of Cases</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>2-tail prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Analysis</td>
<td>Exp</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>53.12</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>5.08</td>
<td>.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48.38</td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .05 level.

### Table 6
Differences Between Experimental and Control Groups on the Interview Preparations: t-Test Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>No. of Cases</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>2-tail prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview Preparation</td>
<td>Exp</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>70.60</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>64.73</td>
<td>7.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .05 level.
groups in job readiness total scores as measured by the Job Search Readiness Instrument.

Table 7 shows the posttest means and standard deviations of the total scores for experimental and control groups. The purpose of Hypothesis 4 was to determine the impact the treatment had on the subjects' job readiness in all aspects. Since the observed value of $t$ (5.38) exceeds the critical value (1.980), the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, the results indicated that there were significant mean total score differences, at the .05 level of confidence.

Table 7

Differences between Experimental and Control Groups on the Total Score: $t$-Test Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>No. of Cases</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>$t$ value</th>
<th>2-tail prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview Preparation</td>
<td>Exp</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>169.24</td>
<td>10.12</td>
<td>5.38</td>
<td>.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cont</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>156.33</td>
<td>13.45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .05 level.

Workshop Evaluation

At the end of the training workshop, the experimental group participants were asked to respond to an evaluation questionnaire (Appendix C). This
evaluation focused on five aspects of the workshop: (1) the presenter, (2) the presentation, (3) the content, (4) the methodology, and (5) the effectiveness. Table 8 indicates that the majority of the participants strongly agreed that the workshop was very effective in helping them learn and understand various aspects of job readiness. Table 8 indicates that in category 5 (effectiveness) of the workshop evaluation form, approximately 70% of the participants in the experimental group remarked that this workshop was a most valuable experience with regard to job readiness.

Other interesting feedback indicated that the participants seemed very satisfied with all aspects of this workshop. Table 9 shows that the participants generally indicated very positive feedback and rated the workshop almost excellent in all the other four categories.
Table 8

Workshop Effectiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>% Strongly agree</th>
<th>% Agree</th>
<th>% Undecided</th>
<th>% Disagree</th>
<th>% Strongly disagree</th>
<th>% Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I was satisfied with my job searching skills before attending this workshop.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am likely to change my approach toward job searching after attending this workshop.</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe this workshop will be beneficial in getting a good job.</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a result of this workshop, my attitude toward job readiness has changed.</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a result of this workshop, the job readiness process has become clearer to me.</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This workshop motivates me to make use of services from the career and placement centers.</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Categories</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Presenter</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tact</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of the subject</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to answer questions</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful with problems</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Mean Score</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Presentation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear and concise</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logical layout</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of understanding</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples and illustration</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Mean Score</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Contents</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverage</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Applicability to present concern</td>
<td>4.52</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall, the total workshop experience</td>
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<td>Total Mean Score</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4. Methodology</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lecture/discussion balance</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Visual aids</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Mean Score</td>
<td>4.41</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(Scale: 1 = poor; 2 = fair; 3 = satisfactory; 4 = very good; 5 = excellent)

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CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Restatement of the Problem

The primary purpose of the study was to examine the effectiveness of a job search skills training program on the job readiness of undergraduate sponsored Malaysian students enrolled at Western Michigan University. Specifically the problem centered on the ability of the treatment program to help Malaysian students to become clearer and to increase their understanding about the importance of self-awareness, job analysis and interview preparation on job readiness. Those subjects who attended the training workshop served as the treatment (experimental) group. The control group received no treatment. This study compared an experimental group which received job search training to a control group which did not.

The specific null hypotheses investigated in this study were as follows:

1. There will be no significant difference between the experimental and control groups in self-awareness as measured by the self-awareness scale mean score of the Job Search Readiness Instrument (JSRI).

2. There will be no significant difference between the experimental and control groups in the job analysis as measured by the job analysis scale mean.
3. There will be no significant difference between the experimental and control groups in interview preparation as measured by the interview preparation scale of the JSRI.

4. There will be no significant difference between experimental and control groups in job readiness total score as measured by the JSRI.

Summary of the Design and Methodology

The subjects used in this study were the undergraduate sponsored Malaysian students enrolled in the Winter Semester 1992 at Western Michigan University. The sample consisted of 98 subjects. The subjects were randomly assigned to one of two groups: (1) a job search training group that served as an experimental group (N = 50), and (2) a no treatment group that served as a control group (N = 48). The Job Search Readiness Instrument was used to collect posttest data. This instrument consists of three important components of job readiness: (1) self-awareness, (2) job analysis, and (3) interview preparation. The subjects also responded to a demographic questionnaire and, at the end of the training workshop, the members of the experimental group were asked to fill out a workshop evaluation questionnaire.

In order to answer the research questions, raw scores on all measures were submitted to a statistical summary. The \( t \) test for two independent samples was used to determine whether the means for the experimental group and the control
group differed significantly. An alpha level of .05 was accepted as demonstrating statistical significance for the analysis of the t tests.

Findings and Conclusions

Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis compared the effectiveness of a job search training workshop on the probability of increasing self-awareness which is one of the important elements of job readiness. Hypothesis 1 was rejected because the results did show a significant difference between the experimental and control group mean scores on self-awareness. The findings suggest that the training workshop for the experimental group was effective in providing those students with increased self-awareness. The fact that the experimental group members were significantly higher in the self-awareness mean scores suggests that undergraduate students can significantly increase their self-awareness with regard to job readiness by being systematically trained with a job search skills training program.

Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis of the study was focused on the effectiveness of a job search skills training workshop on job analysis. This hypothesis was rejected because the results of the analysis indicated a significant difference between experimental and control groups in the job analysis mean scores. The findings
suggest that the job search skills training workshop for the experimental group was effective in providing the students with increased job analysis skills. This finding also suggests that undergraduate students can significantly increase their scores in job analysis by being systematically trained with a job search skills training workshop.

**Hypothesis 3**

The third hypothesis of the study was to compare the treatment effectiveness on the probability of increasing the interview preparation skills between the experimental and control groups. Hypothesis 3 was also rejected because there was a significance difference between experimental and control groups with regard to interview preparation skills. Therefore, the finding suggests that the job search skills training workshop for the experimental group was effective in providing the students with increased interview preparation skills. This finding generally supports that undergraduate students can significantly increase their scores by being systematically trained with a job skills training workshop.

**Hypothesis 4**

The purpose of Hypothesis 4 was to examine the effectiveness of a job search skills training program on feelings toward job readiness. Hypothesis 4 was rejected because the results of the analysis for the job readiness total mean score
showed a significant difference between the experimental and control groups. The findings suggest that the training workshop for the experimental group was effective in providing those students with job readiness skills. Therefore, this finding strongly supports the conclusion that undergraduate students can significantly increase their job readiness scores by being systematically trained with a job search skills training workshop.

Recommendations

Results from this study contributed some evidence to the body of knowledge regarding the effectiveness of systematic training on job readiness and how such training can help undergraduate students increase their understanding and skills in job readiness. This experimental study statistically established the positive impact of the trained group as opposed to the untrained group. It is obvious that undergraduate Malaysian students need special assistance in job readiness training to strengthen their abilities to compete for a job.

The results of this investigation clearly established the need for replication of the research in different settings such as Malaysian students in local universities and in other countries. It is important to expand the training program so its effect on different populations could be compared and evaluated.

However, the findings of the present study also indicated a need for a more in-depth investigation on a larger scale into a number of areas concerning the
effectiveness of such training programs with regard to personal and academic orienta-
tions such as gender, personality, various fields of study, college level and working experience. In other words, it is very important to keep in mind the limitations of this study when interpreting the results in order to avoid their being misleading.
Appendix A

Job Readiness Training Workshop
Job Readiness Training Workshop

The college years are a time during which many students are concerned about career planning and placement. Job readiness should be regarded as a rational planning process which involves the learning of specific skills and strategies.

Generally, the process of looking for a job is not a pleasant experience because it usually takes a good deal of time and money. For most people, job searching is one of the most stressful situations that they face in life. The process creates fear and anxiety, especially to those who feel that they have little control over what is happening to them. In reality, they should realize that they do have specific actions to take and there is specific information that they need to find.

There are some misconceptions or myths about job readiness among college students. Therefore, it is important to understand:

i. What is job readiness?

ii. What causes these misconceptions?

iii. How do these misconceptions affect college students?

iv. What other options do they have?

The most important point is that the job hunters must have specific goals and plans. By having the goal and plan, they can assume more power over the job finding process.
Generally, this workshop will address the following issues: recruitment procedures in Malaysia, interview syllabus or contents, interview and examination, how to prepare for the job you are interested in, and important tips about "winning the interview."

II. RATIONALE

Successful evaluation of career alternatives and job attainment depends upon a set of interpersonal skills such as self-assertiveness, interviewing, and self-disclosure. Many people do not necessarily acquire or refine these skills through their day-to-day, unsupervised experiences. In other words it does not happen by accident, but by design, because it involves skills acquisition.

This training workshop is designed specifically to assist college students in making decisions regarding the evaluation of career alternatives, enhancing career selection, reviewing employment opportunities and preparing students to successfully compete for jobs.

III. OBJECTIVE

At the end of the training workshop, the participants will:

a. Know that job hunting skills are fundamental to job readiness--regardless of profession or level

b. Acquire a positive attitude as a result of knowing and understanding the importance of three related factors which contribute to job readiness: self awareness, job analysis and interview preparation.
IV. WORKSHOP CONTENTS

1. Understanding the purpose of job interview.

The purpose of an interview is for the student to get the best possible job. On the other hand the employer also has the opportunity to select the best possible candidate. Therefore, the candidate must learn about the employer’s goals and expectations, and see the interview from the employer’s perspective in order to have the right attitudes and information during the interview.

The student must be able to demonstrate the following very common personal qualities to the job for which they are interested in applying: basic education, basic experience, any special skills required, working conditions, enthusiasm and interest in the work, physical appearance and communication skills. It means the candidates must know what they want in a job and understand what the employers would like to see in an employee.

2. Getting the interview.

The candidates must know how to use a variety of job hunting sources. They must prepare an effective resume and be prepared to do research in order to get all the information they need for the interview. The best candidates are those who can read the employer’s mind. For example, employers are looking for candidates who have expertise, genuine interest in the job, good potential, intelligence and "fit," both socially and technically.

The candidates have to consider methods that can help them to have more control over getting job interview opportunities. There are four basic methods
to getting interviews:

i. Networking

ii. Responding to advertisements

iii. Using various professional employment services

iv. Knowing how to advertise and market yourself.

In other words, to conduct an effective networking and job campaign, the candidates will have to put themselves into uncomfortable situations. Once they have done this, however, it becomes easier for them to continue with their job campaign.

The interview really begins when the candidate applies for the job or sends their resume to a prospective employer. In Malaysia, it is quite common that the candidates who apply for executive or officer positions in large organizations will have to go through five steps of job screening:

i. Application form

ii. Aptitude test (written test)

iii. Group interview

iv. Individual interview - Middle management

v. Individual interview - Top management

3. Preparing for the interview.

   A. Mental Preparation

Preparing for any job interview is like preparing for any examination. This is the best analogy because in both situations the candidates have to demonstrate
how much information they have about the subject matter. With regard to job interviews, the candidates have to know five important aspects:

i. Information about self or personal traits especially the strengths related to the job they want. This workshop will demonstrate the basic principles for resume writing and how you can use some of the principles when you fill out employment application forms. The resume will help the candidate analyze their strengths and potentials, such as leadership, maturity, hardworker, intelligence, self-discipline, honesty and other qualities.

ii. Information about the particular job. For example, technical skills, interpersonal skills, educational requirements, job responsibilities, job orientation such as things, data or people, and other job requirements.

iii. Information about the particular employer or organization. For example, the organization structure, the major products or services, the goals and how you can fit and contribute to the organization.

iv. Information about a particular employer's current issues, policies and practices. For example, what are some issues, concerns and problems in this organization.

v. General information or current affairs related to the interest of particular organizations. For example, important news about political and economic issues from newspapers, radio and television.
B. Emotion and Physical preparation

In any job interview, the first impression is very important. Therefore, the candidates must be confident, well dressed suitable with the job and personality. For example clean clothes, neat hair, control nervousness, be relaxed and healthy appearing.

4. Successful interview.

A. How to win interview

The candidates must prepare all necessary information and be able to communicate and exchange information, be prepared to deal with stress-provoking situations and think before answering questions, especially problem solving questions. Understand the questions and do not hesitate to ask for clarification if necessary.

Important rules to win the interview:

Be honest
Look your best
Create a good impression
Know the questions you will probably be asked
Learn from each interview

B. Interview questions

Generally the interview questions are based on the who, what, where, when and how of job search.
V. FOR WHOM

This workshop is designed for 50 undergraduate Malaysian students at Western Michigan University during the Winter Semester, 1992.

VI. METHODOLOGY

The workshop consists of four major topics and is divided into seven sessions. Each session can be covered in one hour; however, there may be more time required for activities and discussion. The size of the group should be about 25 people. This workshop will be based on lectures, discussions, activities and videotapes on interviewing.

VII. PROCEDURES

Session 1: Understand the Purpose of an Interview

The purpose of an interview is for the candidate to get the best job and on the other hand the employer also has the opportunity to select the best candidate.

Transparency 1:

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF AN INTERVIEW?

Interview is an examination
Purpose: exam, assess, and evaluate
Objective:
Employer - to select the best possible candidate
Candidate - to get the best possible job
Why?
The employer's purpose and their goals!
By learning more about how they see their goals and how they go about achieving them, you can understand more of what you need to bring to the interview.

The employers's goal - best candidates?

Well qualified, fit, capable, interested, has the background and expertise etc.

Notes:

i. Definition: Interview = Examination.

ii. Examiner versus Candidate relationship.

iii. Plan to fail versus fail to plan.

iv. The employers select the right person for the right job (picture a camera, the camera is focused on you) focused on the following qualities:

Do the candidates have basic education

Do the candidates have relevant experience?

Do the candidates have special skills required?

Do the candidates show interest and enthusiasm?

Do the candidates communicate well?

Can the candidates meet working conditions?

Are the candidates' general appearance adequate?

v. The candidates must consider the following factors: See the interview from the employer's point of view, list five important qualities in the employee (example: intelligence, maturity, resourcefulness, leadership, assertiveness, etc.), know what they want in a job, and understand
Session 2: Getting the Interview

The candidates must know how to use a variety of job hunting sources, prepare a winning resume and be ready with all the information they need when arranging for a job interview.

Transparency 2:

HOW TO GET INTERVIEWS?

Networking:
Tell all people that you are looking for a job and do not hesitate to ask for help. These people-resources will play a key role to your job search.
Example: family, friends, clubs or organizations.

Employment ads:
Newspapers, magazines, professional journals, etc. (especially government jobs).

Employment agencies and services:
Placement office, labor office, private agencies and career consulting services, etc.

Advertising and selling yourself:
Distribute your own resume will take some time and money but it is often effective in getting a job.

Transparency 3:

RESUME
Name, address and photo

Career objective

Qualifications - education, skills and abilities

Job related experiences

Special projects

Activities

Interests

References

Transparency 4:

READING EMPLOYER'S MINDS!

Your Background:

Does he/she have the education, training, and experience for this job?

Your Expertise:

Does he/she have the specific skills and knowledge needed to carry out the job effectively and efficiently?

Your Independence:

Can he/she think for himself and know when to consult his boss?

Your Relationship:

Will he/she get along well with his fellow-workers and customers?

Your Interest:

Does he/she want this job, honestly?

Does he/she understand personal needs and goals?
Notes:

i. The interview begins when the candidates apply for the job.

ii. There are six steps of job screening: application form, aptitude test, group interview, individual interview - middle and top management, and training program.

Session 3: Preparing for the interview

Preparing for any interview is like preparing for any examination. Therefore you must prepare your mental, physical and emotional self so that the employers will be impressed with you.

Transparency 5:

PREPARATION IS KEY

What information you need before you go into the interview?

Cognitive Preparation

Self Assessment:
Assess your strengths and knowledge including your experience, education, interests and activities.

Job Requirements:
Examine the responsibilities of the job you are seeking and match your experience and skills to these needs.

Organizational Fit:
Learn what you can about the organization or industry and see how you can contribute to that organization.
Current Policies:

Current practices and issues of the particular employer or organization.

Current affairs:

General knowledge especially hot issues in newspapers and television.

Notes:

Strengths: Identify your strengths in terms of what job skills you acquired through education and training, what are the most important duties and responsibilities, and what are the personal traits for the particular job.

Job match: In what way does the job match with your skills and strengths. For example, technical skills, interpersonal skills and educational requirements.

Organizational fit: Make sure you know what would be your position, what are the major products or services, and what are the goals, issues and problems in this organization.

Impression: the first impression is very important. Be prepared to project yourself positively during the interview in terms of your physical and emotional outlook.

Session 4: What to Expect During the Interview?

Basically the candidates must be prepared with all necessary information and be able to communicate effectively.

Transparency 6:

WHAT IS A SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEW?
Carefully Prepared

Know the interview format

Interview process is a two-way street

Exchange information is "the heart"

Effective communication

Close the interview

Winning Answers:

Listen to the interviewer

Understand - specific and general questions

Ask for clarification if you need it

Think before answering problem solving questions

Be prepared to deal with stress-provoking situation

Session 5: Interview Questions

Generally the questions can be classified into five important areas: about yourself, about the job, about the employers, about policies and concerns, and general knowledge or current affairs.

Transparency 7:

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

Tell me about yourself?

What is your GPA? Does it reflect your ability?

Tell me about your extracurricular activities and interests?

What are your strongest and weakest personal qualities?
Tell me about project you initiated?
What kind of work do you want to do?
What did you learn or gain from your part-time job experiences?
Why are you interested in our organization?
What interests you about the position?
How have your educational and work experiences prepared you for this position?
What characteristics do you think are important for this position?
How do you spend your spare time?
How do you motivate people?

Session 6: Winning Interview

Basic ingredients for winning the interview: honest, look your best, create a lasting impression, prepare and learn from each interview.

Transparency 8:
WINNING INTERVIEW
Understand the definition and purpose of an interview.
Get all the information you need
Assess your own strengths and skills
Learn about the job, the organization and how your skills fit the job.
Prepare and practice carefully what you plan to say.
Make your nervous energy productive.
Know the types and the format of the interviews
Know the kinds of questions you will probably be asked.

Be prepared to answer a wide variety of questions.

Know the questions that you want to ask about employers.

Preparation is key

**Session 7: "The Inside Secrets of Interviewing"**

This 30 minute videocassette is produced by the XSELL Team in 1987. As stated by the producer "It is the result of thousands of interviews conducted by several Fortune 500 executives now called the XSELL TEAM. These executives saw a tremendous need for job search and interviewing skills. Job competition is tough, but the personal marketing plan found in this package is a proven method for successful job acquisition."

After 30 minutes of watching this videocassette, there will be discussion especially with regard to Malaysian experience.

**VII. DATE / VENUE**

Date: February 22 and 23, 1992.

Time: 900 a.m to 5.00 p.m

Place: Sangren Hall, WMU.

**VIII. EVALUATION**

At the end of the workshop, the participants will fill out the workshop evaluation questionnaire.
Appendix B

Personal Data
PERSONAL DATA

Name: _________________________________________

Age: ______

Sex: ______

College major / Curriculum: _________________________

College level:  Freshman / Sophomore / Junior / Senior

Expected graduation date: _________________________

Had prior exposure seeking skills training:  Yes / No

Financial Sponsorship: ____________________________

Working experience: _______________________________
Appendix C

Workshop Evaluation Questionnaire
WORKSHOP EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions:
Please rate the following items at the level best representing your estimate of the presenter and the various aspects of the workshop.
Use the following scale in each category:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Categories:

1. **Presenter**
   - Confidence
   - Tact
   - Enthusiasm
   - Knowledge of subject
   - Ability to answer Questions
   - Helpful with problems

2. **Presentation**
   - Clear and concise
   - Logical layout
   - Ease of understanding
   - Interesting
   - Examples & illustrations

3. **Contents**
   - Coverage
   - Applicability to present concern
   - Overall, the total workshop experience

4. **Methodology**
   - Lecture/discussion balance
   - Visual Aids
5. **Effectiveness**

Use the following scale to respond to each statement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I was satisfied with my job searching skills before attending this workshop.  
   1 2 3 4 5

2. I am likely to change my approach toward job searching after attending this workshop.  
   1 2 3 4 5

3. I believe that this workshop will be beneficial in getting a good job.  
   1 2 3 4 5

4. As a result of this workshop, my aptitude toward job readiness has changed.  
   1 2 3 4 5

5. As a result of this workshop, the job readiness process has become clearer to me.  
   1 2 3 4 5

6. This workshop motivated me to make use of services and seek the assistance from the career and placement centers.  
   1 2 3 4 5
Appendix D

Human Subjects Institutional Review Board
Letter of Approval
Date: February 21, 1992
To: Ibrahim Hashim
From: Mary Anne Bunda, Chair
Re: HSIRB Project Number: 92-02-07

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research protocol, "The effectiveness of a job Search Skill Training Program on Job Readiness of Undergraduate Malaysian Students Enrolled at Western Michigan University" has been approved under the exempt category of review by the HSIRB. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the approval application.

You must seek reapproval for any changes in this design. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

xc: Geisler, CECP

Approval Termination: February 21, 1993


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