

e-BOOK TVET COMMERCE SYNERGY

"EMPOWERING TVET THROUGH COMMERCE"

HEAD OF COMMERCE DEPARTMENT
ROHANA BINTI MAT

CHIEF EDITOR
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NORELISSA BINTI MOHD SHAHIR
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GRAPHIC DESIGNER
NADZIRAH BINTI MUHAMMAD MEREJOK

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A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF COMMERCE DEPARTMENT



ROHANA BINTI MAT

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh
and warm greetings.

I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Editorial Team of the Commerce Department for the successful publication of the 2025 edition of this e-book. Your tireless efforts and commitment to excellence have resulted in a powerful resource that will undoubtedly enhance the learning experience for students and contribute significantly to the academic growth of our department.

This e-book is more than just a compilation of knowledge—it is a powerful tool that promotes accessible learning for all. The digital format allows students to engage with content in a flexible and interactive manner, which is essential in today's evolving educational landscape. The updated information and enhanced features ensure that readers have access to relevant and practical knowledge, tailored to meet the demands of the dynamic field of commerce.

The contribution of the Editorial Team is not only a reflection of their hard work but also a testament to the collaborative spirit and innovative mindset that we cultivate at Politeknik Port Dickson. As educators and scholars, it is our duty to continuously evolve and push the boundaries of learning, and this publication is a fine example of such progress.

Let this success be the beginning of more groundbreaking achievements. I encourage the entire team to keep striving for excellence, and I have no doubt that your dedication will continue to inspire and benefit our community for years to come.

Congratulations once again and thank you for your remarkable contribution.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EDITOR

RESEARCH, PUBLICATION AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh and warm greetings

It is with immense pride that I extend my sincere congratulations to the Editorial Team of the Commerce Department, Politeknik Port Dickson for their outstanding achievement in publishing the 2025 edition of this e-book. Your collective hard work, dedication, and passion have produced a valuable resource that will undoubtedly benefit both students and department alike.

This e-book offers a modern and accessible approach to learning Commerce, providing users with up-to-date content and practical insights that are essential in today's evolving academic and professional environment. Its digital format allows for flexible and convenient access, empowering learners to engage with the material on their own terms, anywhere and anytime. The material in this 2025 edition reflects a commitment to continuous improvement, ensuring that the content remains relevant and impactful for the rapidly changing commerce landscape. Your efforts not only contribute to the academic development of our department but also embody the spirit of innovation and collaboration that we strive for at Politeknik Port Dickson. This accomplishment is a testament to the power of teamwork and the importance of pushing the boundaries of traditional learning in the field of Commerce.



**NOOR FADZLIN BINTI
ABU BAKAR**

Let this milestone inspire all of us to keep striving for excellence and to continue paving the way for future achievements. Congratulations once again, and may your hard work continue to inspire others in the pursuit of knowledge.

Thank you and well done

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Discovering “Ikigai” in the Life of a Lecturer

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The extent of the lecturer duty these days is beyond the conventional teaching methods. In the last few decades, the profession of academia has changed significantly. Teachers are required not only to teach, but also to handle administrative role unless you are doing pure research, publish papers, serve communities, and technology adoption. With these obligations, striking a work-life balance has proven to be increasingly difficult. And as the expectations grow, so does the pressure to get the results while continuing to take care of yourself. Given this state of affairs, it is time to dig into what sustains educators in their commitment and satisfaction? Ikigai (or the purpose of life), which for me symbolizes the intersect between what one loves, what is good at, what is needed, and what is rewarded, provides a useful and effective inspiration in examining ways by which lecturers can successfully navigate their professional and personal lives.

Ikigai, a Japanese concept meaning '*reason for being*', is highly relevant to the academic profession. Lecturers are not just knowledge providers—they are mentors, motivators, and lifelong learners. When their profession aligns with personal values and joy, a deeper sense of fulfilment emerges. Teaching becomes more than a duty—it becomes a calling (García & Miralles, 2017; Mahad et al., 2024)

The Five Elements of Ikigai in Lecturing

In Ikigai, a Japanese term, which has a rough meaning of a “reason for being”—comprises of five integrated components that will lead humans towards life meaning and purpose (Mahad et al., 2024 Sazali and Paidi, 2023). These dimensions are what you love, what you’re good at,

what the world needs, what you can be paid for, and what brings satisfaction or joy. In the context of the lecturing profession, Ikigai is a concept that could be used as a professional reflective framework which could lead to the examination of its drivers such as enthusiasm or motivations over time. For many of lecturers, the sweet environment is where personal passion, personal contribution, and professional skill intersect. Their passion for teaching combined with a superb command over content, ability to make a difference in life, due recognition (self and societal), aligns together to provide that all-encompassing sense of significance and purpose. This alignment, which makes people more effective and robust under persistent pressure, also helps answer a singular and vexing rhetorical question: “Why do a small band of educators continue to work hard at difficult jobs in the face of ever-rising academic, bureaucratic, or accreditor requirements?” When we see Ikigai in this way, we get to see how teaching is not just a task but a calling, a calling that emanates from the soul, driven by values, passions, and measures of our life and work’s worth.

1. What You Love – Passion: Passion is the emotional spark that draws many into academia. Lecturers often love their subject area and find joy in transferring knowledge to eager learners. This passion transforms classrooms into vibrant spaces where ideas flourish and where both student and educator grow. Passion also acts as a buffer against fatigue, giving lecturers the energy to handle repetitive tasks and long hours with a sense of purpose.

2. What You Are Good At – Vocation: Lecturing is a skill that takes years of attending and listening to your audience if you want to really master it. It is not only about knowledge of the subject but also mastery of the art of teaching, the art of communication, empathy and emotionally intelligent. Competent instructors are able to work with a wide range of learners, including low achievers, and can use innovative teaching techniques. This feeling of control feeds self-esteem and professional self-respect.

3. What the World Needs – Mission: Society continuously evolves, and with it, the need for well-informed, critical-thinking citizens grows. Lecturers fulfil this mission by equipping students with the tools to analyze, reflect, and act responsibly in a globalized world. Beyond instruction, they serve as moral compasses and role models emphasizing ethics, diversity, and civic duty. Lecturers meet this need by publishing impactful research, consulting on public issues, and mentoring the next generation of changemakers.

4. What You Can Be Paid For – Profession: While teaching is deeply rooted in love, service, and a sense of duty, it is also recognized as a formal and respected profession that offers tangible material and career-related benefits. These include stable salaries, opportunities for promotion and advancement, research grants and funding, as well as awards and professional recognition from peers and institutions. Beyond monetary compensation, the academic profession provides valuable non-material rewards such as intellectual autonomy, the freedom to explore diverse research interests, flexible work arrangements, and meaningful participation in institutional governance and decision-making. Lecturers often find satisfaction not just in their teaching responsibilities, but also in the ability to influence educational policy, mentor future leaders, and contribute to societal progress. When a lecturer experiences both professional growth and financial stability while remaining true to their personal values and mission they attain a harmonious balance between career success and life satisfaction. This balance is a key element of Ikigai, where doing meaningful work and being fairly compensated go hand in hand.

5. Your Mission – Personal Calling: When the four previous elements converge, a deeper sense of life purpose emerges. This personal calling can manifest as a lifelong commitment to inclusion, equity, innovation, or leadership in education. Some lecturers dedicate their careers to community outreach, others to educational reform or student mentorship. This calling becomes the internal compass that keeps them going, especially when institutional or personal challenges arise.

Conclusion

The Ikigai concept is not just a philosophy it is a powerful tool for reflection, growth, and sustained well-being. For lecturers, whose professional journey often intertwines with deep personal values, Ikigai offers a meaningful framework to evaluate their motivations, strengths, contributions, and impact. In an era where lecturers face increasing demands from teaching and research to administrative duties and digital adaptation rediscovering their Ikigai can help restore balance and clarity.

By identifying what they love, what they are good at, what the world needs, and what they can be paid for, lecturers can reignite their sense of purpose and prevent burnout. This alignment fosters resilience, enhances professional excellence, and nurtures genuine fulfilment. As explored throughout this article, is not only about professional satisfaction but also about

personal transformation. It is a reminder that teaching is more than a job it is a vocation, a mission, and ultimately, a life worth living with purpose

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Clicks, Credit, and Consequences: How Social Media Drives BNPL Use Among Malaysian Youth

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Introduction

Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) schemes have become increasingly popular among Malaysian youth, especially those under the age of 30. The consumers with low credit scores or short credit histories are especially likely to use BNPL due to difficulties qualifying for other low-interest forms of credit (Carrns, 2021). These services allow consumers to purchase products immediately and pay over several installments, often without interest or the need for a traditional credit card. BNPL is particularly attractive to young adults managing tight budgets while seeking access to lifestyle goods and services. Social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook have played a significant role in promoting BNPL. Through influencer endorsements and targeted advertising, these platforms shape consumer preferences and behavior (Tan & Lee, 2023). While BNPL offers short-term convenience, it may also lead to long-term financial strain for individuals lacking awareness of responsible borrowing. While BNPL services themselves don't directly cause

bankruptcies, they can contribute to the risk of debt and financial difficulties, potentially leading to insolvency in Malaysia

Financial literacy is key to bridge this gap. Financial literacy refers to the ability to understand and manage personal finances. It includes skills such as budgeting, debt control, and evaluating credit products. This paper explores how social media influences BNPL use among Malaysian youth, the role of financial literacy, and how agencies such as Agensi Kaunseling dan Pengurusan Kredit (AKPK) help educate and empower young consumers.

Social Media's Impact on BNPL Usage

Social media has become a main platform for Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) companies to promote their services to young people. According to Malay Mail (2025), BNPL transactions in Malaysia went up by 45% in 2024, with many users being young adults who just started working. Influencers and online ads often show BNPL as a fun and easy way to buy things like gadgets, clothes, and holidays (Kassim & Abdullah, 2021; Tan & Lee, 2023). These promotions usually focus on the convenience of paying later, but they rarely talk about the possible financial risks.

This kind of advertising can lead young people to spend without thinking carefully, especially when they feel pressure to follow what's popular online (PwC Malaysia, 2022). The convenience of BNPL allows people to pay in small amounts over time, many users feel it's affordable and may not realize how much they are really spending. Without proper planning or budgeting, they may miss payments and fall into debt (Mokhtar, 2023). Since this new credit is not subject to too many of the regulations design, the BNPL affect severe measures of financial distress and credit scores (Sarah Papich, 2022).

The Importance of Financial Literacy

The ease of BNPL access and its potential for overspending can increase the likelihood of individuals accumulating excessive debt, especially when combined with other financial commitments like car loans or housing loans. Thus, financial literacy equips individuals with the tools to make informed financial choices. It covers key concepts such as budgeting, interest rates, credit limits, and repayment schedules. However, research shows that many Malaysian youths still lack in basic financial understanding (Lim, Tan, & Lee, 2020). The young BNPL users who lack this knowledge may fail to read the fine print, miss payment deadlines, or incur late fees. They

should be aware of the risks and responsibilities associated with these services. Over time, this can damage credit scores and create long-term financial stress (Mokhtar, 2023; Omar & Ahmad, 2022). Building financial literacy helps reduce such risks and promotes healthy financial habits from an early stage.

The Link Between Social Media and Financial Literacy

Social media serves as both a source of information and a platform for marketing. It enables financial educators and institutions to share tips and advice on budgeting, credit management, and saving. Platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok have been used effectively by experts and agencies to reach young audiences (Chong & Lim, 2024; AKPK, 2023). Adversely, social media also hosts content that glamorizes overspending and easy credit access. Influencer content often omits the risks or actual terms behind BNPL schemes. Youths who lack financial knowledge are more likely to fall for such portrayals, assuming BNPL is risk-free (Zainuddin et al., 2022). The OECD (2023) reported that young individuals with stronger financial literacy are better at evaluating advertising claims and are less likely to make poor credit decisions. This further highlights the need for both financial and digital literacy among the youth population.

The digital communication technologies have become essential elements of daily life where the small gadget in your hands allows the young consumers to observe friends and other peers effortlessly acquiring items through social media and BNPL allows consumers to receive instant gratification without having to experience any pain of payment. BNPL significantly contributes to impulsive buying behavior (Lisa Pettersson, 2025). Additionally, the study also supports that social validation reduces the perceived risk of impulsive purchases, particularly among young consumers which may be more easily influenced and have less financial literacy.

The Role of AKPK in Enhancing Financial Literacy

AKPK plays a vital role in promoting financial literacy in Malaysia. It offers free financial counselling, workshops, and digital learning materials on topics such as debt management, budgeting, and responsible credit use. AKPK also uses social media to share financial tips and educate the public, particularly youth, about the risks of BNPL misuse (AKPK, 2023). By providing accessible education and practical tools, AKPK empowers young Malaysians to manage their finances more effectively. Its outreach programs in collaboration with universities and youth

organizations have helped reduce stigma around financial help and improved awareness of responsible borrowing (Ismail et al., 2023).

Recommendations for Improving BNPL Use and Financial Literacy

Several measures can be taken to support responsible BNPL use and strengthen financial literacy among Malaysian youth:

1. Integrate Financial Literacy into Education

Schools and universities should include comprehensive financial education in their curricula. Lessons should cover real-world topics like BNPL, digital credit use, and critical thinking about online advertisements (Rahim & Lee, 2022; Lim et al., 2020). The need to understand types of financial facilities or services like BNPL should be educated especially among materialistic individuals on promoting sustainable spending habits.

2. Leverage Social Media for Financial Education

Partnering with content creators and influencers to share engaging and factual financial content can help reach youth audiences more effectively (Chong & Lim, 2024; Tan & Lee, 2023).

3. Regulate BNPL Advertising

Clear and transparent advertising regulations are needed. BNPL providers should be required to disclose terms, fees, and repayment obligations in all promotions, especially those on social media (PwC Malaysia, 2022).

Conclusion

In essence, BNPL can contribute to financial hardship and the risk of bankruptcy if not used responsibly and strategically, particularly when combined with other debt commitments and a lack of financial discipline.

Social media platform has a significant influence on BNPL adoption among Malaysian youth. While it offers opportunities for financial education, it also increases the risk of impulsive spending due to misleading advertisements and peer influence. When combined with low financial literacy, this can lead to debt and long-term financial stress.

To address this, financial education must be strengthened across both formal and informal platforms to educate consumers, especially on financial risk associated with BNPL. Agencies such as AKPK are essential in providing resources, support, and outreach that equip youth with the knowledge to use financial products responsibly. With the right education and awareness, Malaysian youth can become financially confident and resilient in an increasingly digital economy.

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BRAIN ROT

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In recent years, the increasing dependence on digital technology has progressed beyond mere convenience and is now become an essential aspect of a contemporary life. This phenomenon referred to the environment with constant stimulation and an excessive amount of information has been produced by using a smartphone, social media platforms, and other linked devices. Everybody enjoys to spent most of their time in digitalize world. Its look like nothing is interesting in life except exploring the life opportunity digitally. No one excluded in spending their valuable time on screen even for beneficial or non-beneficial contents.

Yes, in this challenge world, it is interesting to explore everything in our own way as well as everything in the end of finger. The usage of internet cannot be denied in distribute positive affect as well as negative effects. All these surely depend on our self to explore and control the internet usage. What's make it become a huge issue when people spent most time to explore the internet for nothing. Its waste and Oxford claimed it to the "Brain ROT" (Bernama, 2024). Hanani (2024) believed that "Brain Rot" refers to the decline in cognitive function associated with excessive use of digital technology. It encompasses a range of symptoms that can seriously impact an individual's daily life and productivity. It was supported by Shende & Digvijay Gawande (2025) which "Brain ROT" is a condition caused by excessive internet uses those results in mental tiredness, inattention, and poor cognitive performance. It's comparable to moving from massive, complex pieces to tiny digital items. Social media feeds, viral videos, and meme culture offer fleeting moments of gratification, but at the price of actually engaging the mind.

It's clear that the impact of excessive internet usage closely related to the mental and intellectual health of younger generations especially Gen Z. There are growing concerns that this constant digital engagement is causing cognitive decline, captures the cerebral haze and cognitive lethargy brought on by excessive exposure to pointless internet information.

According to Idikut Ozpence (2024), in today's world, most people waste so much time on the internet with their digital devices that their emotions fluctuate steadily. Most people try to deny that spending too much on screens would overloads a brain with digital information, which can have widespread negative effects on individuals' mental and physical health, social interaction and companionship, and well-being of people.

Here, we examine the symptoms, causes, consequences, and ways to overcome the increasing of "Brain ROT" among generation Z.

Symptoms of "Brain ROT"

1. Memory Lapses

Memory lapses or loss is one of the signs of brain damage. People with "Brain ROT" may have trouble to remember the new information or recent occurrences. This forgetfulness can show itself in a number of ways, such as having trouble recalling where things are, forgetting appointments, or having trouble remembering specifics of discussions soon after they take place. This problem could be made worse by an over-reliance on digital tools for memory tasks (such as calendars and reminder applications), which would prevent people from engaging in cognitive exercises that are crucial for improving and retaining memory (Mishra & Mishra, 2024).

2. Zombie Scrolling

One of the "Brain ROT" is when people browse and scrolling the internet without a destination in mind or any benefit derived. People who aimlessly browse social media or websites with the exception of the occasional significant interaction referred to the zombie scrollers. The zombie scrolling caused by a form of dissociative state of mind, lack of intentionality or motive. This behaviour is typically demonstrated by a general loss of control over the action which is driven by a brain that is rewarded with a steady stream of digital stimulus and is looking for novelty (Newport Institute, 2024).

3. Social Media Addictions

Vendhan et al., n.d. (2025) mentioned that people with "Brain ROT" also desire to put themselves in social media even though there is nothing to settle down by it. Social media addiction including a persistent urge to check social media and uneasiness while attempting

to stop the behaviour. These people can't stop checking social media platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok whenever they have an opportunity to do it. By having a constant notification, bright colours, and stimulating sounds can literally mesmerize them as well as causing them to stop thinking clearly.

Consequences of “Brain ROT”

1. Excess Screen Time

The amount spent on screen time was associated with the increasing levels of anxiety, depression, and stress among people like Generation Z. these would lead to poor concentration, a sense of mental cloudiness, and diminished cognitive function. The brain is so overstimulated with switching between tasks that it finds difficulty focusing on important or meaningful activities. As a result, both productivity and motivation go down. Therefore, it may be beneficial to promote strategies that encourage generation Z to engage in activities that are not related to screen time (Yousef et al., 2025).

2. Cognitive Decline

“Brain ROT” would affects the death of brain cells which leading to cognitive decline, memory loss, and difficulty with decision-making and motor skills. Additionally, it may cause personality changes and mood swings. Problems with simple skills, coordination, and general physical health owing to disrupted neural connectivity are some of the detrimental effects that overconsumption of inconsequential internet information can have on the body and a person's mental state when brain function declines like mental haze and shorter attention spans. This would result in total loss of motor control or paralysis (Brain Rot, 2024).

3. Addicting to Social Networking

Social media either social networking like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and other platforms are made users' interest and promote continuous scrolling which can lead to hours of use without any genuine breaks. Young people like generation Z would enjoy to scroll through their feeds to experience a surge of satisfaction that encourages them to go even more. When young people reach the flow state, where the need for digital involvement becomes overwhelming and it becomes more difficult to quit utilizing these platforms, this compulsive behaviour may eventually develop into an addiction-like pattern. Social media's emotional toll exacerbates brain damage even further. The overabundance of information, the pressure of impressionable lifestyles, and the constant presence of beauty standards can lead to a persistent sense of dissatisfaction, despair, and anxiety, which is

known as "social media brain rot." This realization is important because young adults can identify these problems and properly classify them (Yousef et al., 2025).

Ways to overcome

1. Detoxification of Dopamine:

According to Volkow et al., (2019), "Brain ROT" is strongly associated with overload where a condition that reward system of the brain becomes desensitized to constant stimuli. Social media actually make our brains desire for instant satisfaction, making slower, more demanding employment look unappealing. The detoxification can be done through an offline activity by resetting the dopamine levels by avoiding screens for even one day every week by stimulating creativity and problem-solving and switch to effortful incentives like painting, making music, and gardening.

2. Awareness on mental flexibility

When people practice mindfulness, they are governing attention, self-regulation, and decision-making would perform better and feels less stressed. By improving mental flexibility, mindfulness also combats the rigidity associated with "Brain ROT" (Tang et al., 2015). It can start by breathing for just two minutes per day, being calm blend movement with mindfulness like Tai chi, yoga, and other forms of exercise integrate mental awareness with physical activity.

3. Get rest by sleeping

Whenever human tired, go to get into bed immediately. Lack of sleep also a major contributor for brain damage. Meanwhile, deep sleep has a metabolic waste product linked to cognitive decline, eliminated from the brain by the lymphatic system (Xie et al., 2013). People can arrange a schedule to enjoy a deep sleep which means have a regular bedtime and wake-up time.

In order to be competitiveness, all parties are responsible in controlling and limiting screen time, interacting with instructive and informative content, and striking a balance between digital activities and other learning and engagement methods. Generation Z can lessen the consequences of "Brain RPT" and promote a more balanced attitude to technology use by being aware of the hazards and forming healthier digital habits.

In conclusion, like it or not, it cannot be denied that at this time, generation Z suffers with "Brain ROT". It is a serious problem that reflects the difficulties and coping mechanisms of this generation that grew up with technology. It is import to support the mental and intellectual health of future generations in understanding and get attention of this issue.

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Bridging the Gap: Solving Graduate Skills Mismatch in Malaysia

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Introduction

Graduate underemployment and skills mismatch have become significant challenges in Malaysia's labor market. Despite a high graduate employment rate, many graduates find themselves in jobs that do not align with their qualifications, leading to underemployment. This issue not only undermines economic growth but also results in the underutilization of human capital. In recent years, the gap between graduate qualifications and job market needs has widened due to technological advancements, evolving industry demands, and inadequate alignment between education and workforce requirements. This chapter explores why skills gaps exist and how Malaysia can better align education with job market needs to boost graduate employability.

Current Situation in Malaysia

Malaysia has significantly expanded access to higher education, with university enrolments rising from thousands in the 1980s to over a million today (Hamid, 2024). However, this growth has not been matched by an increase in high-skilled job opportunities. While graduate employment rates appear strong, many are underemployed especially those from non-technical fields like social sciences, humanities, and general business. According to the Khazanah Research Institute Graduate Career Tracking Survey (2024), over one-third of graduates start and remain in jobs that do not match their qualifications. Many also turn to contract or freelance

work, which offers flexibility but lacks long-term security and benefits. This trend raises concerns about the future stability and sustainability of Malaysia's workforce (Hamid, 2024).

Factors Contributing to the Skills Mismatch

There are a number of reasons why there is a growing discrepancy between graduate credentials and employer demand.

1. Rapid Technological Advancements Outpacing Curriculum Updates

Technological fields such as IT, machine learning, and engineering are evolving rapidly, creating new roles that demand specialized, up-to-date skills. However, many university programs have not adapted quickly enough to include these in-demand competencies. Graduates may complete an IT degree without exposure to current tools like AI applications or data analytics platforms, making them less competitive in the job market.

2. Weak Integration of Practical Skills in Academic Programs

Universities often emphasize theoretical knowledge over practical, job-ready skills, leaving graduates unprepared for workplace realities. This disconnect reduces their immediate value to employers. According to Cheong & Narayanan (2021), many Malaysian graduates struggle to perform in roles requiring teamwork, problem-solving, and communication skills not adequately covered in traditional classroom settings.

3. Misalignment Between Academia and Industry Needs

There is often limited collaboration between universities and industry stakeholders, leading to outdated course content and missed opportunities to tailor education to real-world demands. Without regular industry feedback, business schools may continue teaching obsolete marketing theories instead of current digital marketing strategies sought by employers.

4. Oversupply of Graduates in Non-Technical Fields

An imbalance exists between the number of graduates in certain fields like business, humanities, and economics and the actual market demand for such qualifications. This leads to underemployment. As noted by Low & Mah (2024), many business administration graduates end up taking clerical or customer service roles that do not match their level of education, contributing to job dissatisfaction and economic inefficiency.

Strategies for Bridging the Gap

To address the issue of graduate underemployment and skills mismatch, several strategies need to be implemented across various levels.

1. Align University Curriculum with Industry Needs

Universities should continuously update their academic programs to reflect current labor market demands. Close collaboration with industry players will help identify essential skills and qualifications required by employers. According to Hamid (2024), educational institutions can work with sector-specific experts to revise course content, integrate real-world case studies, and include skill-based modules that reflect the evolving needs of industries like fintech, logistics, or healthcare.

2. Implement Professional Certification Programs

Short-term, industry-recognized certification programs can equip graduates with practical skills that complement their academic knowledge. These programs are particularly helpful in boosting employability in competitive job markets. Example The PENJANA Career Advancement Program (KPT-CAP) and the PENJANA Professional Certification Program (KPT-PACE) were introduced to address skills mismatches by providing certifications endorsed by industry leaders (Hossain et al., 2020).

3. Expand Internship and Apprenticeship Opportunities

Hands-on work experience before graduation gives students a chance to apply their knowledge, build soft skills, and establish professional networks, which are crucial for employment success. Example Internship programs co-organized by universities and companies in sectors like IT, hospitality, or manufacturing allow students to gain direct exposure to workplace expectations (Pauw et al., 2008).

4. Create More High-Skilled Job Opportunities

The government and private sectors should work together to generate high-value employment opportunities, especially in emerging and technology-driven industries. Example by investing in R&D, promoting tech startups, and supporting sectors like renewable energy or high-tech manufacturing, Malaysia can absorb more highly skilled graduates (Hamid, 2024).

Aligning Education with Market Needs

Solving graduate underemployment and skills mismatch requires more than education reform; it demands aligning education with labor market needs. Malaysia must emphasize practical over purely theoretical learning, especially as industries shift toward digital skills. TVET programs, which offer job-ready expertise, should be reimagined and elevated in status to effectively bridge the skills gap and improve graduate employability.

Conclusion

Graduate underemployment and skills mismatch remain major issues in Malaysia. Although graduate numbers are rising, high-skilled job growth has not kept up. To bridge this gap, education must be better aligned with market needs through updated curriculum, industry-recognized certifications, and more internships. Encouraging job creation in emerging sectors and strengthening university-industry ties will further boost employability and reduce underemployment supporting long-term economic growth and job satisfaction.

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Global Market Exposure: Entry Modes Strategies and the Benefits of Academic Trips for Marketing Diploma Students

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Introduction

In today's globalized world, companies need solid strategies to break into international markets. One of the most crucial strategies is called "modes of entry," which is the method a company uses to enter a foreign market and deliver its products, technology, or services. These entry modes include exporting, licensing and franchising, joint ventures, and foreign direct investment (FDI). Each of these methods comes with different levels of control, risk, and potential returns. For Marketing Diploma students, understanding and evaluating these strategies can be made much clearer through academic trips, which provide direct exposure to real-world international business operations.

Modes of Entry in International Marketing

- Exporting is the most basic entry strategy, where products are sold from the home country to a foreign one. Direct exporting gives a company control over the sales process, while indirect exporting uses agents or intermediaries to market the products. This strategy is considered low-risk but offers moderate returns.
- Licensing and Franchising allow a company to share its intellectual property or business model with a company in the host country. Franchising, in particular, provides full

support to the franchisee, including operational and marketing systems. According to Brouthers et al. (2022), franchising offers a way to achieve rapid growth in new markets with a lower investment.

- Joint Ventures involve a partnership between a local and a foreign company to create a new business entity. This approach helps companies reduce risk and share resources with a partner who understands the local market. Hennart (2022) notes that joint ventures are great for companies that want to expand their operations without giving up complete control.
- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is an entry mode that requires a large investment and offers full control over operations. A company can either build new facilities (a greenfield investment) or acquire an existing company. Research by Kok and Siripipatthanakul (2024) shows that FDI plays a significant role in Malaysia's economic growth, especially in the technology and infrastructure sectors.

The Benefits of Academic Trips for Understanding Entry Modes

Academic trips are a fantastic way for students to connect theory with practice. For example, a visit to Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad (MAHB) helps students understand the role of exporting and logistics in international trade. MAHB is key to managing the movement of goods and people globally, which is directly related to export strategies.

For Marketing Diploma (DPR) student semester 5, this trip to MAHB is highly relevant to their services marketing subject. They can see how MAHB provides efficient logistics services and manages the passenger experience, which are crucial aspects of services marketing. Students can appreciate how these services support international export and trade activities, making the theories they learn more tangible and relatable to the real world.

Then, a trip to Mitsui Outlet Park KLIA introduces students to the concepts of franchising and licensing. This outlet features many international brands that operate in Malaysia through franchise models. Students can see first-hand how companies adapt their global marketing strategies for the local market. The partnership between MAHB and Mitsui in developing the commercial area can also be linked to the joint venture strategy. This exposes students to the concept of strategic partnerships between local and foreign companies that bring mutual economic benefits.

DPR students can directly connect this experience with their international marketing subject. They can analyse why companies choose a franchise model to enter the Malaysian market and how they adapt the product, price, place, and promotion (the 4Ps) to suit local tastes. This interaction helps students see that international marketing is not just about selling products abroad, but also about understanding local culture, regulations, and market dynamics. The trip also helps students build self-confidence and interpersonal skills as they interact with industry experts. This comprehensive exposure helps prepare students to better face the challenges of a career in global marketing.

Conclusion

In summary, academic trips are an incredibly useful platform for helping students grasp international market entry strategies. By getting direct exposure, students can see how the theories they learn in class are applied in real-life situations. This experience not only strengthens their knowledge but also boosts their analytical and critical thinking skills for making marketing decisions. The trips also enhance academic development, self-exploration, and an understanding of industry dynamics through direct interaction.

This direct exposure allows students to link theory with practice. For instance, a visit to Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad (MAHB) helps students understand the role of exporting and logistics in international trade. A trip to Mitsui Outlet Park KLIA introduces students to the concepts of franchising and licensing, where they can observe how international brands operate in Malaysia through franchise models. This hands-on experience helps them understand how companies adapt global marketing strategies for the local market.

Furthermore, these trips contribute to students' academic development by strengthening their knowledge and ability to perform strategic analysis. Exposure to real global strategies encourages them to think critically and build confidence in making decisions based on actual data and situations. Students also build a connection between international marketing theory and local practice, seeing how local culture and regulations influence a company's choice of entry strategy. The trips also build self-exploration and interpersonal skills as students interact with industry experts and peers outside of the classroom. Ultimately, this comprehensive exposure helps students become better prepared to face the challenges of the real working world in global marketing. Therefore, academic trips to places like MAHB and Mitsui Outlet

Park KLIA should be continued and expanded to produce well-rounded, competitive graduates ready to face the global market.

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The Power of Personal Branding: How Personality and Grooming Shape Success in the Workplace

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In today's fast-paced professional landscape, personal branding—including grooming, attire, and attitude—has become a defining factor in shaping an individual's workplace presence and career trajectory. A person's efforts to build and promote oneself to others are known as personal branding. When a person takes charge of their own identity, whether intentionally or unintentionally, they are engaging in personal branding (Jacobson, 2020). Research suggests that beyond qualifications and skills, personal image plays a critical role in hiring decisions and professional advancement. Furthermore, if a workplace populated by highly competent individuals, cultivating robust personal brands will be significantly advantageous not only for the individuals themselves but also for the businesses they represent (Tourky, Foroudi, and Al-Zadjali, 2021).

Grooming—including attire, hygiene, and overall appearance—is a key component of professional branding. A 2024 article in *The Enterprise World* underscores that personal grooming significantly impacts first impressions, confidence levels, and adherence to workplace culture, all of which are crucial for professional success (The Enterprise World, 2024). Moreover, a 2024 study from Flinders University warns that biases based on appearance, or 'lookism,' can influence hiring decisions, particularly in the hospitality and tourism sectors, demonstrating how grooming affects employability (Phys.org, 2024). By strategically managing both internal attributes and external presentation, professionals can enhance their workplace presence, improve networking opportunities, and advance their careers in competitive environments.

Key Sections:

Understanding Personal Branding in the Workplace:

Everyone has their own unique brand; although an individual might not be aware of, acknowledge, accept, or manage their own brand, it is undeniably present nevertheless (Jacobson, 2020). According to Kaputa, 2012, building a name for oneself in the marketplace by emphasizing one's own set of experiences, beliefs, and character traits is known as personal branding. Your personal brand is much influenced by your personality since it shapes your presentation and how people see you. Important responsibilities in this process are performed by key personality qualities like sincerity, constancy, and flexibility. Being authentic enables your personal brand to accurately represent your authentic self, thereby promoting relatability and trust. Jennifer Holloway, a personal branding expert, observes that the most effective personal brands are not excessively curated; they effortlessly capture the unique aspects of an individual's personality (Holloway, 2024).

When people trust one another, it improves the level of cooperation and conversation in a social setting. Scientific studies have shown that people are more likely to trust one another when their actions are congruent with their stated beliefs and promises. Relational ties are strengthened by this alignment, which lessens uncertainty and makes acts more predictable. Being authentic builds trust and engagement, leading to more meaningful work relationships (Brown, 2007).

In today's era of limitless career opportunities, the concept of organizational career growth, which involves an individual's professional development and progress within a company, has become a key focus for businesses. Organizations are increasingly prioritizing this aspect to retain valuable employees and strengthen their competitive edge in the market. By fostering career advancement opportunities within the company, organizations aim to reduce turnover and ensure they remain attractive to top talent.

The Role of Personality in Professional Growth:

The balance between assertiveness and humility has been recognized as an essential factor for enhancing collaboration, leadership, and influence. Assertiveness is the ability to express one's thoughts, feelings, and beliefs with confidence, while humility involves recognizing and acknowledging one's limitations and appreciating the perspectives of others. Integrating these two qualities has been shown to improve decision-making, strengthen interpersonal relationships, and create more productive work environments (Humble, 2015). Intellectual humility, in particular, plays a significant role in this balance, as it allows individuals to

acknowledge the limits of their knowledge, encouraging openness to new ideas and reducing the risk of overconfidence (Mason et al., 2019). This openness not only fosters continuous learning but also allows individuals to be more receptive to diverse viewpoints.

Additionally, the positive psychology framework underscores the importance of balancing self-esteem with humility, as this balance is critical for fostering human flourishing and resilience, especially in the face of challenges (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Humble leaders, in particular, contribute to building a culture of mutual respect, which in turn supports teamwork, trust, and effective conflict resolution (Humble, 2015). Research has consistently highlighted that intellectual humility—understanding the limits of one’s knowledge and remaining open to alternative perspectives—is essential for effective leadership. Mason, Swann, and Sagarin (2019) explain that intellectual humility not only enhances decision-making abilities but also facilitates better collaboration among teams. Leaders who exhibit intellectual humility tend to create environments that encourage innovation, as they are less likely to make decisions based on overconfidence and more likely to foster inclusivity in problem-solving processes.

Moreover, the combination of assertiveness and humility plays a key role in conflict resolution. Leaders who are assertive yet humble are better equipped to handle disagreements constructively, as they can clearly express their views while remaining open to feedback and recognizing the value of others’ opinions. Research on leadership styles has found that "humility in leadership is linked to better conflict management and team cohesion" (Offerman & Coats, 2018). This is because humble leaders are more willing to admit their mistakes and listen to others, creating a trusting environment that facilitates collaboration and effective problem-solving. Practical examples, such as the leadership of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, further illustrate the positive impact of this balance. Carter’s servant-leadership style, which prioritized the needs of others and the greater good, exemplifies how humility in leadership can lead to significant, meaningful change and enhance team dynamics (Houston Chronicle, 2023).

In conclusion, research consistently shows that a combination of assertiveness and humility is critical for effective leadership, fostering positive conflict resolution, and promoting a collaborative organizational culture. By integrating both qualities, leaders are better equipped to make well-informed decisions, enhance team cohesion, and achieve greater success within their organizations.

Conclusion

It comes to the conclusion that personal branding is a useful tool for the development of companies and professions. People should constantly review and adjust their personal brands, he says, considering changes in their job goals in line with changes in the digital ecosystem. According to this paper, using the most recent digital tools and platforms would help one to become more visible and influential. Your grooming and demeanor help to provide a good first impression that might open doors. Awareness of the value of these elements and intentional use of them will help you to strengthen your professional image, hasten the development of your career, and boldly handle issues that develop in the workplace.

Moreover, personal branding inspires employees to be involved by means of a feeling of uniqueness and connection at their job. Encouragement of personal branding projects helps to link business objectives with personal values, hence improving job satisfaction and loyalty. Strong personal brand increases employee visibility and recognition, therefore promoting a culture in which staff members feel inspired, empowered, and valued and ready to contribute their best efforts.

In the end, personal branding helps organizations flourish as well as for personal professional achievement. Building a good personal brand becomes a crucial tactic to draw top talent and lower turnover as companies concentrate more on employee retention and career development. Organizations can match individual objectives with company goals by supporting personal branding projects, therefore encouraging an engaged, empowered, long-term successful culture. Thus, unlocking more career potential and supporting a vibrant working atmosphere depends on investing in personal branding, in terms of personality as much as professional presentation.

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