TO STUDY SALARY COMPENSATION FOR ACADEMICIAN IN EDUCATION INDUSTRY BENCHMARK COMPARISON WITHIN MALAYSIAN EMPLOYMENT MARKET

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A B S T R A C T	K E Y W O R D S
The research is aimed to explore the case study of salary for academician in education industry in comparison towards the benchmark within the overall job employment market in Malaysia. With the rising trend of the business, the job market had been increasing competitive within the employment market. Based on initial understandings, there are multiple suggestion that the compensation package for academicians appear to be less attractive against the compensation from other industries in a non-academician role for the job. With this, the designation of the quantitative study had addressed the comparative analysis using the salary guide to demonstrate the historical salary trend for education industry for the academicians against the accounting and finance related roles in four different industries namely, manufacturing, IT, retail and healthcare. The outcome through the findings had provide solid evidence where the results suggested that IT industry provide the highest compensation package to the individuals where the education industry for academicians appear to be setting lower average against the benchmark agreeing with the initial expectations for the study. The outcome of the study will provide significant drive to understand the needs for the education industry to further develop the revision on the salary compensation package for the academicians to improve the retention of the talents and skills for the teaching force in educational institutions in Malaysia.	Salary compensation., academician, education industry, Malaysia, employment market

Introduction

The job employment market had been very competitive in the market especially in Malaysia where there are multi talents people around competing for the better job prospect over time (Miah, 2018). Therefore, it is no doubt that the current job market in Malaysia had been rising with higher demands over supplies. In the similar perspective, there are a greater number of graduates coming from

universities and colleges each year where the education qualification had been drastically increasing in the market (Wan et al., 2017). With reference to this, there is no significant upper value for bachelor's degree these days where the qualification had become the benchmark to access into the employment market (Ashraf, 2020).

However, the suggestion for the competitive market is believed failed to demonstrate the higher salary adjustment in the market for the education industry. This is mainly contributed by the reasonings that the education industry is lacking in the demand for the professionals like the lecturers and professors over time (Wan et al., 2017). On the other hand, there is another argument that arises mentioning that the unattractive salary range provided from the education industry (Che Ahmat, Arendt & Russell, 2019). It is often being provided the impression that the education professors and lecturers as well as trainers had been recognized as the high-level professional that are highly paid in the market. However, there are often suggestion that demonstrate that the PhD and doctorate holders are struggling to make good earning in the universities and colleges in Malaysia (Hee et al., 2019).

In comparison with the corporate industry, the compensation package is definitely attractive within the business-like manufacturing, IT and retail industry, the average payment for the salary appears to be more attractive due to the higher competitiveness of the business industry (Ismail & Awang, 2017). Therefore, the talent acquisition appears to provide higher compensation to attract higher talent into the business organization. This had been very different into education industry where the demand for the individuals for the roles like lecturers and professors appear to be lower compared to the job market in average (Sinniah et al., 2019). This had created the surplus in the industry leading to the down pressure of the salary package for the education industry (Mohammadi & Karupiah, 2020).

Problem Statement

The problem statement for the current study had been addressed with the major doubt which is identifying the discrepancies in the salary range for the education industry for the professionals like lecturers against the other jobs in other business industry. This will become the solid demonstration of the evidence that will conclude the answer towards the problem statement as highlighted in the current study (Selvanathan et al., 2019). The myth on the low salary range in the education had been widely discussed within the job market in Malaysia but there is no significant research papers that provide the relevance evidence to showed the actual reflection of the job market in Malaysia (Mahzan & Nordin, 2021). Therefore, this provided the force of the motivation to drive this current research study to conclude the achievement to eliminate the problem statement for the study.

Objective of the Research Study

The objective of the research study had been referred as the purpose and aim of the current study which create the motivation for the research to achieve the significant outcome at the end of the study. In addition, the designation of the objective for the research study will provide the clear direction for the purpose of academic study to demonstrate the significant contribution to reflect the rationale in conducting the current study. Furthermore, the research objective had been clear to demonstrate the significant outcome in the analysis of study to arrive at the conclusion that will be able to resolve the problem statement as highlighted in the initial stage of the study.

Research Methodology

The research methodology will introduce the application of the quantitative study method which had been the common approach and research design to assist the exploration of the numerical data. The data input for the current study will be a good fitting into the quantitative study method as the involvement of the salary range in Ringgit Malaysia (RM) value will become the quantifiable measurement to generate the visibility in the quantitative analysis (Mahzan & Nordin, 2021). The benefits for the quantitative analysis as demonstrated will provide the objective outcome in the data analysis where the outcome in the results and findings through the quantitative analysis will be concrete without having the subjectivity and judgment for the research study to draw the conclusion at the end of the research (Sinniah et al., 2018). For the current study, the quantitative study will apply the comparative analysis where the different set of the quantitative data will be put into the analysis to identify the discrepancies through the ability to compare and contrast the quantitative data analysis.

Data Collection Process

The target population for the research study is targeting to explore the salary range in the employment market of Malaysia. With reference to Malaysia, the job employment market had been suitable to fit into the study where Malaysia had been recognized as the developing country in Asia that are having high foreign investment from major MNCs that create a highly competitive job market in the country (Selvanathan et al., 2019). With reference to this, the research will be exploring the secondary data collection as the nature of the salary guide will be published through the recruitment company based on the observation through the historical trend and salary input from actual employees in Malaysia (Da Wan & Morshidi, 2018). The source for the secondary data will be reference to the Jobstreet Malaysia Salary Guide 2023 which had been the most recent published salary guide referring to the current job employment market in Malaysia. For the quantitative study, the data input will be focusing into the collection of the salary range from education industry for the professors and lecturers as well as trainers in comparison with the accounting and finance field relating to four different industries including the manufacturing, IT, retails and healthcare which had been major representation of the business industries in Malaysia (Mohammadi & Karupiah¸2020). The reason for preferring the accounting and finance jobs related salary range is mainly contributed by the highest popularity of the role in demand within the Malaysian job market (Sinniah et al., 2019). The average salary from the different industries will then be analyzed using the comparative analysis for the quantitative study method.

Results and Findings

With reference to the research design as demonstrated, the quantitative study will perform the comparative analysis using fie different sets of quantitative data which includes the average salary of the lecturers, professors and trainers from the education industry comparing against the accounting and finance field average salary for the industry of manufacturing, IT, retail and healthcare in Malaysia.

Table 1: Average Salary based on Salary Guide 2023 by Jobstreet

Level	Education	Manufacturing	IT	Retail	Healthcare
			Accounting / Finance		
Non-Executive	2,200.00	2,300.00	3,250.00	2,160.00	2,100.00
Entry Level	2,400.00	2,640.00	2,750.00	2,350.00	2,760.00
Junior Executive	3,250.00	3,150.00	3,400.00	3,000.00	3,250.00
Senior Executive	4,250.00	4,700.00	5,250.00	4,400.00	5,500.00
Manager	6,000.00	8,000.00	8,400.00	7,250.00	8,000.00
Senior Manager	9,250.00	12,500.00	17,500.00	11,000.00	12,000.00

Based on the results in Table 1, it had provided clear evidence that the industry of IT had been providing higher salary for the accounting and finance role in different business industry. From the results output, it had been clear to identify that the average salary for education industry for the professionals like lecturers, professors and trainers appear to be far from the highest benchmark as observed from the accounting and finance jobs in Malaysian job market. In addition, the industry of healthcare had been showing quite comparable average salary within the accounting and finance roles showing the significant of the healthcare industry in Malaysia.

Table 2: Salary Ranking

Level	Education	Manufacturing	IT	Retail	Healthcare
			Accounting / Finance		
Non-Executive	3	2	1	4	5
Entry Level	4	3	2	5	1
Junior Executive	2	4	1	5	2
Senior Executive	5	3	2	4	1
Manager	5	2	1	4	2
Senior Manager	5	2	1	4	3
Average Ranking	4.00	2.67	1.33	4.33	2.33

Shifting the focus into Table 2, the Table 2 is showing clearer picture to identify the ranking from one to five based on the level of the average salary observed with the comparison across the four industries for the accounting and finance average salary against the average salary from the education industry. With reference to the average ranking points system shown, the IT had been recording the highest average ranking with only 1.33 among all the five categories followed by the healthcare standing second with 2.33 average ranking points while manufacturing industry recorded 2.67 with third in place, the retail industry had been standing last among the five categories and the education industry had been recording fourth in place which is not the last in the categories for the job employment market in Malaysia.

Table 3: Salary Discrepancies from Education Industry

Level	Education	Manufacturing	IT	Retail	Healthcare
			Accounting / Finance		
Non-Executive	2,200.00	4.55%	47.73%	-1.82%	-4.55%
Entry Level	2,400.00	10.00%	14.58%	-2.08%	15.00%
Junior Executive	3,250.00	-3.08%	4.62%	-7.69%	0.00%
Senior Executive	4,250.00	10.59%	23.53%	3.53%	29.41%
Manager	6,000.00	33.33%	40.00%	20.83%	33.33%
Senior Manager	9,250.00	35.14%	89.19%	18.92%	29.73%

Moving on into Table 3, the discrepancies in terms of percentage expression had been identified through the computation of the differences of the average salary for the accounting and finance role

from each of the industry against the average salary from the education industry. In the first view had been clearly indicating the higher average salary in all the industries in totally had been showing the lower average salary in the education industry which had been showing the lack of the growth in the salary range for multiple employment level as demonstrated from Table 3. Only the IT industry had been showing 100% consistency where all the average salary in different employment level had clearly exceed the education industry signaling lack of the education industry to have comparable salary against the highest trending industry in Malaysia. The retails industry appears to be offering the lower side of the average salary in comparison against the benchmark education industry showing the comparable salary range between the two industries. In addition, the average salary for education industry appears to be lowest within the range from senior executive to senior manager showing that the growth in the salary level is very unlikely as the role progress in the education industry in comparison with any other industries as demonstrated in Table 3.

Table 4: Salary Incremental with Employment Level

Level	Education	Manufacturing	IT	Retail	Healthcare
		Accounting / Finance			
Non-Executive	2,200.00	2,300.00	3,250.00	2,160.00	2,100.00
Entry Level	9.09%	14.78%	-15.38%	8.80%	31.43%
Junior Executive	35.42%	19.32%	23.64%	27.66%	17.75%
Senior Executive	30.77%	49.21%	54.41%	46.67%	69.23%
Manager	41.18%	70.21%	60.00%	64.77%	45.45%
Senior Manager	54.17%	56.25%	108.33%	51.72%	50.00%

The Table 4 had been showing the incremental level in expression of percentage to understand the incremental of the salary from each stage of employment level between the five categories as shown. The results in Table 4 had showed that there is no significant winner for this comparative analysis where the different industries seems to be taking the different timing to observe the higher incremental salary in different employment level growth. This indicated that there is no solid evidence to point out which employment level will be more rewarding based on the industries comparison where the growth in the salary increment is very much variable based on the nature of the business and roles.

Discussion

The outcome from the findings and results derived from the quantitative analysis had provided the relevance discussion towards the purpose of the research study. Firstly, the identification on the average salary through the ranking had provide clear understanding that the IT industry had been the best paying industry for the job for accounting and finance related roles which is not a surprising fact considering the current business trend as the IT industry had been growing rapidly in the business industry inducing the development of higher compensation package for the employees. This contributed to the potential reason drawn for the observation of highest average salary for the IT industry due to the higher business growth and sales revenue for the relevance business organization in this industry.

The healthcare industry had been considered as the second preference based on the ranking system which could be contributed by the stability of the industry where the healthcare industry tends to be consistently in demand within the market of consumer demands as the medical supplies had been

common when comes to the necessity for the consumers which is unlikely to be affected by the economic cycle. Therefore, the healthcare industry tends to be able to produce reasonably good compensation package to retain their high talent employees within the job employment market in Malaysia.

However, the ranking system had pointed out significant evidence where the education industry had been far below the average standings in comparison with other industries where the role of educator had been showing lacking good compensations despite being recognized of being the high professional within the education industry. This had been in alignment with the initial understanding where the education industry appears to be having lower salary range package in comparison with a normal corporate employee. To the surprise, the retail industry had showed to be standing last behind the education industry signaling the potential address of the low skills requirement within the retail industry resulting in lower average salary in the employment for the accounting and finance personnel. The lack of attractiveness of the education industry average salary package had been highly supported by the fact in the observation of the discrepancies of the average salary from education industry against other industries. The observation in the findings had suggested that the growth for the average salary within education industry had been relatively slow especially progressing into higher employment level. As a result, the average salary for education industry appears to be significant lowest among all the five categories within the comparative analysis data. This would provide the evidence to suggest the lack of growth in the compensation package for the lecturers and professors had become the limiting factor for the development of the compensation package within the education industry leading to higher attractiveness for the corporate employees in other industries.

This had been supported by the lower comparison of the average salary within all employment level within the salary range demonstrated through the historical survey data through the salary guide. This would indicate that there is agreement with the previous understanding where the average salary for education industry is not attractive leading to the higher reasoning where more individuals in Malaysia tend to dive into the career other than education related role and industry where the opportunity would likely to offer a higher compensation package and provide higher stability for he career growth progression in aligned with the incremental of the salary package for the employees. Therefore, it is no doubt that more individuals are leaving the education industry role in Malaysia where the education institutions may need to revisit on addressing the reasonable salary range for the education industries for the professionals like lecturers and professors.

Contribution of Study

The outcome of the study had been contributing significant value to the relevant parties to benefits from the conclusion of the study. Firstly, it is no doubt that the findings for the current study had been very interesting due to the lack of exploration in the similar scope of interest within the academic where the outcome for the current study will provide great value of references towards the academic resulting to the effort to close down the gap in the literature review for the research scope. In addition, the current outcome of study will also provide the opportunity for the researchers and academicians to further the scope of interest to extend the understanding towards the relevance topic in understanding the salary range and compensation package within the employment market in Malaysia.

Besides, the outcome for the study had been crucial to address the potential discrepancies of the salary package especially for those individuals that are interested to become an educator in their career in

education industry. The assessment in the difference in the salary range for the education industry against the benchmark for the corporate role like accounting and finance would provide a good feel to identify the potential compensation to be obtained within the career. This will become especially helpful for those individuals that remained divided to explore the future career between becoming an academician within education industry or becoming a corporate employee in other industry.

Furthermore, the comparison of the benchmark compensation package in terms of the salary level had been a crucial address for the education institutions in Malaysia. In the wake of the lack of attractiveness of the compensation package for the academicians, the alarming concerns should trigger the revisit for the education industry including universities and colleges in Malaysia to assess the potential revision required for the salary range for the lecturers and professors which will help to attract more quality talents and skillful individuals to join into the teaching force for the education institutions in Malaysia.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the outcome for the current research study had proved that the average salary for the academicians within the education industry is not as attractive as the corporate employees as accounting and finance personnel in other industries. The agreement with the previous suggestion on the lower and less attractive compensation for the education industry could become a concerning factor for Malaysian education industry to revisit in order to avoid further destruction in driving away the talents from education industry. With the forecast of the shortage for the teaching employees in the future, it will be important to implement the risk mitigation strategy to improve the employees retentions for the existing academicians as well as attracting new talents into the education industry creating higher supply for the workforce to engage as the future academicians for the long-term career in Malaysia.

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