

# The Analysis of Career Choice Factors and Ways to Address Unemployment Problems among Youths at the Perak State Youth Council

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## Abstract

This study examines the factors of career choice among youths and ways to overcome unemployment problems in the State of Perak. Qualitative approach with the use of Hermeneutic Method is used in this study. Questionnaires were distributed to 100 youths in Perak state consisting of 50 youths living in rural areas and 50 youths living in urban areas. The findings show that there are various difficulties faced by youths in obtaining jobs in rural areas compared to the difficulties faced by youth in urban areas. Similarly, ways to overcome unemployment problems among youths in rural areas compared to urban areas. The findings show that lesser job opportunities have contributed to the major factors of unemployment and youth unemployment in rural and urban areas. The conclusions from this study show some important decisions in identifying the difficulty factors of youths getting jobs in rural and urban areas as well as measures to address these problems. Cooperation from various parties can reduce the difficulty and unemployment problems that occur among youths in Perak.

**Keywords:** Career, Unemployment, Youths, Hermeneutics Method

## Introduction

Youth is the backbone of the country's economic development. Various programs are designed for youth participation in particular career programs as they will become leaders, professionals and skilled workers in the future. Career is an important activity in one's life and will be content with his life if he has a career that is fixed and secure. Career is said to be a source of strength to one's in realizing a more manageable life. In addition, career is also an important aspect in the development of one's life because it does not only affect the pattern of life, but also determine the status, identity and social role of a person in the future.

Unemployment among youths is a waste because the country would not be able to fully utilize the skills and knowledge they face due to the increasing unemployment problem every year, especially the unemployment that occurs among local or private university graduates. Employment is an important activity in an individual's life when it can have a fixed, secure job and can improve living standards in a better direction. Most of these unemployed youths are

not due to unemployment or receiving job offers but perhaps the posts offered are not compatible with them. Currently, many youths are still looking for jobs that are in line with the academic qualification status they have.

The rapid development of the country will certainly create competition that brings about changes in one's life, especially in terms of education, employment, family and their daily life (Yusof, 2013). Therefore, proper and appropriate career choice is crucial in determining the future pattern of life by engaging in the field of work that can deliver satisfaction with being productive, skilled, and committed to the career and in line with the wishes of the nation's vision to become a developed nation ahead year 2020.

### **Literature Review**

The finding of the study by Maziah Che Yusoff (2005) state that the usual monetary benefits that are regarded as a priority in career selection is not the most important factor for youths in choosing career. According to this study, survey respondents are more concerned with social security such as pensions, EPF and medical benefits as well as job security versus financial benefits and academic achievement. However, they also have different perspectives in which the male groups choose employment guarantees while the women's groups prefer the benefits of the service.

Ravi's study (2015) found that there was a relationship between attitude and desire in the selection of entrepreneurship career where this study showed that Indian students at the undergraduate level had positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship as their career. The findings also show that desires are an important element and motivate individuals to become entrepreneurs by formulating an entrepreneurial activity clearly and successfully in the field of entrepreneurial entrepreneurship.

Tharuka and Ivy Maria (2018) studies, Singapore experienced an increasing number of tertiary students who are keen to work in Singapore after graduating to get a better career. According to Chaos Theory of Careers (CTC), individuals make career decisions subject to change and are not systematic. The study interviewed 26 respondents, comprising foreign graduates who aimed to understand the role of unplanned influence and the complexity of the CTC in finding jobs in Singapore. The findings show that the results of job-related selection are subject to the influence or change they see and respond, and therefore they are not systematic or fixed in making decisions.

Rapa, Diemer and Bañales (2017) studies show that individual or collective social actions to bring about social change can improve career development for those who are marginalized. However, the specific mechanisms that underlie these critical action career development associations are not well understood. Thus, the researcher explored the role of critical action that linked critical actions with youthful expectations of adolescence and adult work achievement, uniting with previous studies connecting critical awareness to career development, social mobility pathways, and employment achievement among marginalized youth.

### **Problem Statement**

The issue of unemployment has become a sensitive issue to the community, especially among graduates. The unemployment issues are increasingly becoming a globalization disease for all developing and developed countries. Therefore, every year the Malaysian government provides job opportunities to fill vacancies in the government or private sectors to cater for the labour force and reduce unemployment issues among its people, especially youth.

Although many job opportunities have been opened and offered, unemployment issues still exist.

According to Statistics of Main Labour Force in Malaysia in July 2017, the labour force participation rate in July 2017 was 67.7 per cent, decreased 0.1 per cent from the previous month. The year-to-year comparison also showed a decrease in the labour energy participation rate by 0.1 per cent. The unemployment rate in July 2017 was 3.5 per cent, up 0.1 per cent over the previous month, while the year-to-year comparison, the unemployment rate did not change. On a season-to-month adjustment, the unemployment rate in July 2017 was 3.5 per cent, increased 0.1 per cent compared to the previous month.

The youth are the most vulnerable groups with this condition. This group may be the last group to work and the first group to be laid off due to lack of experience, knowledge and skills in the field of work. Every youth has their own choice of career choices that are appropriate to the academic qualifications, knowledge and skills they possess. Each youth also has a different tendency and interest in something. Similarly, in career choices, the right choice should be made to avoid regretting in the future. According to Zairoslawanee (2014), every individual wants a career that can guarantee life in the future.

Career selection is not an easy matter and one is often influenced by the knowledge and the factors in the environment during the career selection process. Therefore, the researcher feels that a research should be done to look at the factors affecting career choice in rural areas as opposed to urban for youth in Perak to avoid unemployment problems continue to occur.

### **Research Objectives**

- i) Identify the factors of career choice among youth in rural areas compared to urban areas in the state of Perak.
- ii) Identify ways to overcome unemployment problems among youth in rural areas as compared to urban areas in the state of Perak.

### **Research Methodology**

This study uses descriptive qualitative method in the form of Hermeneutics method. This method is used to interpret the questionnaire text to study and analyse the difficulty factors faced by the Perak youths to get the job and the means to overcome the problem. According to the Hermeneutical method, the questionnaire is the text and the result after interpreting the text is meta text. Meta text refers to a new clearer text created after understanding the text in depth. Meta text is the second text derived from the original text (Suppiah, 2016). In this study, the meta text is the result of the interpretation made on the questionnaire which contains an explanation of the meaning sought in the text.

The study involved youths living in the rural areas of Gerik and Ipoh, Perak. The location of this study was chosen because it was appropriate with the problem and there were suitable subjects and respondents to answer the research question. The population of the study focused on various age groups of youth in the Perak state of 100 people whose sex, race, settlement area and level of education were identified as respondents of this study.

### **Research Outcome**

Based on the original texts that have been interpreted using the Hermeneutical method, researchers are able to look at factors that cause difficulties for youth to get jobs in rural areas compared to urban areas and ways to overcome unemployment problems among youth in

rural areas as opposed to urban areas in the state of Perak. Table 1 shows the difficulty factors for youths seeking employment in rural areas compared to urban areas.

Table 1

*Comparison of the Difficulty Factors of Youth in Getting Work in Rural Areas with City Areas*

No of Respondent	Transport		Employer's Attitude		Education Level		Working Experience		Income/Salary		Family Commitment		Working Experience		Living Cost		Lack of career information		Total
	LB	B	LB	B	LB	B	LB	B	LB	B	LB	B	LB	B	LB	B	LB	B	
R1	/																		1
R2					/														1
R3							/												1
R4							/		/										2
R5							/												1
R6	/										/			/					3
R7	/						/												2
R8							/												1
R9							/												1
R10							/												1
R11	/																		1
R12							/												1
R13							/		/										2
R14			/																1
R15							/		/										2
R16	/				/									/					3
R17							/												1
R18	/	/	2	R19			-												
R20																	/		1
R21																	/		1
R22							/												1
R23							/												1
R24							/												1
R25			/																1
R26			/																1
R27							/												1
R28							/										/		2
R29	/						/						/			/			4
R30							/												1
R31							/												1
R32							/												1
R33							/												1
R34							/												1
R35	/				/		/												3
R36			/				/												2
R37	/						/												2
R38	/						/												2

R39	/			/	2
R40			/		1
R41			/		1
R42		/			1
R43			/		1
R44			/		1
R45	/				1
R46			/		1
R47	/	/		/	3
R48			/		1
R49			/		1
R50		/	/	/	3

Table 1 shows that the identification of employment in rural areas is experiencing a significant shortage of job opportunities compared to urban areas. A total of 36 respondents in rural areas agreed to state that limited employment opportunities were the main factor of the difficulty of youth getting jobs in rural areas while 12 respondents in urban areas agreed that limited employment opportunities contributed to the major factors of youth difficulty gaining employment in urban areas.

In addition, from the aspect of transportation, rural areas experienced higher transportation accessibility problems than in urban areas where 11 respondents in the rural areas felt that lack of public transport contributed to the second factor that made it difficult for youths to find employment in rural areas and on the other hand, in urban areas the transportation factor recorded a lower number compared to the work competition factor due to population density in urban areas.

There is a significant difference between rural and urban areas in terms of obtaining jobs based on the level of education where youth in rural areas have lower rates than the high rates recorded in urban areas that contribute to the difficulty of finding youth employment. Some employers take the choice of employees who have certain educational qualifications before deciding to work.

Furthermore, the lack of information on a job recorded high numbers in rural areas as compared to urban areas where 4 respondents in rural areas noted that lack of facilities and mobility prevented youths from obtaining information about their career in rural areas compared to urban areas which has complete facilities for obtaining job information.

In addition, there is also a payback factor, work experience, financial factors and a young age factor contributing to the difficulty of youths in obtaining jobs in rural and urban areas. Overall, the difficulty in obtaining employment in rural areas is higher than in urban areas.

According to Table 2, it is found out that in terms of job identification in both areas, 23 respondents from rural areas suggest ways to overcome the problem of unemployment among youths is to provide more employment opportunities in rural areas while 20 respondents in the area the city expresses an almost equal view with the highest number amongst other ways of addressing other unemployment problems by recommending the authorities to open more job opportunities for youth in urban areas.

The increase in rural and urban areas will be able to provide new employment opportunities to youths in the field of employment. In addition, there is a significant difference between rural areas and urban areas in overcoming unemployment problems in terms of

career campaigns and skills. In the rural areas the proposal to organize a career campaign gets a higher number of 13 respondents than the proposed skill development and in contrast, in the proposed urban areas increase the skills to get a higher number of 8 respondents compared to the city's career campaign.

Next is the difference in the aspects of hiring foreign workers between rural areas and urban areas. In rural areas, restrictions on hiring foreigners do not get much higher than in urban areas with a record of 6 respondents. Limiting the recruitment of foreign workers will reduce the competition between local youths and foreigners in the quest for job opportunities.

In addition, in rural areas 2 respondents suggested to increase mobility and facilities in the rural areas as a means of overcoming unemployment by facilitating the movement of youth to find information on jobs compared to urban areas that have sufficient mobility and facilities.

Table 2  
 Comparison of How to Solve Unemployment Problems among Youth in the Regions  
 Rural areas with Urban Areas

No of Respondent	Working Experience		Skill level		Career Campaign		The Influx of Foreign Workers		Income / Salary		Mobility facilities		New Sectors / (business)		Total
	LB	B	LB	B	LB	B	LB	B	LB	B	LB	B	LB	B	
R1	/					/						/			3
R2	/						/	/							3
R3									/						2
R4	/								/						2
R5	/	/													2
R6	/								/					/	3
R7	/	/													2
R8	/	/													2
R9		/	/			/									2
R10	/	/													2
R11	/					/									2
R12														/	1
R13	/													/	2
R14		/					/								2
R15	/														1
R16		/					/								2
R17									/						2
R18		/					/								2
R19						/	/								2
R20						/	/								2
R21		/					/								2
R22		/					/								2
R23	/	/													2
R24		/	/												2
R25														/	1

R26 /	/	2 R27	-					
R28				/	/			2
R29	/	/						2
R30	/		/					2
R31	/			/				2
R32	/		/			/		3
R33	/	/				/		3
R34	/		/	/				3
R35	/	/						2
R36	/					/		2
R37			/	/				2
R38	/				/			2
R39	/							1
R40				/				1
R41	/							1
R42	/							1
R43		/						1
R44		/		/				2
R45					/	/		2
R46	/							1
R47 / /	/	2 R48	-					
R49						/		1
R50			/			/		2

## Discussion

Researchers found that the lack of job opportunities has contributed to the major factor of the difficulty faced by the youth get to work. The lack of development done in the rural areas has led the youth to find a job as compared to the rapid development in urban areas. However, youth in urban areas are forced to compete for jobs due to the increasing population in urban areas. In addition, with the increase in foreign workers, some employers prefer to employ foreign workers as compared to local workers. This adds to the existing problems when youths are forced to compete with foreigners for job opportunities.

In rural areas, lack of mobility facilities and facilities such as public transport make it difficult for youth to move to a place in search of employment in rural areas and instead this problem is not felt at all by youths in urban areas due to public transport facilities which are readily available in urban areas. This finding is supported by the study of Rapa, Diemer and Banales (2017) where career development, social mobility pathways and employment achievement among marginalized youths should be encouraged to achieve higher employment status in adulthood and social injustice can be reduced.

Besides that, the attitude of some employers who choose to hire employees with excellent academic qualifications, certain work experience and skills have caused problems in the unemployment problem in Perak. The excessive eligibility requirements make it difficult for young people to apply for jobs because of the employer's tendency to overtake qualified individuals without providing opportunities for other youths to seek work experience. This finding is supported by the study of Wambu, Hutchison and Pietrantoni (2017) which shows that some youths have excellent academic achievement and ability but weaknesses such as

weak language domination have to be faced because it is considered necessary to make career choices.

Several ways have been identified in addressing the unemployment problem among youths, adding more job opportunities, especially for youths in rural areas and urban areas. Incentives from authorities that encourage youths to engage in the business and entrepreneurship industry are able to reduce unemployment problems by offering more job opportunities to fill vacancies by youth. This is supported by Ravi (2015) who finds positive attitudes and aspirations for entrepreneurship as a career, is an important element and motivates individuals to succeed in entrepreneurship.

The increase in rural development by creating new companies is able to overcome the shortage of job opportunities experienced by youth in rural areas and instead improve the employment sector which provides the advantage of skill trainings to youth in urban areas those who are looking for work experience. Furthermore, the measures to overcome the unemployment problem by limiting the influx of foreign workers into the employment sector by giving more employment opportunities to youths in rural and urban areas. Additionally, the attitude of a very select group of youths to work has to be changed in overcoming the unemployment problem by engaging in the job sector without thinking of financial factors alone and trying out various types of job sectors to find work experience. This finding is supported by Tharuka and Ivy (2018) opinions in which attitude affects the career choice by applying any occupation regardless of relevance or interest and accepting any job offers that exist.

### **Conclusion**

This study is a small effort contributing to the employment sector in explaining the difficulties in obtaining jobs and measures to address unemployment problems among youths in rural and urban areas in the state of Perak. According to this research, it is found that the employment in rural areas is experiencing a significant shortage of job opportunities compared to urban areas. This has caused serious unemployment problem among youths in rural areas of Perak state. The Perak State Council plays an important role in taking steps and actions that can solve the unemployment problems. Efforts, commitments and readiness from stakeholders can contribute to addressing the problems that occur in the state of Perak in creating special employment opportunities for youths. Disclosure of information on various types of careers with the organization of career selection, career campaigns and information obtained through the website or the experiences of people around can help the youth in planning to make an appropriate career choice. Therefore, this study is recommended to be used as a basic guide that can be used by other researchers, lecturers, stakeholders in the effort to increase employment opportunities for youths. In addition, researchers also hope that all youths should take advantage of job opportunities so that they can guarantee the future.

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