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Unemployment Issues and Problems in Kinta, Manjung and Kuala Kangsar, Perak, Malaysia

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Abstract

Unemployment is one of the macroeconomic problems that signal the inefficient use of capital resource in the market. The research on unemployment in the Districts of Kinta, Manjung and Kuala Kangsar in Perak aims to identify the issues and problems related to the unemployment as public participation has become a driver that determine the future generation. A survey on 203 of respondents conducted randomly was to assess the current socio-economic condition of unemployment. Issues identified such as mismatched in location of work and availability of workers and increase of foreign worker in the local labor market. Hence, several recommendations proposed to overcome the issues of unemployment in the study.

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Keywords: Unemployment; macroeconomic problems; issues and problems of unemployment; foreign worker

1. Introduction

Over the past decades, unemployment in Malaysia shows fluctuations from early 1980's to 2010. Recent economic development in 2010, Malaysia had set a target to achieve a high income nation through

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inclusivity and sustainability by year 2020. This programme was translated from Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) in which a high income nation can be achieved via three vital principles. The principles are high income nation, inclusiveness and sustainability. Unfortunately, unemployment is a crucial scenario faced by developing country especially with saturation of population due to lack of vacancies offered, huge influx of foreign worker, mismatch skills and the job selection, spatial job location offered, higher demand on semi-skilled workers and others. Thus, it will result in wastages of human labour towards nation especially in local labour. Unemployment is a stress condition that gives crucial impact to the society and national development. Durjadin and Goffette-Nagot (2007) stated unemployment may reduce one's self-esteem by affecting the individual performance in terms of social, physical and economical. The effects of unemployment rely on certain factors which are social problems and supported by Firmansyah et al. (2012). Therefore, wasted the labour force, government tax increased and higher spending on welfare of unemployed people are among impact of unemployment.

The unemployment study will be focusing on the issues and problem of unemployment in state of Perak by involving three districts namely Kinta, Manjung and Kuala Kangsar in terms of physical, social, and economic perspective. Thus, all data generated shall be confined to the area of this subject only. The area of study shall covered a few districts in state of Perak that focusing on a few types of land uses activity such as housing and commercial area. Therefore, the data collected is generated from those listed areas only.

The goal of community sustainability is to establish local economies that are economically viable, environmentally harmony and socially responsible. Achieving this goal requires participation from all sectors of the community, both to determine community needs and to identify and implement innovative and appropriate solutions. Thus, it presents information from a variety of sources on approaches and techniques used successfully in different communities to develop key aspects in shaping their local economies on a sustainable basis.

1.1. Study objectives

The objectives of this study are as follow:

- i. To indentify the issues and problems of unemployment in related districts of Kinta, Manjung and Kuala Kangsar;
- ii. To recognize the possible factors caused unemployment in related districts of Kinta, Manjung and Kuala Kangsar;
- iii. To study the impact of unemployment in related districts of Kinta, Manjung and Kuala Kangsar;
- iv. To suggest recommendations as mitigations pertaining to unemployment issues and problems.

2. Definition of unemployment

Unemployment can be categorized into three major aspects which are physical, social and economic. Shore & Tashchian, (201, p. 983-984) explained that unemployment will affect the physical and mental health of unemployed people. Both of them agreed that, physical unemployment can be defined as affected by physical health condition of not being employed or physical defects like physically handicapped, impaired hearing, hearing and visionary impaired, respiratory system tend to have longer duration of unemployment as compared to physically unimpaired persons (Diehl, 1935).

Unemployment rate =	The number of persons unemployment in the specified category	X 100
	The number of person in the labour force in the same	

category

On the other hand, unemployment can caused social exclusion as it affects the emotion instability as their felt shame on being unemployed. Starrin, (2002, p. 1) considered poverty among unemployed people as main factor that caused social exclusion. However, from economic perspective, Zhao (2012, p. 586) figured out that "unemployment represents unutilized labor resource; it can be argued that an increase in unemployment rate, ceteris paribus, causes additional efficiency losses. Based on Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2011, unemployment rate can be elaborated as:

2.1. Types of unemployment

There are five types of unemployment based on research done by Hussainat, Ghnimat and Al-dlaeen (2013, p. 157). The types of unemployment are as follows:

i. Fricative Employment

It is when one part of economy goes towards progress and the other goes towards getting down which leads to demanding special jobs and works.

- *ii. Hierarchical Unemployment* It is the change in the ways of production by having new technology to replace the man power.
- *Seasonal Unemployment* This is resulted from the setback of economic and weather conditions in some seasons which lead to an inactive work.
 Cruicel Unemployment
- *Cynical Unemployment* It includes all sectors of economic activity which resulted from some conditions as wars, general inactive economy.
- *Disguised Unemployment* It is the increasing of workers in the institution in which each one has a sub work does not offer him his basic needs.

2.2. Factors of unemployment

Previous researchers claimed, the causes of unemployment come from economic growth and social development. Johnson (1967) points out the tariff affect economic growth as cited by Bhattacharyya & Biswas (1987, p. 4) because tariff leading leads to discourage exports and create the situation of welfare loss. As Bhorat, (2007) cited by (Eita & Ashipala, 2010, p. 94) "economic theory states that high education results in a greater likelihood of employment. In many middle and low income countries there is shortage of highly educated individual and this result in high unemployment". Thus, Blanchard & Wolfers (2000) as cited by (Walter & Xie, 2008, p. 2) there is lacking in previous research related to unemployed people from economic perspective especially in terms of adverse economic shocks, adverse labour market institutions and relation between the two. Based on the recent studies conducted by Hussainant, Ghnimat, and Al-dlaeen (2012, p. 157), psychological and emotion problems such as depression and low self-esteem are among illness that lead to social exclusion. On the other hand, depression also will correlate with low self-esteem due to not having confidence to face local community as well as hopelessness for being unemployed.

2.3. Issues and problems of unemployment

Issues and problems of unemployment been identified form previous literature review are the issue of gap wage between levels of education (Beaudry & Green, 2000, p. 1-8). Next, emergence huge numbers of foreign workers has increase the rate of unemployment in Malaysia in late 1990s. The situations of flooded foreign workers have worsened the local human capital in order to search job. Among the reasons behind it has proved by Ramendran & Yacob (2012, p. 531-534). Other rising issue of unemployment are mismatch of job opportunities and location of worker. This issue is highlighted by Sahin et al. (2013, p. 1-8) whereby job location is relating to the planner's distribution of locations sectors. Another issues of skills and jobs based on the Barnard et al. (2001) cited Rahmah Ismail, Ishak Yussof & Sieng, 2011, p. 6) jobs and skills mismatches occurred when right skills meets job that follows possess skill affect the wages, productivity and probability to get a job. This statement supported by Sahin et al. (2013, p. 6) which "only quantifies the number of job-seekers searching in the wrong sector, but not how such misallocation lowers the job-findings rate and raises unemployment".

2.4. Impact of unemployment

Eita & Ashipala (2010, p. 92) stated the impact of unemployment is closely related to poverty, homelessness and family cohesion affects. All of these negative impacts will lead to serious crime rates such as crime violence, prostitution and alcoholism that possibly collapse the family institution. Nevertheless, unemployment cause negative lifestyle and cause depression as the demand of current lifestyle and high cost of living. Linn, Sandifier & Stein (1985, p. 502) mentioned that "unemployment might be expected to increase anxiety and depression, lead to lower self-esteem, and produce adverse health consequences, particularly when efforts to locate work are met with failure over a long period of time". On the other hand, researchers also found, the psychological function of unemployed increased the physical symptoms such as loss appetite, sleep, and sexual interest and surrounded under depression status. This study was supported by Kessler, Turner & House (1998, p. 75) which claims the impact of unemployment may leads to health problems by differences of stress and strains. Siti Huzaimah., et.al. (2012) otherwise mentioned, having huge responsibilities could leads to stress. Thus, physical and emotional factors were affected which tend to involve in drinking, drug use, or even suicidal.

Nonetheless, researcher found that positive impact on psychological distress which will motivates more active job searching-continuous employment. They will experience distress at the same time and will be more active in their job search. On the other hand, Thomas, McCabe & Berry (1980) found that unemployment may replace loss quality time being with family while still in working time before. Social impact caused from unemployment has been further elaborated by Jones (1988, p. 200-201) as it could affect family members especially children. Head of family is obliged with responsibility to earn money; however, if unemployment occurs towards breadwinner, children may suffer from having a good education provision, received stress impact from their parent due to financial constraints.

3. Methodology

Methodology is essential in examining the sets of data that is suit with the research objectives and research questions. The data collection should come from two sources of findings which are Primary Data and Secondary Data. Primary Data is gained through distribution of questionnaires and interviews upon the target group. Surveys and interviews from primary data will be translated into Social Science (SPSS). A few methods of analyzing the data were used for this study such as Cross Tabulation, Correlation Coefficient (Pearson Correlation and Spearman's Rho) and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

3.1. Method of data collection

Method of data collection is based on conveniently random sampling method whereby all of unemployed people have the chances to answer the questionnaires. Sampling of population of unemployment in three districts of Kinta, Manjung and Kuala Kangsar is 141 numbers of respondents. Data of unemployment are hard to be reached since the focused group will be based on unemployed people only. Thus, the sets of questionnaires had been distributed into few types of land uses activities such as housing, commercial and recreational area. On the other hand, Secondary Data from various reports and authorize publications.

3.2. Descriptive analysis

Based on the findings, the unemployed people in area of Kinta, Manjung and Kuala Kangsar were dominance by Male (58.9%) as compared to Female (41.1%) in which more than (50%) is Malay followed Chinese (12.9%), India (6.4%). Therefore, it shows that the majority of unemployment came from young people in between age 21 years old to 30 years old as compared to any other age of group. In addition to that, more than half of the respondents (66.7%) received secondary school of education, followed by tertiary education (23.4%) and primary school only (5.7%). There are cases of respondents who do not attend schools and do not receive any educational background.

In terms of marital status, unmarried respondents with (62.4%) tend to be unemployed as compared to married, divorced and widowed due to less number of dependent except for him / her. Household income of the unemployed respondents when they were recruited before, mostly received below than RM 999 with 37.6%. This leads to the small percentage of financial assistance receiver due to high cost of living. Among the schemes for financial aid that offered assistance are "*Bantuan Sara Hidup*", Financial Assistance Scheme for Single Mother and Zakat Assistance.

Meanwhile, approximately 80 % of unemployed people have working experiences and been worked around one until 5 years terms. Hence, as for salary scale offered while still been working, the range of salary starting is different. However, most of respondents claimed that earned below than RM 1,000 with 48.2% resulted for causes of resignation.

In terms of unemployment history, 51.1% of respondents have duration of being unemployed are less than 6 month and most of the respondents still actively looking for a job with 84.2%. Less than 20% found out that hard to find a replacement job within short period of time as well as faced other problems like financial constraint and family matters (taking care of sick family members and etc.).

On the other hand, there are few method used by respondents in searching for job and the most popular medium in search the job by respondents are via family and friends with 68.1% agreed to use this kind of medium as compared to other medium. Unlike connected through family and friends, the least

preferred method used by respondents is Job Fair with only 10.6%. There are other alternative ways for search the job through local employment agencies as 50.4% of respondents had registered with the local employment agencies. The most selected local employment agencies are Public Service Commission of Malaysia with percentage of 40.4%.

Finally, in terms of skills, majority of the respondents are able to speak and write in Malay language with 50.4% and 44.0%. On the other hand, ability to speak and write in English language seems moderate with 41.1% and 36.2%. Majority have the ability to use computer software with 79.4% as well as ability to use computer keyboard 73.8%.

3.3. Inferential analysis and findings

Inferential analysis is an analysis that focuses on the developed hypotheses in order to test the relationship of selected variables. Pearson Correlation Analysis been used when there is ordinal and scale data need to be tested out as one of the variables relationship. It is capable in determining whether the significant relationship has the strong or weak relationship based on the value of correlation (r). The strong and weak correlation can be determined based on the positive and negative relationship among the tested variables.

Besides that, One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) also has been used as an analysis for mean comparison between the groups when there is differences of two or more interval and ratio scale data.

Hypothesis Testing 1:

H₀ = There is no significant between educational background and individual impact of unemployment

H₁ = There is significant between educational background and individual impact of unemployment

Skills	Correlation coefficient	Sig. (2- tailed)	No. of respondents	Hypothesis
Low self-esteem	-0.235**	0.005	141	Rejected
Stress and anxiety of job loss	0.016	0.849	141	Failed to reject
Loss of identity	-0.030	0.728	141	Failed to reject
Feeling isolation	-0.017	0.840	141	Failed to reject
Increased alcohol uses	0.059	0.487	141	Failed to reject
Easily influenced in self-destructive habits such as smoking, drug use, alcohol use	-0.036	0.673	141	Failed to reject
Decreased in purchasing power	-0.039	0.647	141	Failed to reject
Increase in leisure activity	-0.034	0.686	141	Failed to reject

Table 3. Pearson correlation of educational background towards individual impact of unemployment

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) (Source: Fieldwork survey, 2012)

Based on the Table Pearson Correlation of Educational Background towards Individual Impact of Unemployment, the result shows a very weak relationship of education background with low self-esteem through significance level of 0.005 due to r = -0.235. Hence, the null hypothesis (H_o) can be rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted (H₁). There is significant between educational background and individual impact of unemployment.

Hypothesis Testing 2:

 H_0 = There is no significant differences mean between working experience and spatial mismatch of job opportunities.

 H_1 = There is significant differences means between working experience and spatial mismatch of job opportunities.

Table 4.	ANOVA	test of working	experience w	ith issues and	problems of unem	ployment in Malaysia

Issues		Mean square	Sig.	Hypothesis
Increase of foreign worker in the market	Between groups	4.262	0.328	Fail to reject
	Within Groups	3.789		
Low-wage	Between groups	6.136	0.224	Fail to reject
	Within Groups	4.050		
Mismatch of jobs and skills	Between groups	10.520	0.060	Fail to reject
	Within Groups	3.657		
Spatial mismatch (jobs opportunities and location of worker)	Between groups	15.951	0.005	Rejected
	Within Groups	2.926		
Disability to communicate well and include oral and written communication	Between groups	6.731	1.505	Fail to reject
	Within Groups	4.233		
The courses or/and subjects that the applicable to the industry	Between groups	1.532	0.602	Fail to reject
	Within Groups	3.007		
Not prepared to re-locate to smaller towns	Between groups	6.410	0.145	Fail to reject
	Within Groups	3.274		

(Source: Fieldwork survey, 2012)

Based on the Table above, there are significance differences in the mean for the working experience and issues of unemployment in Malaysia through spatial mismatch of jobs opportunities and location of worker with 0.005 level of significant where p = <0.05. Thus, null hypothesis (H₀) can be rejected and alternative hypothesis (H₁) can be accepted from the result of ANOVA Test. The alternative hypothesis (H₁) stated that there is significant differences mean between working experience and spatial mismatch of job opportunities.

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4. Discussion

Research objectives of the unemployment study are achieved based on the literature review and extensive data finding and analysis. This objective is achievable based on the literature review study from previous researchers, dissertations, journals and papers in order to picture the actual factor caused unemployment. Among the factor of unemployment are imbalances economic performance within certain time, information of job is hardly to reach community especially in rural area and psychological factor for being unemployed in longer duration.

Nevertheless, the issues of unemployment in Malaysia are increasing due to the foreign worker in the market, spatial mismatch (jobs opportunities and location of worker), low-wage, mismatch of jobs and skills, disability to communicate well and include oral and written communication, not prepared to relocate to smaller towns and the courses or/and subjects that the graduates studied are not relevant and not applicable to the industry. Thus, the objective one and two are achieved through the method of analysis selected in identifying which are the higher issues listed. In addition, among impacts identified in the related districts are low self-esteem, decrease in purchasing power, feeling isolation, loss of identity, increase leisure activity, restricted access to service and public transportation, increased alcohol use, easily influence in self-destructive habits, hence achieved objective three. Finally, objective four is achieved through suggestions and recommendations provided.

5. Recommendations

5.1. Control number of foreign worker in the local market

The admission foreign workers need to be look as one of the threat that affects local labor especially for the group of young people. One of way to overcome of admission foreign worker into local labor market is by strongly opposes memorandum between ASEAN country on mass recruitment of foreign worker into local market. The job vacancies should be given to Malaysian university graduates, school leavers, unemployed and poverty group (Mohamed, Ramendran & Yacob, 2012).

On the other hand, policies to control immigrants and foreign workers should be formed as to relieve public stress due to flooding of foreign workers. Profile of foreign workers registered under responsible foreign worker agent need to be audited regularly by The Immigration Office and The Police Department for instance. Investigation on the profiling should cover their basic information as well as finger print need to be taken for record purposes. From this record, new admission of foreign worker can be traced to avoid the same worker re-entered the local labor with different identities and passports.

5.2. Improvement in the location of jobs opportunities based on development action plans and strategies

Economic development strategies play a vital role in order to maximize the economic performance of one area. Economic development plans have to synchronize from national level down to the local level. The location of production and manufacturing should be based on the economic strategies plans and directions as to produce more job vacancies especially in the rural areas. Shirotsuki, M., et al., (2010) stated that "resource allocation has been one of the residents' biggest concerns; more precisely, they were

concerned about allocation of financial". Hence, placement of sectors in the rural areas should be based on the potential of existing resources which may helps to revive the economic development in that area. Not only that, Shirotsuki, Otsuki & Sonoda (2010) and Ujang (2010 agreed that individual and society development were attached to their placement. Focus development area have to precise especially in outskirts as to cater the needs and demands of local labor , indirectly provide more jobs opportunity to those who're living in the rural area as most of them avoiding working outside of their living area.

5.3. Minimum wage, introductions of skills and trainings provided

Low wage issue is among the concerned matter that increased the rate of unemployment in Malaysia. Thus, pertaining to these issues some of the recommendation could be by reducing the working hours of employed people and substitutes with the skills and trainings provided by the employers. Skill and training may helps workers to be more focused and specialized towards the related field as well as enhance worker's abilities. Therefore, through the skills and training provided, it will increase the possibility to get a good job and improve the condition of their life.

Skills required as one of the needs to have a place in a local labor market. Mismatch of jobs and skills can be reduced if employee identified their interest at the early stage while studying. Skills need to be empowered before it can be sells and it is considered as one of the advantages required by the potential workers. Confusion of interest need to clarify at the early stage as to help workers to identify which direction and needs of their interest. However, if the initial interest could not help to get any of desired job, perhaps, potential workers could quickly suits themselves with the new jobs and skills. New skills always can be learned and exercised if willingness to learn is higher as to fill the vacancies. Nowadays the labor market trend on the local labor force is very competitive.

Production manufacturing and services that support Malaysia economic performance usually placed in the outskirts areas. Existing resources were identified in those outskirts area and created the job opportunities. The relocation of the manufacturing and services to urban areas require cost of moving and transportation. In order to reduce the cost, production need to run nearby the resource area as to produce more productivity rather than faced a high cost of moving. This is also in line with the economic strategy development plan in order to enhance economic performances in outskirt area. As the potential employees, certainties of having relocate to the outskirts area is higher due to manufacturing and services spur a lot in rural area. One's mental and physical should be prepared together willingly to be transferred in order to secure the job offers.

5.4. Training in language and oral skills

Communication plays as important role for those who are seeking a job. The ability to speak more than one language can be huge advantage for them. In addition to that, writing skills also need to be improvised as the working not only relies on communication. To be simplifying, both communication and writing skills is useful in broadening their potential.

6. Conclusion

Unemployment may cause a lot of problems in society in terms of economic, social and physical aspect of a country. Hence, the direction of recreating the economic development is closely related as well as one of an effective strategy is needed to tackle unemployment directly, towards achieving sustainable development and living environment as it clearly define in the development plan of Perak

State Structure Plan. Thus, the overall study on unemployment issues and problems in the district of Kinta, Manjung and Kuala Kangsar has successfully achieved all developed objectives.

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