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Reports by FAZLEENA AZIZ

Job mismatches and the reality of finding work

PETALING JAYA: When it comes to doing a job unrelated to their field of studies, it's all about perspective and preference, says a digital creator who also blogs about employment.

Ahmad Azeem Ahmad Raslan, 28, a Masters in Administrative Science holder, said he had sent out 297 applications before finally landing a job.

"The whole process was difficult, and during that phase, I had to do freelance work to support myself.

"I did video editing and graphic design. The money I made went to paying for food, drinks, telephone bills, petrol and others.

"You can pick up any job which is far from your degree to earn a living.

"At the end of the day, you need to put food on the table.

"All the bills are waiting at the end of the month, there is no discount, we have to pay them all," he said.

Ahmad Azeem, who lives in Rawang, Selangor, has some 3,700 followers on Facebook and runs a popular blog called Travelog Azar, where he also shares his views on topics like job mismatch and the reality of finding a job.

He added that in the end, job seekers should base their perspective on the reality of the employment market.

"For better or worse, it's their perspective of things (whether they take up a job they are trained for or not)," he said.

Ahmad Azeem also spoke about the importance of acquiring skills to do a job because "graduates cannot continue to score on paper only".

"The world needs problem-solvers, thinkers and reliable workers, not merely paper chasers or top scorers, as we do not want those who have knowledge in theory only," he said.

Call centre agent Hidayah Mohd Nor, 30, who holds a bachelor degree in communication, said undergraduates cannot have high demands unless they have a very strong portfolio.

"During the internship period, we can start choosing our path and will know where we fit in. After that, it's luck or your rezeki (blessing).

"Sometimes it feels like there are only low-level jobs because of a lack of positions on the higher level for graduates.

"Even in the government sec-



Life crossroads: UiTM students discussing their future at a library. — AZLINA ABDULLAH/The Star

tor, there is a quota for positions; so it appears like graduates need to lower their benchmark to get a job," said Hidayah, who is from Ampang, Kuala Lumpur.

Senior personal trainer Jonnath Tan, 30, opted for his line of work because it aligned with his life goals and passion.

Despite holding a diploma in advertising and a degree in mar-

keting, he said he was doing his best at his job.

"For those who are unable to get into their desired field, it is best to provide value for yourself and others in other areas, every failure puts you one step closer to success — the key is perseverance and persistence.

"We also need better exposure to learn about the variety of job

opportunities, instead being limited to business, law, engineering, aviation, medicine and other so-called popular jobs," he said.

To prevent graduates ending up in jobs requiring only low-level skills, Tan opined that the education system needed to change to nurture students who weren't just followers, but who could also think outside the box.

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