



## Employability Analysis of Social Work Graduates as Human Resources Practitioners in Industries

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### **Abstract**

*This study aims to determine whether a social work graduate has a large or small chance of being eligible to be a human resources practitioner in the industry. This research is qualitative and uses data collection techniques through library studies, internet-based research, as well as field studies that included interviews and observations with practitioners of human resources from Ralali.com, Unilever Indonesia, Glints Indonesia, and TikTok (Bytedance) Indonesia. Based on the results of the study, the authors concluded that the opportunity for social work graduates to become practitioners in human resources feasibility exists. In the discussion, the factors that influence the magnitude of the opportunity are: first, the views of human resources practitioners in the industry towards social work graduates are still not optimal, but when human resources practitioners already know in detail about social work and its graduates, practitioners tend to believe in the skills possessed by social work graduates. Second, it shows how the industry is actually quite open to hiring graduates of any education for positions in human resources as long as these graduates possess the competencies required by the industry even though the level of market competition for positions in human resources is quite competitive.*

**Keywords:** *Employability, Human Resources, Human Resources Practitioners, Social Work Graduates, Industry*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Universities have been producing graduates at a fairly rapid rate, but we still hear frequent calls for technical expertise from industry. Thousands of university graduates do not work, or they end up in industries and places that have nothing to do with education and/or graduate qualifications (Beretu, 2018). There are too many unemployed graduates because graduates are basically unemployable. Of course, stagnant economic growth also contributes so that high unemployment rates generally occur. The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) reported that the unemployment rate in Indonesia reached 8.42 million people in the August 2022 period, up from the previous 8.40 million people in the February 2022 period. Marshall (1980) also emphasized that one of the factors that was also the biggest factor is that graduates cannot be employed because they do not have the special skills needed by a growing industry, and most of them are graduates from general fields of knowledge.

On the one hand, the industry says that universities do not provide graduates who are ready for industry needs (Yang, et al 2011, in Berutu, 2018). In the end, these new graduates have to spend time relearning not only university theory, but practical skills in order to adapt to real life. If industry and universities work hand in hand, of course there will be synergies that will develop graduates who will be immediately able to work when they finish their tertiary studies. Industry requirement or industry requirements are general requirements that are applied and followed by all members in an industry (Bangun, 2018). These are the skills and knowledge required for certain jobs in industry and should be developed directly from university to the workplace. In this case, once again there must be harmony between what is needed by the industry and what is offered by learning institutions to students so that learning can be relevant to the industry.

In Pradini, et al (2019), it is explained that in practice social welfare graduates in an industry/company, the services provided by graduates are as industrial social workers, including part Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs), Human Resources (HR), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Occupational Health and Safety (K3), as well as policy and advocacy. In this study, researchers will focus on one of the career choices mentioned for social welfare graduates, namely human resources. Human resources is one of the important departments in the company that can determine the continuity or fall of the

company (Schuler, Jackson & Tarique, 2011). Through human resources, companies can identify current human resource needs and human resource needs in the future.

As a practitioner of human resources, a person is expected to be able to perform several functions to ensure the company's performance runs smoothly. Some of these functions are ensuring a conducive workplace for employees to work, providing compensation and benefits to employees, recruiting employees for company needs, training employees, managing communication between employees and the company, and encouraging employee motivation to be more productive and maximized in an organization. work. (Hughes & Rog, 2008; in Berutu, 2018). Referring to the functions mentioned above, many roles of social welfare graduates or social workers can be carried out, it's just that company awareness and stakeholder those in the industrial world, especially in Indonesia, do not fully understand and are aware of the needs of social workers in an industry. This will certainly have a negative impact on the opportunities for social welfare graduates to become practitioners of human resources in the industry.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that this study aims to analyze the size of the opportunity for work feasibility (employability) social welfare graduates as practitioners of human resources in the industry based on theories and using the variables that become a reference for these opportunities. Research entitled "Analysis of Employability Opportunities for Social Welfare Graduates as Human Resources Practitioners in Industry" can provide solutions or advice to new graduates, especially social welfare graduates so they can have a career in the field of human resources according to their interests and abilities. In addition, this research can also provide information to companies about how to increase opportunities for social welfare graduates to have careers in the field of human resources.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research is a qualitative type of research. The research results will be described descriptively so that researchers can explain in more depth and comprehensively the description of cases that occur in the field. This research does not have a specific location because the sample of informants was taken from several companies in various industries and locations. Some of these industries include manufacturing Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), namely Unilever, start-up based Business to Business (B2B), namely Ralali.com, human resources services, namely Glints,

lastly, entertainment provider, namely TikTok. In this study, the sample informants were divided into three parts, first, key informants (key informant). The key informant in this research is 1 (one) practitioner human resources (senior-level) in the industry. Second, the main informant (main informant). The main informants in this study were 2 (two) practitioners of human resources in the industry. Third, additional informants (additional informants). Additional informants in this study were 1 (one) practitioner human resources in the industry with a background in social welfare education.

This study aims to analyze the size of the opportunities for social welfare graduates to become practitioners of human resources in the industry based on the above theories and using the variables that become a reference for these opportunities. First, the practitioner's point of view on human resources in the industry towards social welfare graduates. Second, skills that graduates must have for a practitioner position in human resources. Third, the openness of the industry against the educational background for the position of human resources. Final, market competition level to be faced for the position of human resources in the industry. This research will be carried out by collecting data through literature studies, internet studies (internet-based research), study away job portal, in this case, LinkedIn, observation, and interviews with relevant informants. This study uses descriptive data analysis techniques, namely data in the form of non-numeric and focuses on the quality, completeness, and clarity of the data.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Human Resources Practitioner's View in Industry Against Social Work Graduates Still Not Maximal**

In this study, researchers sought information about the views of informants on social welfare and their graduates. Based on the results of interviews, researchers obtained information from informants (key & main) as practitioners of human resources, that they still don't or don't really know what social welfare is, what they learn, and what competencies the graduates have. Social welfare itself is a social science family which is quite uncommon in Indonesia compared to other social sciences such as Psychology, Sociology, Management, and others. This is also proven based on the results of researchers' observations, that the number of social welfare study programs and the like in Indonesia only exists at 14 universities/polytechnics/academies.

In the recruitment process, especially for human resources positions, of course educational background is one of the benchmarks in considering candidates to be hired. As

stated by Goffman in his theory, society's views can affect individuals negatively in several ways, including reducing the individual's ability to find work. So from there, ignorance and lack of understanding of informants as the first gate of a company or industry for social welfare education and its graduates have an impact on the opportunities for social welfare graduates to be employed as practitioners of human resources in the industry.

Furthermore, the researcher found that the informants tended to rarely accept applications from social welfare graduates for positions in human resources. In this case, based on the researcher's observations, there is still low interest in social welfare graduates registering for positions in human resources in the industry which is influenced by several factors. First, social welfare graduates don't know that human resources is one of the career choices they can pursue. Second, in the process of studying at the university, social welfare students are not given information that they can become practitioners of human resources in the industry. Third, social welfare graduates feel that they lack the skills to become practitioners of human resources. Lastly, social welfare graduates feel that human resources is a career field that can only be pursued by graduates of certain educational fields such as psychology, human resource management, and business administration.

### **Social Work Graduates Have Sufficient Skills To Become Practitioners Human Resources in Industry**

In this study, the researcher sought information regarding the skills required for the position of human resources. Based on the interview results, the researcher obtained information from informants (key, main & additional) as practitioners of human resources, that to build a career in the field human resources have to go through a lot of processes and not that easy. The informants said that in building his career as a practitioner of human resources, the industry is quite competitive in hiring a candidate. For example, to take part in an internship, they need prior organizational experience in a relevant position to eventually graduate. As for organizational experience, it can help provide mastery of certain skills, therefore it is very important to be active during lectures by organizing or organizing committees.

Then, the informant also emphasized that 1-2 internships experience is not necessarily enough to be employed permanently (full-time), especially if we want to work in a company that is quite prestigious. This is evidenced by the fact that on average they have apprenticed 3-4 times in a position of human resources before reaching their current position. This is in line with Holland's career development theory, that individuals are expected to go through specialization and consolidation stages in building a career, that is, individuals begin to choose specific career

paths and begin to develop the skills needed to be successful in that field until finally individuals begin to feel more involved. deeply in their chosen career field and begin to build their professional reputation. The informants said that general skills such as effective communication (effective communication), high participation ability (adaptability/engagement), solutive (solutive/problem-solving) and empathy (empathy) is the key to success in building a career as a practitioner of human resources. As for the technical skills (hard-skills) such as data analysis (data analyst), interview (interviewing), salary calculation (compensation & benefit), and others can be learned while practicing (learning by doing).

Furthermore, after the researcher explained what social welfare was in detail, the researcher obtained information through informants that the general skills that a practitioner must possess in the industry are already owned by graduates of social welfare. This is in line with Suharto (2017), that social welfare or social workers will be required to learn and master various soft-skill important skills such as communication skills, analysis, research, problem solving, sensitivity, empathy and so on. Informants also said that social welfare graduates are very suitable for careers as practitioners of human resources part learning and development.

### **The Industry Is Quite Open To Graduates With Various Educational Backgrounds As Long As They Have Sufficient Competence For The Position Human Resources**

In this study, researchers seek information about industrial openness in hiring (employment) someone graduates for the position of human resources. Based on the interview results, the researcher obtained information from informants (key, main & additional) as practitioners human resources, that the industry is quite open to new graduates (fresh graduate), but with the record that these graduates have the competencies needed by the industry regardless of any educational background that a graduate has. This competence can be measured through the activities, achievements, and organizational experience and internships of graduates during lectures. Of course, some of these competencies must have relevance to the position being applied for, including the position of human resources.

In Holland's career development theory, it is stated that it is important for graduates to develop specific competencies needed by the industry to be successful in a job. The more relevant the competency or the applicant has, the easier it will be to get the job role. In practice, human resources having various strategic roles within a company, this can be an opportunity for graduates of any education to have a career in the field of human resources. For example, informants said that graduates of graphic design education could have careers as human resources part employer branding because this role requires expertise in graphic design and

social media management. The expectations of an industry or company for a new graduate certainly affect the quality of the company. The more prestigious the company, the higher the expectations. Based on the theory of employment marketing by Dunlop, if individuals have high ability, it will be easier for them to find suitable jobs and increase the industry demand for them. So from there it is also important for new graduates to understand the factors that affect the supply and demand for jobs, not just relying on their competence.

The researchers also found factors that were quite surprising for a graduate to be employed in the industry, namely factors from university background, faculty, and even graduate study programs. In this case, the informants said that they often find new graduates (fresh graduates) who do not have the competencies mentioned above, but as long as graduates come from the best universities, faculties and study programs (top university), the industry will consider these graduates more. This certainly has an impact on the small opportunities that graduates who come from not from the best universities, faculties and study programs have. This is in line with what Maslow stated in his theory, that the basic need of an individual to get recognition regardless of whatever background they have and the actualization need for the unique abilities they have. In essence, the reality on the ground is of course not always in line with wishes, therefore graduates who come from not the best universities, faculties and study programs must further hone their competencies so they can compete in the industrial job market.

### **The Level of Market Competition for Human Resources Positions in The Industry is Quite High**

In this study, researchers seek information about the level of market competition for human resource positions in the industry. Based on the interview results, the researcher obtained information from informants (key, main & additional) that the level of market competition for positions in human resources is high enough. Informants said that the interest of the community, especially new graduates (fresh graduate) for the position human resources quite high based on several factors, first, career field human resources itself quite open to all educational backgrounds (all-major are welcome) as long as the applicant has relevant experience with the organization, internship, or committee human resources. Second, the career field human resources is one of my favorite career field choices. Lastly, the career field human resources tend to have fairly competitive earnings. This is in line with Dunlop's theory of employment marketing, which states that the supply of jobs in the labor market depends on the

level of ability, level of existence, volume of job requests, as well as the level of wages offered by the company.

In the process of recruiting for the position of human resources, the informant conveyed in more detail that the applicants had very varied educational backgrounds. The number of applicants was dominated by graduates from Psychology, Management, Business Administration and Industrial Engineering. Furthermore, informants also conveyed that applicants varied greatly based on their educational background, even educational graduates who had no correlation at all with human resources such as graduates of Petroleum Engineering, Biology, Nutrition Science, Accounting, Geological Education, and Electrical Engineering are also applying for positions in human resources. Not a few of them eventually succeeded in their careers as practitioners of human resources, of course this is supported by the competence that graduates have. This is also evidenced by the observations of researchers looking at practitioners of human resources in several companies who have varied educational backgrounds.

Furthermore, informants also said that human resources including one of the career fields that is quite favorite among the public. Apart from being supported by competitive income, people tend to see human resources as the only career field that reigns in the recruitment of a company, therefore people feel they are practitioners. Human resources can lead to its own existence, when in fact human resources itself has many roles, not just recruitment. Of course this has an impact on the large number of applicants so that the competition that must be faced is quite high and tight.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the research results, the conclusions obtained are the opportunities for social welfare graduates to be employed as practitioners of human resources in a large enough industry. In the discussion, the factors that influence the magnitude of the opportunity are first, that from the practitioner's view human resources in the industry towards social welfare graduates is still not optimal, but when practitioners already know in detail about social welfare, practitioners tend to believe in the skills possessed by social welfare graduates. This is evidenced by the second factor found, namely the skills of social welfare graduates are sufficient enough for a career in the field of human resources. Third, that the industry is actually quite open to graduates of any education for positions in human resources as long as the competencies required by the industry are owned by these graduates. This certainly can help alleviate the fourth factor found,

namely the level of market competition for positions in human resources which is quite high. With industry openness to variations in educational fields as well as adequate and relevant competencies to needs, social welfare graduates can easily compete in high job market positions in human resources.

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