A Comparison of Competencies in the Self-Management and Task Management Domain for Marketing Course Undergraduates

Ilangko Subramaniam[1*], Paramaswari Jaganathan[2]

[12]School of Languages, Literacies and Translation
Universiti Sains Malaysia
ilangko@usm.my
parames@usm.my
*Corresponding Author

https://doi.org/10.24191/ajue.v17i4.16198

Received: 30 July 2021
Accepted: 14 September 2021
Date Published Online: 31 October 2021
Published: 31 October 2021

Abstract: The shift from knowledge-based curriculum to a competence-based curriculum for Marketing course undergraduates is crucial in producing work-ready talents. The study focuses on the comparison of Self-Management and Task Management domain attained by final-year marketing students in 5 different higher learning institutions in Malaysia. A survey questionnaire consisting 25 items was distributed to compare the competencies in the Self-Management and Task Management domains among 289 undergraduates. The data was analysed using one-way ANOVA on SPSS program version 26.0. The results indicated a significant difference among the undergraduates' competency in Self-Management domain between the different groups of HEIs. However, there was no significant difference in the Task Management domain. The Public university and Distance Learning university displayed a high Self-Management competencies with a mean score of 4.04 and 4.02 respectively. The competencies attainment for Task Management domains were moderate. All the universities in this study recorded a high score for the knowledge and skills competencies in the Self-Management domain. This comparative study indicates the emphasis of knowledge and skills in their Marketing courses compared to other competencies. This study is significant to identify instructional improvement to enhance competency based learning to produce work-ready marketing undergraduates.

Keywords: Competency, Higher Education, Marketing, Self-Management, Task-Management

1. Introduction

Given the volatile and uncertain economic situation in a global era, current employers seek for multi-talented graduates who are proficient in communication skills, competent in the field of information technology and well equipped with teamwork skill. The International Labour office in Geneva reports that in order to develop a sustainable workforce, there is a need to have a policy framework grounded on four elements; mainly a broad availability of good-quality education future training; a close matching of skills supply to the needs of enterprises and labour markets; enabling workforce that is adaptable to changes in market and technological advancement well equipped with preparatory skills needs of the future. (ILO, 2011). Hence, the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education envisions to complement this notion by producing a holistic, entrepreneurial and balanced graduates as stipulated in the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (Higher Education). Nevertheless, studies

carried out in the higher education have also indicate that the quality of education as one factor that contributes to unemployment among graduates in Malaysia (Zaliza Hanapi and Mohd Safarin Nordin, 2014). Thus, current development in graduate education witnessed a shift to competence-based learning as an overarching goal in the present day graduate education system, whereby learning outcomes need to be applicable and complementary to work performance (Jaganathan et.al; 2014)

The field of Marketing course; a domain in Business Studies discipline, is one popular field among undergraduates for its wide job prospects. In a broad sense, the objective of Marketing studies is to produce graduates with the ability to succeed in the ever-changing business world by providing relevant programmes and courses. Generally, the duration for the Marketing field for the undergraduate level in Malaysia has been standardised to three or four years. Within the competence-based learning framework, a practical learning process which refers to learning-by-doing at workplace and in the higher education system is proposed to produce apt graduates (Knight, 2002). In the field of business studies too, scholars have called for a paradigm shift of the curriculum over past few decades. Stephens et al., (1998) for one, posited that learning should incite "a reflective practitioner" ability. The transfer of training from learning environment to workplace environment is deemed vital. So, in order to produce competent, knowledgeable and skilful graduates, the education institutions have to provide identical workplace condition or environment (Violas, 1981; Bridges, 1993; Teichler, 2000). The current trend of providing outcome-based education and competency aligned course curriculum has become a catchphrase and specific competency profiles are matched in courses to competence domain, such as task management, self-management, information management and other management domains. (Arnold, 1999). In line with the development of competence-based course alignment, this study specifically looks into the competency of marketing undergraduates in Malaysia. It specifically compares the two core competencies; Self-Management and Task-Management competency in the marketing course content of the different types of universities in Malaysia. The null hypothesis underpinning this study is that there is no significant differences in Self-Management competency and Task-Management competency among final-year marketing students in public and private higher learning institutions.

2. Literature Review

The Malaysian government has developed strategies and plans to ensure that the Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) are encouraged to undertake change and achieve excellence to face the competition posed by the global education market. The objective of these plans is to ensure that Malaysian universities achieve world-class status and operate as a hub for higher education in the Southeast Asia region (Ministry of Higher Education, 2007). Several initiatives and approaches have been initiated thereafter and implemented to boost the role of higher education in Malaysia. Among others the initiatives are outlined in the Tenth Malaysian Plan Malaysian (2011-2015), Education Blueprint (2013–2025), and the National Higher Education Strategic Plan (2007 – 2020). The Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia (2020) reports that the higher education institution currently encompasses about 456 institutions. This includes public universities (20) and private higher learning institutions (436). The involvement of private corporations such as Tenaga Nasional Berhad, Petronas, Telekom Berhad and other corporations has also complemented the government in providing education services to cater for the increasing demands. The private HEIs includes private universities (51), foreign universities branches (10), college universities (37) and colleges (338); all of which boast a total enrolment of about 537,434 students (MOE, 2020). With the growth in numbers of the universities in Malaysia, the transition of the curriculum is also an area of concern for the policy makers due to the current challenges, mainly globalisation and the demand for knowledge-based society.

These developments also bring changes and reforms in terms of philosophy, organization, curriculum, and pedagogy. The proponents of work-based curriculum in these institutions of higher learning claim that they do not narrow the vision of education. Instead, they expand educational acquisition opportunities and promote lifelong learning goals (Boys et al., 1988). Hence, transformation, restructuring and efforts to develop the concept of liberal education that incorporates features such as critical perspective, interdisciplinary approach, open learning and self-directed learning that offsets the impact of power to these HEIs (Hyland & Johnson, 1998). From the viewpoint of pedagogy, Goodlad (1995) also posits that there needs to be an incorporation of theory and practice in

the HEIs to cater to the needs of these developments. He further stresses that practical learning without theory becomes a conservative basis and theoretical learning without practical aspects can be mysterious, incomprehensible, and trivial (Goodlad, 1995). The fast development also is witnessing a paradigm shift towards an adoption of competence-based education model (Gervai, 2016); including in the field of business education (Bratianu et al., 2020). This is the proliferating trend across the global education scenario where optimisation of competence transfer is aimed to produce relevant and competitive graduates for the workforce. For example, Hasina Akter (2020) study showed how Bangladesh universities offer graduate studies with specialisations in their BBA and MBA studies in line with the demands of business world needs and likewise has evolved an entrepreneurship and interpreneurship development among the business studies graduates.

The concept of competence has been long defined as characteristics that drive towards a more effectiveness of performance in occupation (Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999). This has been further expanded in terms of specific skills and domains needed according to organisation needs. Kotler (2010), defines competence in the marketing field as areas of special technical and production expertise. Lambert et al. (2014) summarises that the competence needed in business entity revolves around a set of skills, behaviours and attitudes that is performed competently and can be measured within a set of parameters. This is reiterated by Rodrigues et al., (2021) who defines competence as a general ability to do well in a particular task domain and it requires a number of specific skills. A competent employee, not only has a general understanding of the domain (knowledge), he also has to have a certain attitude that helps to do well in that domain. As mentioned earlier, in the work sector, the focus on the transferability of the specific domains and skills have always been linked to specific work performance. (Judith & Tom, 1999; Rodrigues et al., 2021). For example, the skills needed by industry are interpersonal, business, programming, analytical and design, application, environmental and language skills. Additionally, employers also select graduates who not only have the knowledge but also the competence, experience, personality and positive values to progress in their careers.

Similarly, the competency in marketing field are based on a pedagogy that incorporates skills and knowledge within the curriculum, either as generic competencies or specific competencies. The division of competencies according to generality and specificity is in reality not easily distinguished. Some competencies can be directly and indirectly exposed through marketing courses. For instance, communicational competency is instilled indirectly in almost all marketing courses during the course of learning activities. In this case, communicational competency is general in nature. However, direct exposure of some competencies through marketing courses can be classified as specific competencies. For instance, the competency to communicate is considered specific when it is exposed to students through Communicational Marketing. Despite various competencies being indirectly emphasised in all institutions of higher education, the application of these competencies has to be formal and directly exposed. These specific courses like communication competency, negotiation competency, salesmanship competency, planning marketing strategy competency, and analysing and decision making competency have to be embedded in marketing courses.

Identifying the various competencies, however, depends highly on the various factors from employers' and higher education curriculum makers' perspectives that are generally designed based on different models. For instance, the USES model (Knight, 2002) categorises 39 competences in three groups namely personal qualities, core skills and process skills. Meanwhile, Lucia & Lepsinger (1999) added knowledge competence, skill, personal attitude and ability in a competency model for students in business studies. The ASSET model (Winter & Maisch,1996) likewise, emphasises the aspect of commitment towards professional value, continuous professional learning, effective awareness, effective communication, professional knowledge and intellectual flexibility. The advantage of this competency model is that it is favoured by most employers. This competence can also be applied to higher education graduates through teaching and learning activities, including specific curriculum of business studies to adequately prepare the undergraduates for effective career performance.

The competencies that are necessary for the marketing field proposed by Arnold et. al. (1999) are divided into 4 categories namely Self-Management, Task Management, Information Management and Others Management. The 2 categories of Self-Management and Task Management competencies in marketing field included several sub-domains. The Self-Management comprised of Self- Knowledge, Knowledge and Skills as well as Initiative and Self-Motivation. Likewise, the Task Management included the Decision Making subdomain, Planning and Organising as well as Analytical Explanation.

However, this paper reports on the 2 main competency in the marketing field among 5 institutions of higher education in Malaysia. The mean score and the significant differences for each competency were identified to observe if the differences among the studied HEI were evident.

Table 1. Explanation of items in competencies

Competency	Explanation
	Self management
Self Adaptation	Use opportunity as an advantage, deal with stress and adjust goals as needed
Knowledge and Skills in Field of Study	Show knowledge and skills in the field of study
Initiative and Self-Motivation	Take own responsibility to make something successful and to overcome hurdles
	Task management
Analytical Explanation	Provide analytical explanation orally and by using statistical information to analyse various opinions and r each a logical consensus
Decision Making	Make realistic decision on time after considering multiple options and views from various parties
Planning and Organising Skills	Set achievable and challenging goals, provide contingency plans to face unpredictable situations, short-term goals, set priorities and appropriate monitoring of progress

3. Methodology

For this study, the competence of Self-Management and Task Management domain among the final-year marketing students in 5 different public and private higher learning institutions were measured via a survey questionnaire. A questionnaire consisting of 25 items were distributed to 289 respondents. The respondents were selected based on purposive sampling; the criteria is that they are Marketing major students. The 5 types of universities were Distance Learning University (DLU), Public University(PU), Corporate University (CU), Foreign Branch University (FBU) and Private College (PC). The criteria of selection were mainly based on the Marketing major course offered in the university and provided the approval to conduct the study.

The research sample consist of final-year students studying marketing as a specialisation at undergraduate level from 5 universities. All of the final-year students studying marketing as specialisation were selected for the purpose of this study. Since the number of students in each institution was different, the overall population of final-year students was chosen to give their perceptions regarding competency attainment. The sample size was diverse because the population of final-year marketing students in each higher education institution varied. The samples are enlisted below:

Table 2. Sampling of HEIs for the study

Higher Learning Institutions	N
Distance Learning University (DLU)	58
Private College (PC)	11
Corporate University (CU)	39
Public University (PU)	106
Foreign Branch University (FBU)	75

The survey questionnaire was adapted from Arnold et. al. (1999) to gain feedback regarding the various competencies attained in both Self-Management and Task-Management domains. As mentioned earlier, the competencies that are necessary for the marketing field proposed by Arnold et. al. (1999) are based on 4 categories namely Self-Management, Task Management, Information Management and Others Management. This paper however, reports the main two domains; mainly the Self-Management and the Task Management domains. For each competency , a total of 3 to 6 question items were presented. A 5 point Likert scale was used to measure the undergraduate's competencies ranging with 5 options; namely 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'not sure', 'agree' and 'strongly agree'. The questionnaire consists a total of 25 items. A Pilot test was conducted in three higher education institutions consisting of 2 private higher education institutions and a public university in Penang with a sample of 122 students majoring in Marketing at the degree level. Alpha coefficients for 20 items showed a high achievement of .948. To ensure the validity and credibility of the research instrument for the local context, an expert advice was sought. He was in the panel for curriculum making in Marketing Studies in Universiti Sains Malaysia. Several suggestions were given to strengthen the validity and credibility of the research instrument. The questionnaire items were also translated into Bahasa Melayu. The data was analysed using one-way ANOVA on SPSS version 26.0. The interpretation of findings was discussed based on the mean scores along the scales of very high, high, moderate, low and very low competencies and scored against the values ranging from 1.00 to 5.00.

4. Results and Findings

4.1 Competency Difference between Domains in Marketing Field

Table 3 below shows the mean difference for Self-Management and Task Management domains among final-year marketing students.

Table 3. Means and standard deviations for final-year marketing students' Self-Management, and Task Management (N=289)

Higher Learning Institutions	N	Self-Management		Task Management	
		M	SD	M	SD
Distance Learning University	58	4.02	.325	3.90	.311
Private College	11	3.81	.363	3.83	.299
Corporate University	39	3.93	.275	3.89	.258
Public University	106	4.04	.391	3.96	.395
Foreign Branch University	75	3.91	.370	3.82	.343

Based on Table 3, the competence of Self-Management in DLU and PU is at a high level with a mean score of 4.02 and 4.04 respectively compared to CU, FBU and PC which recorded a moderate level with a mean score of 3.93, 3.91 and 3.81. The lowest mean score in the aspect of Self-Management is in PC with a 3.81 score. As for the competence of the Task Management aspect, all these educational institutions showed a moderate mastery with a mean score between 3.82 and 3.96. PU recorded the highest mean score among 5 higher education institutions which is 3.96 and the lowest is the FBU which is 3.82. The CU and DLU recorded mean scores of 3.89 and 3.90 while the PU recorded a mean score of 3.83. The difference in mean scores were at moderate level for the HEIs. The mean score recorded for both the Self-Management and Task-Management reflect a mid-higher level score. Overall, the data

for the PU and DLU showed a high level of mastery for Self-Management domain compared to other higher education institutions.

Table 4 likewise, shows the differences of Anova results in the Self Management and Task Management domain according to the respective HEIs. The results indicated that there were significant differences among the students' competencies in the domain of Self-Management between different groups of HEIs (F (4,284) = 2.471, p = .045). However, there was no significant difference in the Task Management domain (F (4,284) = 1.749, p = .139).

Table 4. Differences in Self Management and Task Management in the 5 HEIs (N = 289)

Variable	Source	Ss	Df	MS	F	P
Self Management	Between group	1.269	4	.317	2.471	
	In group	36.461	284	.128		.045*
	Total	37.730	288			
Task Management	Between group	.840	4	.210	1.749	
	In group	34.091	284	.120		.139
	Total	34.930	288			

*p<0.05

4.2 Comparison of Students' Competency in Self-Management

To measure the students' competency in Self-Management, a one-way ANOVA was employed. Table 5 shows the results from one-way ANOVA to seek the difference in Self-Management competency among final-year marketing students in all five higher learning institutions for the of Self Adaptation, Knowledge and Skills, and Initiative and Self-Motivation domain.

Table 5: Mean and standard deviation of Self-Management Domain of final year students in marketing (N = 289)

Variable	N	Self Adaptation		Knowledge & Skills		Initiative & Self-Motivation	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Distance Learning University	58	3.78	0.464	4.34	0.479	4.07	0.383
Private Collage	11	3.68	0.391	4.13	0.551	3.81	0.468
Corporate University	39	3.73	0.433	4.26	0.560	3.95	0.273
Public University	106	3.78	0.464	4.34	0.479	4.07	0.383
Foreign Branch University	75	3.85	0.560	4.06	0.519	3.89	0.415

4.2.1 Self Adaptation Competency

Results from Table 3 for the competency attainment of Self Adaptation are at a moderate level with mean values between 3.78 and 3.85. The highest mean is recorded by FBU. Analysis of all four items in Self Adaptation competency also shows moderate attainment. Item (18) 'flexible attitude in an ever-changing condition and situation' scored a min of 3.99 in PU. On the other hand, item (2) 'calm attitude during intense condition' scored the lowest mean in all institutions which is between 3.45 to other items in this competency. Despite that, PU scored the highest mean for item 5 (mean=3.92), item

13 (mean=3.89) and item 18 (mean=3.99) as compared to FBO. Although these mean score show moderate level of competency, they are more inclined to a mid-high level.

4.2.2 Knowledge and Skills Competence

Meanwhile, the mastery of knowledge and skills competencies was high in all higher education institutions studied. The highest mean scores among higher education institutions were at DLU (mean = 4.34) and PU (mean = 4.34). The FBU recorded the lowest mean score compared to other higher education institutions of 4.06. CU recorded a mean of 4.26 and followed by PC (mean = 4.13). Item analysis for Knowledge and Skills Competence showed that both items were at high levels. The highest mean achievement for item (3) 'improving my knowledge in the field of specialization' was at the CU which was 4.33. The lowest mean for this item is 4.15 which is in the FBU. Meanwhile, for item (6) which is 'improving skills in the field of degree specialization', DLU recorded the highest mean of 4.45 followed by PU of 4.43. The lowest mean recorded in PC is 4.09.

4.2.3 Initiative and Self-Motivation

For the Initiative and Self-Motivation, DLU and PU achieve a high level of mastery. The mean score for these two higher education institutions is the same which is 4.07. Meanwhile, CU, FBU and PC are at a moderate level. The lowest mastery of Initiative and Self-Motivation competencies was recorded by PC (mean = 3.81). Meanwhile, the mean scores for CU and FBU were 3.95 and 3.89 respectively.

All higher education institutions recorded high achievement for item (1) 'taking responsibility for oneself'. In all institutions of higher education students agree that they bear the responsibility of their own to ensure that a task can be done perfectly. The highest mean for this item is 4.22 in DLU and the lowest mean in FBU and PC is 4.00. Each item in this competency exhibits high achievement in PU. In fact, PU also showed the highest scores for items (10), (19) and (13) compared to other higher education institutions. The mean score for item (10) 'identifying and overcoming any obstacles' was 4.07, item (19) 'maintaining commitment and effort despite challenges' mean score was 4.03 and item (13) 'assignments completed regardless in any obstacles' mean score is 4.14. Although the OBU achieved the lowest mean for items 10 (mean = 3.74) and 13 (mean = 3.51) but for item 12 (mean = 4.13) the achievement was high compared to other higher education institutions.

4.3 Comparison of Students' Competency in Task Management

One-way ANOVA was employed to shows the mean difference in Task Management among final-year marketing students in 5 HEIS which consists of Analytical Explanation, Decision Making and Planning and Organising Skills.

Table 6. Mean and standard deviation of Task Management of final year students in marketing by HEI's (N = 289)

Variable	N	Analytical Explanation		Decision Making		Planning and Organising Skills	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD

Distance Learning University	58	3.82	0.419	3.91	0.356	3.95	0.371
Private Collage	11	3.39	0.416	3.80	0.464	3.81	0.227
Corporate University	39	3.90	0.452	3.93	0.277	3.85	0.366
Public University	106	3.86	0.494	4.01	0.399	3.95	0.492
Foreign Branch University	75	3.79	0.516	3.83	0.411	3.84	0.429

4.3.1 Competence of Analytical Explanation

Based on Table 6, the mastery of Analytical Explanation competency was moderate with a mean score between 3.39 and 3.90. CU recorded the highest mean score of 3.90. Followed by PU (mean = 3.86), DLU (mean = 3.82) and FBU (mean = 3.79). The lowest mean score was recorded by PC which is 3.39. The mean score for item (9) 'analyzing situations and information to reach logical conclusions' showed a high level in all institutions except the FBU. In fact, PC showed the highest proficiency compared to 4 other institutions with a mean score of 4.27 for item (9).

4.3.2 Decision Making Efficiency

Decision Making Competence in all HEIs is moderate except in Public University, the achievement is high with a mean score of 4.01. PC recorded the lowest mean score of 3.80. CU recorded a mean score of 3.93 followed by DLU (mean = 3.91) and FBU (mean = 3.83). Item (11) 'make decisions according to the set time so that appropriate action can be taken', all higher education institutions except the FBU (mean = 3.90), which is between 4.07 and 4.15. In addition, for item 16, namely 'studying various ways to solve problems before making a decision' is also high in CU (mean = 4.05), DLU (mean = 4.00) and PU (mean = 4.11).

4.3.3 Planning and Organizing Competence

The data showed that the Mastery of Planning and Organizing competency is moderate in all HEIs with a mean score between 3.81 and 3.95. PU (mean = 3.95) recorded the highest mean score and the lowest mean score was PC (mean = 3.81). DLU recorded a mean score of 3.95 followed by CU (mean = 3.85) and FBU (mean = 3.84). Although the mean score showed that the mastery of efficiency was at a moderate level but the mean difference was not much different and more towards a high level. The mean score for item (21) 'prioritizing and planning assignments to use time well' was high in PU (mean = 4.08), DLU (mean = 4.05), and FBU (mean = 4.00). Item (22) 'determining short-term goals' showed the lowest mean score compared to the other 4 items in all higher education institutions.

Table 5 shows ANOVA results on the differences in all three competencies according to HEIS. The results show that there is a significant difference in Decision Making competency between different groups of HEIS ($F(4,284)=2.753$, $p=.028$). However, there is no significant difference in Analytical Explanation and Planning and Organising competencies between different groups of 5 HEIS ($F(4,284)=0.541$, $p=.706$) and ($F(4,284)=1.214$, $p=.305$).

Table 7. Differences in Analytical Explanation, Decision Making and Planning & Organising according to 5 HEIS (N=289)

Variable	Source	Ss	Df	MS	F	p
Analytical Explanation	Between group	.495	4	.124	.541	
	Within group	65.018	284	.229		.706
	Total	65.513	288			
Decision Making	Between group	1.614	4	.404	2.753	
	Within group	41.638	284	.147		.028*
	Total	43.252	288			
Organising and Planning	Between group	.900	4	1.214	1.214	
	Within group	52.617	284			.305
	Total	3.518	288			

*p<0.05

Based on Table 7, PU show high (H) attainment of competencies with mean scores between 4.01 and 4.34 for Self-Management Domain (4.04), (Knowledge and Skills (4.34) and Initiative & Self-Motivation (4.07)) and Decision Making (4.01). PU show more high attainment of competencies in comparison with other HEISs. On the other hand, DLU shows a high (H) attainment of Self-Management Domain and 2 competencies namely Knowledge and Skills (4.34) and Initiative and Self-Motivation (4.07). In contrast, other HEIs only show high (H) attainment of competencies for one competency which is Knowledge and Skills. This indicates that Knowledge and Skills competency among final-year marketing students in all HEIs was highly reviewed. Attainment of competencies in most domains and other competencies are moderate (M) with mean scores between 3.39 and 3.96. Infact, the mean scores recorded by these HEIs do not show huge difference. This suggests that the attainments of competencies at this level are quite similar and can still be considered quite well.

Table 8. Summary of competency attainment Levels in 5 HEIS

Domains / Competencies	DLU	PC	CU	PU	FBU
Self-Management Domain	H	M	M	H	M
Self-Adaptation	M	M	M	M	M
Knowledge and Skills	H	H	H	H	H
Initiative and Self Motivation	H	M	M	H	M
Task Management Domain	M	M	M	M	M
Analytical Explanation	M	M	M	M	M
Decision Making	M	M	M	H	M
Planning and Organising Skills	M	M	M	M	M

H=High, M=Moderate

5. Discussions and Conclusion.

As mentioned earlier, marketing course undergraduates need to be work-ready talents upon graduation. Hence, a competence-based curriculum is instrumental in preparing skilled workers. Generally, the overall data from the study shows that there is no clear differences in the attainment of competencies between the 5 HEIs studied. 4 out of 6 competencies; Analytical Explanation competence, Decision Making competence, Planning and Organising Skills competence as well as Self Adaptation competence are at a medium level attainment. In all the HEIs studied, the students recorded a high attainment of competencies for Knowledge and Skills only. This reflects that all HEIs emphasise knowledge in the field of marketing. This trend is probably in accordance with the objectives of

marketing field and specialised marketing courses. An analysis of the marketing curriculum for most courses in this field also had the similar outline and this may be the possible reason why the students are still dominated by the learning approach that is exam-oriented. Over emphasis on the theoretical aspect, raises the question to how the students are able to transfer the theoretical aspects that had been learnt to their employment world.

Other than that, the PU recorded a high attainment of competencies for Knowledge and Skills, Initiative and Self-Motivation and Decision Making compared to other HEIs that had a high attainment for Knowledge and Skills only. This clearly suggests that the attainment of competencies is good in PU compared to other HEIs.

One contributing factor is that the PU in this study is generally established and has strong programs as well as lecturers who are more experienced compared to the other HEIs in the study. The variety of activities, including practical trainings also helped to strengthen the students' understanding and skills in the field of study. In the current globalised world, the core competencies actually makes potential graduates stand out and remain competitive. There is a need to leverage on the core competencies that will well equip the graduates to be relevant so that there will not be a mismatch when they step into the real world of employment. Likewise, the marketing curriculum developers need to ensure an integration of transferable competence that can open to further industry academia collaboration and outcome based curriculum that will empower the graduates for the long run. One area that needs to researched and dwelled further is the segmentation and specialisation in order to sustain the efficacy of the Marketing program as concurred in Hasina Akter (2020) study.

6. Limitation and Future Research

This study specifically focused on the comparison of competence in the Task Management and Self-Management domain for the marketing undergraduates in Malaysia. Building upon the findings of this research, there are however, some limitations that needs to be addressed. A more comprehensive inclusion of competence is necessary, mainly the information and digital management domain that is crucial to provide a holistic research outcome for the current globalised workforce. Besides, the competence elements, a detailed study of pedagogical implication from the different group of universities may provide a guide for best practices in nurturing work-ready Marketing course graduates. Future studies need to address this limitation and it is recommended that a bigger scale study is necessary for Malaysia to develop and design a comprehensive and specialised competence-based framework that will equip the Marketing students for the workforce needs. The feedback from the employers and input from the industry is another crucial aspect that needs to be gauged to identify the real needs in designing a competence-based curriculum to reduce the theory-practice gap.

7. References:

Arnold, J, Loan-Clarke, J, Harrington. A & Hart. C, (1999). Students perception of competence development in undergraduate business-related degrees. *Studies in Higher Education.* Volume, 24 (1), 43-59.

Boys, C.J., & Kirkland, J., (1988). Degrees of success: Career aspirations and destinations of college, university and polytechnic students. London: Jessica Kingsley Publisher Ltd.

Boys, Brennan, Henkel, Kirkland, Kogan & Youll, (1988). Higher education and the preparation for work. London: Jessica Kingsley Publisher Ltd.

Bratianu,C., Hadad.S and Bejinaru.R (2020). Paradigm shift in business education: A competence-based approach. Sustainability,12, 1348. Retrieved from DOI:10.3390/su12041348www.mdpi.com/journal/sustainability

Bridges, D. (1993). Transferable skills: a philosophical perspective. *Studies in Higher Education*, 18 (1), 43-51.

Goodlad, S. (1995). The quest for quality sixteen forms of heresy in Higher Education. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Hasina Akter. (2020). Business graduate-ness and work-readiness: A comparative analysis of

public and private universities in Bangladesh. *Asian Journal of University Education*, 16(3). 59-77.

Hyland, T. & Johnson, S. (1998). Of cabbages and key skills: exploding the mythology of core transferable skills in post school education. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 22 (2) 163-172.

ILO Report (2011) . A skilled workforce for strong, sustainable and balanced growth. Retrieved from https://www.oecd.org/g20/summits/toronto/G20-Skills-Strategy.pdf

Iris Berdrow & Frederick T. Evers (2010). Bases of competence: An instrument for self and institutional assessment: *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 35:4, 419-434, DOI: 10.1080/02602930902862842

Jaganathan. P, Pandian A. & Subramaniam, I. (2014). Language courses, transversal skills and transdisciplinary education: A case study in the Malaysian university. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 2(2)1-10.

Judith, F. & Tom, J. (1999). Key aspects of Teaching and Learning in business and management Studies. A handbook for teaching and learning in higher education – *Enhancing Academic Practice*. London: Kogan.

Knight, T. (2002). Innovation in education for employability. Proceeding presented in skill plus conference. Center for outcomes-based education, The Open University [WWW document]. http://www.open.ac.uk/vqportal/Skill-Plus/home.htm

Kotler, Philip. (2010). Marketing management. The Millennium Edition. New Jersey: Prentice Hall International, Inc.

Lambert,B., Plank,R.E., Reid, D.A & Fleming, D. (2014). A competency model for entry level business-to-business services salespeople. *Services Marketing Quarterly*, 35:1, 84-103, DOI: 10.1080/15332969.2014.856746

Lucia, D., & Lepsinger, R. (1999). The art and science of competency models: Pinpointing critical success factors in organizations. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Pfeiffler.

Stephens, J., Hall, R., Knowles, V. & Stewart, J. (1988). Exploring business skills: an innovative approach to promoting lifelong learning. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 22 (3), 329-341.

Teichler, U. (2000). New perspectives of the relationships between higher education and employment. *Tertiary Education and Management*, 6, 79-92.

Violas, P. C. (1981). Reflections on theories of human capital, skill training and vocational education: *Educational Theory*, 31 (2), 137-151.

Zaliza Hanapi and Mohd Safarin Nordin, (2014). Procedia - Social and behavioral sciences 112. 1056 – 1063