



## **72% Of SPM Graduates Prefer To Be Influencers, E-Hailing Drivers Than Pursuing Higher Education**

Every year, employers lament that they can't find new hires while the people complain that they can't find jobs.

It's evident that there are vacancies but why are companies struggling to fill these roles? Where have the fresh graduates gone?

A recent government research might give a clue as to the reasons why.

According to Utusan, the research has found that 390,000 or 72.1% of SPM graduates have no plans to further their studies and prefer to work as online influencers, e-hailing car drivers, or food delivery riders.

The figures by the **Department of Statistics** showed that out of 560,000 Malaysians who hold a diploma in 2019, only 170,000 went on to further their studies.

The remaining 390,000 chose to head straight into the workforce and it's a trend that shows no stopping for years to come.

The Director of Entrepreneurship, Industry and Community Networking at the University of Perlis Professor Prof. Madya Dr. Shafriza Nisha Basah expressed concern that the trend will affect the country's long-term development.

He pointed out 3 main reasons why those in this age group are disinterested in continuing their studies:

- More employment opportunities on gig platforms

- The influence of social media

- The belief that good academic results may not necessarily guarantee high-paying jobs

According to The Sun, Neal Sivadas, the Product Marketing Manager at TikTok, also pointed out that job seekers face stiff competition in the market.

He shared that the average job today gets about 250 applications to fill one role while bigger companies such as Microsoft and Google receive two million job applications annually.

With the job market being fiercely competitive coupled together with the rising cost of living, the younger generation can't be faulted for branching out of the traditional work pathways and going where the jobs are to earn a living right away.

Aside from that, a survey on the country's labour force by the Malaysian Productivity Corporation (MPC) found that 5.8% of Malaysians have never attended or completed school.

The MPC believe that this group who do not go to school are individuals from poor families, the Orang Asli communities, and in Sabah and Sarawak.

The Star reported that these students also drop out of school due to poverty, loss of interest and the system's focus on exams.

The students further feel alienated by the curriculum content and failed to see the purpose of schooling.

There's no motivation for the students to continue their studies when their parents also showed no concerns about their children's education.

MPC's development, productivity and competitiveness division director Mohamad Muzaffar Abdul Hamid said this would result in many low-skill workers in the workforce which would then cause a decrease in the nation's productivity, innovation and competitiveness.

He added that it'll cause difficulties in creating new job opportunities and will have an impact on low-wage workers.

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