

Analyzing the characteristics of graduates' employment: Results and conclusions of a large survey

Vassilis Kostoglou

Department of Informatics,
Alexander Technological Educational Institute of Thessaloniki,
P.O.Box 141, 57400, Sindos.
E-mail: vkostogl@it.teithe.gr

Abstract

The employability of its graduates is among the main priorities of the Greek higher education establishments; universities and technological educational institutes (TEIs). Therefore, the examination of graduates' employment characteristics presents particular interest for all involved parties: universities, TEIs, Ministries of Education and Employment, academics and researchers, as well as graduates and undergraduates of secondary and higher education.

This paper focuses on the investigation and analysis of all main employment parameters of the graduates of Alexander TEI of Thessaloniki. An OR model has been developed for this purpose. A specially designed structured questionnaire has been used as a research tool. The next stage of survey's conduct consisted of the collection of first-born data through telephonic interviews. A representative and unbiased sample of 1541 graduates (nearly 28% of the total relevant population) having completed their studies in the period 1997-2001 has been formatted through random sampling. The sample was stratified according to the sex and the specialty of the graduates.

The answers of the informants were analyzed through descriptive and analytical statistical techniques. Regarding the topics examined initially the graduates' profiles as well as their educational background are presented. The main emphasis is given to the employment characteristics by the thorough examination of four relevant categories: employed, self-employed (entrepreneurial activities), unemployed and idle graduates. Additionally, the relationships between the principal parameters are examined through appropriate statistical techniques ((X^2 test, Cramer's index V, Spearman's correlation coefficients and analysis of variance).

The conclusions derived show relatively high employability; however is obvious the presence of significant hetero-employment. Graduates' sex, qualifications and department of origin affect significantly their adopted practices for job searching and their policies during their employment.

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