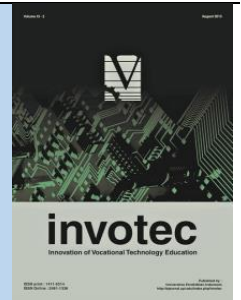




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Workplace Adaptation for Vocational Schools Graduates

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ABSTRACT

The essence and types of workplace adaptation as a choice of professional activities performed by vocational high school graduates are more closely related to the school learning system and employability skills. Researchers conducted a systematic literature review to investigate various sources of information on vocational high school graduates' workplace adaptation. A high degree of initial knowledge and skills, an interest in new organizations and professions, and, in the long run, possessing the appropriate character qualities and psychological qualities impact the effectiveness of workplace adaptation. The success of workplace adaptation is determined by a high level of initial knowledge and skills, an interest in new organizations and jobs, and, in the future, having the necessary character traits and psychological characteristics. Timely assistance from colleagues, supervisors, and managers, as well as the ability to anticipate difficulties and respond to situations promptly. The adaptation of the workplace for vocational high school graduates is strongly intertwined with the implementation of the stages and roles of student vocational career guidance. The authors focus on the creation of a framework that vocational high school graduates can use to prepare them for the workplace, beginning with the preparation, search, evaluation, negotiation, and ending with starting and improving jobs as a source of income. This framework is strengthened by increasing skills, specifically soft skills as the fundamental skills required by job seekers.

1. Introduction

Workplace Adaptation (WA) is the process of modifying actions and interpersonal interactions in a new work environment (Kunasegaran et al., 2016). Workplace Adaptation is also a process of assimilation for newcomers to a work environment (Reio Jr & Sutton, 2006). WA in the educational process emphasizes the existence of appropriate reciprocal adjustments for newly hired employees (Reio Jr, 1997). WA can also assess a person's ability to meet the work needs in a known work area by employing a coping strategy (Chung-Yan, 2005). The process of adjusting to the workplace can be accelerated with support from the company or organization (Wang et al., 2011). WA for

newcomers has been facilitated by technological advances owned by modern companies (Fadel, 2012).

The transition from school to the workplace is a time-consuming process with uncertain boundaries that involves several aspects that are difficult to adjust (Ling & O'Brien, 2013). Fresh graduates encounter several challenges when it comes to adjusting to a new job. These difficulties include a lack of practical skills, a lack of communication skills with clients and colleagues, and some difficulties with professional adaptation and organizational administration (Frolenoka & Dukule, 2017). Graduates of vocational high schools must not only be specially prepared to meet job-specific skills, but they must also be equipped with learning skills and adaptability competencies (Nambiar et al., 2019). This statement demonstrates that vocational students are equipped with work skills, study skills, and the ability to adapt so they are ready to enter the workforce following the world of work.

Vocational school graduates frequently struggle to find work, move from one job to another, and end up in jobs with no prospects for advancement. Furthermore, VET graduates entering the labour market frequently lack traditional support systems and services, prompting some researchers to refer to them as "cut off." Vocational education is intended to produce graduates who are ready to work, but this is not always the case (Laterite, 2019). In education, the solution is to conduct an analysis first, before or during the transition to work. Research was conducted on how to prepare vocational students for the transition to employment and navigate employment pathways that lead to better livelihoods. Creating a framework for structuring thinking about school-to-work transitions, outlining context, identifying scope and gaps in the knowledge base, and making recommendations for guiding the future of school-to-work transition programmes and policies. Therefore, the authors intended to investigate work adaptation based on the aforementioned phenomena of vocational high school graduates.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Workplace adaptation

Workplace Adaptation is the process of adapting to new actions and interpersonal interactions in a new work environment (Kunasegaran et al., 2016). It can also be interpreted as a process of assimilation for newcomers to the workplace (Reio Jr & Sutton, 2006). Workplace Adaptation (WA) is a reciprocal adjustment educational process designed for new employees who have recently joined the organization (Reio Jr, 1997). WA also assesses a person's ability to meet the demands of his job with a known work area and a coping strategy (Wang et al., 2011). As a result, workplace adaptation can be defined as the process of adjusting a person to the work environment.

Pulakos, Dorsey, and White (2006) concluded that cognitive abilities, practical intelligence, originality, emotional stability, openness, cognitive flexibility, achievement motivation, cooperation, sociability, social intelligence, and physical abilities are the most important factors in determining an individual's adaptability in the workplace.

The ability to understand problems and use language effectively is referred to as cognitive ability. A higher level of intelligence enables a person to change behaviour or focus and deal effectively with a wide range of different and dynamic situations. Cognitive abilities are thought to improve adaptability in situations requiring learning and problem-solving.

Practical intelligence is more concerned with the ability to solve unusual problems, which may have multiple solutions and ways to solve them, as well as the ability to learn and apply knowledge to unusual everyday problems (Wagner, 1986). As a result, practical intelligence can play an important role in a person's ability to adapt effectively to new and changing situations, as well as solve problems creatively.

The ability to develop creative or intelligent ideas about a specific problem or situation, or the ability to develop new ways to solve a problem, is defined as originality (Fleishman, 1992) because originality has been shown to help with the solution of new and unusual problems. These constructs can help with adaptability in uncertain situations.

Emotional stability refers to the ability to remain calm and prudent when confronted with difficult or stressful situations. People who are emotionally stable or well-adjusted are also aware of their moods and can adapt quickly even in rapidly changing situations. Emotional stability has been discovered to be a valid predictor of a variety of job performance criteria, including irresponsible behaviour, teamwork, and executive capacity (Hough, 1992). Emotional stability will greatly predict adaptability (Peterson et al., 1999).

Openness is synonymous with curiosity, broad insight, and one's acceptance of new environments and events. Individuals who have openness tend to display traits such as tolerance and curiosity when faced with new situations. As a result, they are less likely to perceive change as stressful and tend to adapt more effectively. There is a positive relationship between openness and coping with organizational change (Judge et al., 1999) because people with openness exhibit tolerance and curiosity when confronted with new situations. This construct tends to increase effective adaptability in several dimensions of adaptability.

Cognitive flexibility is something that is required for someone to be resilient, a person who sees change as a challenge or an opportunity for further development (Kobasa, 1979). Individuals who are optimistic about change are more likely to explore their surroundings and have a better understanding of the resources available to them to help them cope with change (Moss, 1973).

The desire to overcome obstacles, achieve results, and master tasks beyond the expectations of others is referred to as achievement motivation. According to research, high achievers have a variety of characteristics, including a willingness to take on a significant amount of responsibility for solving the problems they face and a proclivity to set moderate achievement goals that account for all risks (Greenlaw, 1972). Achievement motivation can also increase willingness to overcome obstacles and create positive performance expectations based on the desired interest in personal success.

Cooperative involves being able to work effectively with others to achieve common goals. Cooperative behaviour has been linked to psychological adjustment, managerial performance, teamwork, public relations performance, customer service, and other interpersonal criteria (Peterson et al., 1999). Furthermore, Peterson reported that subject matter experts (psychologists) consider cooperation to be sufficient for determining adaptability.

Sociability is a positive attitude, a personality trait characterized by wellness, self-assurance, and affiliation (Teilegen, 2019). Sociability is also the tendency to be friendly and at ease in social situations. These characteristics are effective predictors of how people cope with life events (Holahan & Moos, 1987). Furthermore, the affiliation aspect of sociability should help individuals form positive and productive interpersonal relationships, which can become adaptive or serve as a buffer mechanism for dealing with stress or other changing situations (Schneider, 1992).

The ability to understand the feelings, thoughts, and behaviour of others, including oneself, in interpersonal situations and to act appropriately based on that understanding is referred to as social intelligence (Marlowe, 1986). Social intelligence is widely regarded as a valuable adaptive personal trait (Costa Jr & McCrae, 2008).

Physical ability is linked to adaptability, which is physical in nature. This dimension entails adjusting to difficult environmental conditions (for example, heat, noise, and cold) as well as adjusting muscle weight and strength to become proficient at performing physical tasks. Physical ability will be extremely important in predicting physically oriented adaptability because physically oriented adaptability will necessitate physical abilities in addition to other types of individual attributes that may be associated with it.

2.2 Learning at work

Workplace Adaptation and workplace learning are synonymous. Workplace learning is defined as "the process of transmitting technical knowledge, culture, norms, and company procedures through formal and informal communication" (Reio Jr & Wiswell, 2000). Employees can adapt to the various possibilities that emerge in their work environment by encouraging the acquisition of values and norms, developing job-related skills and capacities, and developing an identity within the company (Reio Jr & Sutton, 2006) so that they can carry out their duties and roles and adjust to the company. It is a learning process that is supported by curiosity-induced exploratory behaviour and includes a wide range of activities that influence beginners' thinking, attitudes, and behaviour, resulting in adaptations to their company (Ghosh, Reio Jr, & Bang, 2013).

Morton discovered that workplace adaptation learning entailed forming co-worker relationships, understanding company culture, and gaining the knowledge required to do work in a new organization. According to the findings of this study, building co-worker relationships is extremely important for job knowledge (Morton, 1993). Other findings Feldman (1989) and Holton (1992) have suggested that good employee performance cannot be sustained in the absence of

interpersonal relationships with co-workers. Researchers Ashford (1988) and Jablin (1984) discovered that the longer an employee works, the less feedback and information retrieval he or she receives from co-workers.

Morton (1993) developed a Workplace Adaptation Questionnaire (WAQ) based on extensive factor analytic research to assess workplace learning or employee adaptation. The 18-item instrument's original subscale was designed to measure perceptions of learning from a job-relevant socialization perspective, including relationship building (five items), acculturation (five items), and job knowledge items (Morton, 1993). This scale is divided into three subscales for learning or adaptation: (1) establishing peer relationships (to obtain information about materials and work-related support); (2) establishing relationships with supervisors (to obtain information about company norms, procedures, and rewards), (3) job knowledge (to be actively involved in the first two stages of socialization so that employees can acquire sufficient job-relevant knowledge to adapt to their job) (Reio Jr & Wiswell, 2000).

Park et al. (2018) validated Morton's WAQ, and the results show that the Korean version of the WAQ can be used in the Korean context. Job Knowledge, which includes technical knowledge about the job, is one of the WAQ components used. Acculturation to the organization, which includes an understanding of the company's regulations and policies, developing relationships, which is knowledge about colleagues, and Satisfaction with learning experiences, which includes satisfaction with learning experiences at work.

2.3 Employability skill

Employability skills are defined as a transferable core set of skills that are a presentation of the essential functions and supporting knowledge, skills, and attitudes required by 21st-century companies as a prerequisite for achieving career success at all levels of employment and education (Overtoom, 2000). Employability skills include personal skills, interpersonal skills, attitudes, habits, and behaviours which are skills that allow someone to become a workforce or be able to stay in a job (Lankard, 1990).

Kecakapan bekerja is an Indonesian term that refers to employability skills. These are general skills that must be applied in a variety of jobs and are required to enter the workplace.

Employability skills are categorized into three groups of skills which include: (1) basic academic skills, (2) high-order thinking skills, and (3) personal qualities (Robinson, 2000). Furthermore, Robinson revealed that having good higher-order thinking skills is more important for success at work than having good basic academic skills. Workers must be able to think, argue, and make decisions to perform well at work. A person who can think critically, act logically, and evaluate situations when making decisions and solving problems is a very valuable asset to the workforce.

According to several explanations of the above opinion, employability skills are a set of skills required to enter the non-technical world of work, which are required to survive and develop a career in the workplace, or to advance in a new workplace.

3. Methods

A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was used in this study. The research began with a search for indexed scientific books/journals/articles from the last five years (2016-2021). Researchers used unpublished scientific articles such as a thesis/dissertation as well as guidelines, regulations and policies from educational institutions and government agencies. The researchers then sorted the articles that were relevant to the research, and then analysed the sorted articles. Furthermore, the researchers wrote the analysis results using scientific articles/journals from ERIC, SAGE PUB, ELSEVIER, and national journals. Researchers used a variety of keywords to find references that could support the researcher's SLR, as shown in Figure 1 below.

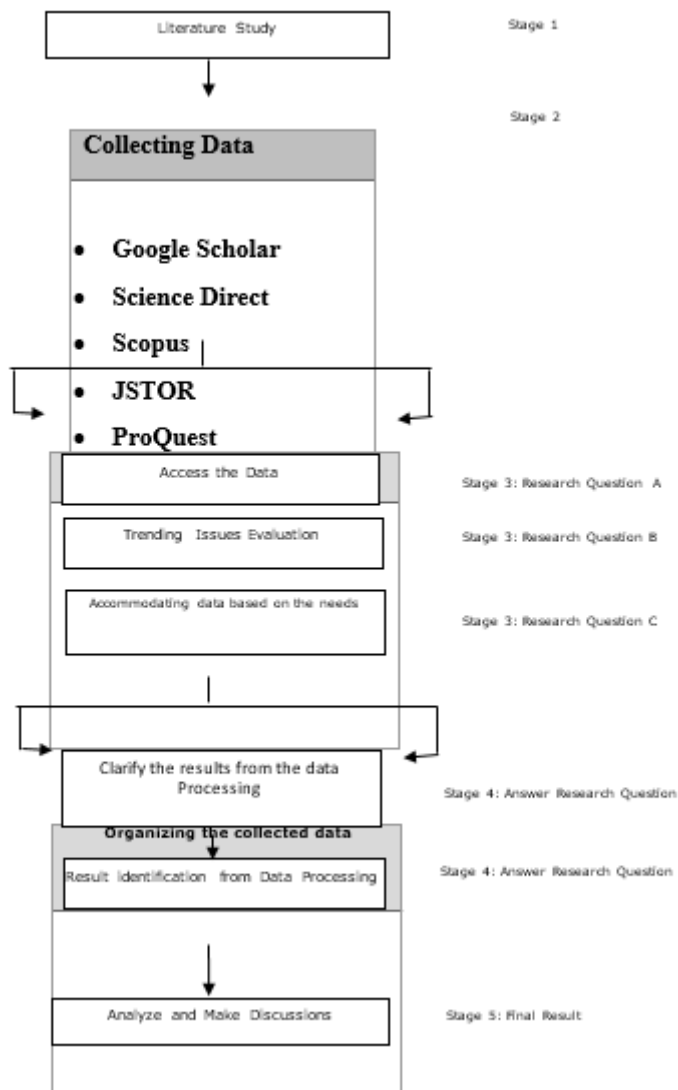


Figure 1. Process of Systematic Literature Review (SLR) research

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Adaptation in the workplace

For decades, vocational education has served as a training field for students to gain skills and be prepared to enter the labour force. The implication is that only some students continue to university and the rest choose to work, but the reality is that not all vocational school graduates are capable of working and adapting to the working environment (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2020). One of the issues that arise during workplace adaptation is that employees who have recently graduated from high school have difficulty adjusting to a new workplace. These difficulties include a lack of practical skills, a lack of communication skills with clients and colleagues, and some difficulties with professional adaptation and organizational administration (Frolenoka & Dukule, 2017). Vocational education graduates should be adaptable because they are supported by a variety of factors, including a skills-centred learning system. Furthermore, vocational education graduates have the opportunity to do internships in the industrial world, which can improve skills so that they are more honed and ready to enter the world of work. In addition, schools provide career guidance services, which assist students in choosing and determining what types of work are suitable based on the skills (Hlad'o, Lazarová, & Hloušková, 2019).

Teachers' and infrastructure's roles and functions are needed in work adaptability through job skills, as well as the business and industrial environments. Teacher encouragement, facilities and infrastructure, and the world of industry all have an impact on the development of student work skills, which directly affects the ability to adapt in the student's workplace. Teacher's support for job skills has an indirect effect on students' work adaptability, whereas job skills are supported by facilities and infrastructure as well as the industrial world, which has a direct effect on students' work adaptability (Parjono, 2016).

One of the factors that can encourage students to adapt easily in the working environment is the assessment and advice of school counsellors on the guidance and counselling programs provided at school. Counsellors believe that the guidance program at the vocational school is effective in terms of the guidance program activities, the level of student development in the areas of educational, vocational, and personal guidance and counselling, and the area of student flexibility. This program is also capable of problem-solving (Torunoğlu & Gençtanırım, 2015).

The following are the key factors that influence an individual's adaptability in the workplace: 1. Cognitive abilities (the ability to understand something and use language) 2. Applied intelligence (the ability to solve unusual problems, for which there may be several solutions and several ways to get them; to learn and apply knowledge to everyday problems that are not undefined), 3. Originality (the ability to generate ideas that are not understood or intelligent about a particular topic or situation; the ability to develop creative ways to solve problems), 4. Emotional stability (maintaining prudence and remaining calm when facing difficulties, frustrations, or other stressful/difficult situations), 5. Openness (is receptive to new environments and events; curious and broad-minded; displays broad

interests), 6. Cognitive flexibility (perceives change as a challenge or opportunity for further development), 7. Motivation for achievement (shows a desire to achieve results and master tasks beyond the expectations of others; set difficult and challenging goals and work hard to achieve them; shows a drive to succeed), 8. Cooperative (working effectively with others towards common goals; showing a willingness to give and take to achieve group goals; develop constructive relationships), 9. Sociability (feeling comfortable in social situations; going out; enjoying meeting new people), 10. Social intelligence (understanding appropriate social behaviour; understanding others' feelings, motivations, and behaviour and acting accordingly; finding solutions to interpersonal problems), and 11. Physical ability (physically-oriented adaptability) (Pulakos et al. 2006).

Today's job skills are highly expected from new engineering graduates and how these competencies relate to workplace adaptation (relationship building, acculturation, and job knowledge). Interpersonal and technical competencies have a significant impact on new employees in terms of developing relationships and learning from co-workers, learning organizational norms and values from supervisors, and gaining technical work knowledge (Reio Jr & Sutton, 2006).

Guidance and counselling programs at vocational high schools are extremely beneficial in terms of program activities, program suitability with student development levels, educational, vocational, and personal guidance and counselling domains, student flexibility, and program adequacy for problem intervention. On the other hand, the guidance program is facing a variety of mismatching guidance activities for the vocational high school structure, a lack of implementation time, a lack of sufficient vocational and personal guidance domains, a mismatch with the level of student development, difficulties in implementing guidance activities in the classroom, and a lack of an examination of the program. Quality standards for career preparation programs are being raised to ensure that all programs are embedded in a pathway that is closely aligned with market workforce needs and culminates in meaningful postsecondary credentials or skills certification in the industry. By incorporating career readiness indicators into the accountability system to generate postsecondary certification credentials or industrial skills certification, it can be a solution in the preparation of career guidance for schools and students.

The workplace adaptation success is determined by a high level of initial knowledge and skills, interest in new organizations, jobs, and the future, having the necessary character traits and psychological characteristics, timely assistance from colleagues, supervisors, and managers, and the ability to imagine difficulties and respond to situations promptly.

4.2 Transition from school to workplace

To meet the demands of the school industry, students are required to have skills that are following industry needs before entering the world of work. Vocational high schools, in particular, play an important role as a producer of graduates (Hasanefendic, Heitor, & Horta, 2016; OECD, 2018). Graduates may struggle to make the transition from school to the workplace if they lack the

necessary skills. As a result, to anticipate, a design and framework can be created so that graduates can face difficulties in adapting to a new work environment (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). Figure 2 illustrates the five stages that a person can go through when dealing with adaptation in a new work environment: preparation, searching, evaluation and negotiation, starting and improving work as a livelihood. The framework is fairly general and can be applied in a variety of settings, both formal and informal, including those where young people seek job opportunities on their own. This framework openly simplifies very complex processes to make situations in a new working environment easier to understand and analyse (Laterite, 2019).

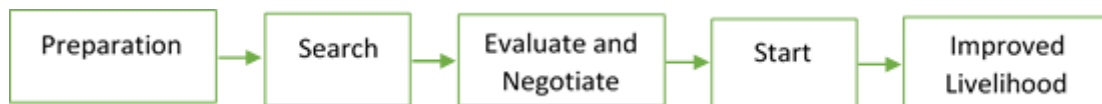


Figure 2. Outline of the school-to-work transition process

During the transition stage, a person must prepare himself or herself and develop his or her skills and knowledge. It refers to all activities carried out before looking for work or starting a business. Preparation compels someone to engage in certain activities, such as identifying the competencies and skills they possess, setting goals, and determining the type of work they desire. The next step is to understand what the employer is looking for. To improve their skills ahead of time, students are required to take an internship by obtaining a certificate of expertise. In addition, students must be more active in participating in activities outside of learning, one of which is having a community that can build insights and hone skills.

The persuasion stage is an important skill in the transition from school to work: job seekers must persuade employers that they are capable of doing the job; potential entrepreneurs must persuade clients that the services they offer are worthwhile or suppliers that they will become reliable business partners. Job search negotiations can take the form of an interview, a short probation period, or an internship. Persuasion is not just for job seekers; employers, clients, and suppliers must also build trust and persuade job seekers or potential entrepreneurs that they offer good opportunities. During this time, all parties will conduct an evaluation based on their preferences. The art of negotiating employment terms is a part of the persuasion step. This includes position, salary, and other conditions for job seekers; for aspiring entrepreneurs, it can include the terms of the agreement, taking into account their business goals. During this period, the various parties involved reached an agreement. Job seekers receive job opportunities after an agreement is reached. The next step is to adapt during the first few weeks of work when an employee learns workplace norms and applies skills to the job for the first time. The ease of transition and ability to succeed in the first few weeks or months of work are critical components of a successful transition period.

Starting work is the next stage, and it is one of the potential endpoints of the transition process. Several qualitative elements must be considered for various types of work, such as jobs that are

temporary, extremely underpaid, or dangerous, as these are not suitable and do not contribute to improving employees' livelihoods.

The transition is complete when work translates into better living conditions for young people (Scoones, 2009). Livelihood is made up of abilities, assets (including both material and social resources), and activities that are required for a living. When coping with stresses and shocks, sustainable livelihoods maintain or improve their capabilities and assets while not depleting the natural resource base. Facilitating or improving the school-to-work transition is not a standalone development goal, but rather part of a larger development goal of improving youth livelihoods.

When discussing the skills mismatch between labour supply and market, the skills literature frequently focuses on what skills are required to perform a job in the labour market. There is, however, no conclusive literature on what skills is required to make the transition to work. The skills identified in this section are critical for making the transition to employment, and the literature is supportive. Then, for comparison, it is necessary to review the current skills available as well as the training and intervention programs. Aside from the various paths that young people take to the formal and informal labour markets discussed in the informant interviews, some basic skills emerge as important in dealing with the crisis, namely the transition period in the work environment.

Besides, soft skills are extremely important at this level. Employers generally look for employees who are both strong and have soft skills during the interview process. The literature notes the high demand for and scarcity of soft skills among employers in many contexts around the world (UNESCO, 2012), including Peru (World Bank, 2011) and the Philippines (Gropello, Tan, & Tandon, 2010). Soft skills are one of the factors being considered, which we can learn more about through key informant interviews. Individuals working in the informal sector, for example, must demonstrate trustworthiness and racial responsibility. A company's communication is also an important factor to consider. It includes basic literacy skills as well as understanding more tailored communications such as how to respond to emails, ask for and receive feedback, or present yourself to potential customers. Self-confidence, motivation, and self-management are examples of soft skills. Students must acquire a variety of skills to succeed in the school-to-work transition, including cognitive, behavioural, and socio-emotional, technical, and entrepreneurial skills. Cognitive skills are typically the foundation of the educational system, beginning with basic literacy and numeracy in elementary schools and progressing to critical thinking and problem-solving in later years of education (Filmer & Fox, 2014). Behavioural and socio-emotional skills, also known as life skills, transferable skills, or soft skills, are critical skills that develop during development. Technical skills are frequently job-specific and are taught as part of a specific subject, such as TVET education.

4. Conclusion

When someone is just starting in the workforce, the adaptation process in a new working environment will be difficult if they do not have sufficient planning and adequate skills. As a result, a

framework to use as a guideline when deciding what path to take after graduating from vocational high school is required. Vocational education, as an institution that produces graduates who are ready to work, must have a strategy in place to ensure that graduates can easily adapt. The adaptation of the workplace for vocational high school graduates is inextricably linked to the implementation of the stages and roles of student vocational career guidance. The stages of learning, both in class and in industry, are the main reference for how a person must be able to adapt; additionally, the implementation of career guidance for students can be a reference and reference in choosing a profession, based on what interests and job trends are chosen. A framework that vocational high school graduates can use to prepare them for the world of work, beginning with the stages of preparation, search, evaluation, and negotiation, and ending with starting and improving jobs as a livelihood. This framework is strengthened by increasing skills, specifically soft skills as the fundamental skills required of job seekers.

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