

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The previous chapter explained methodology. This chapter reports the results of the attitudes of recruiters toward the competencies of candidates with an online degree. The chapter is divided into three parts: general background information, attitudes towards the competencies of candidates with an online degree, and suggestions for the candidates.

4.1 GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

As shown in Table 8, the number of subjects was 77 who were undertaking Master of Business Administration (Program for Executives) at the University of Thai Chamber of Commerce, Kasetsart University and Thammasat University.

4.1.1 Educational Background and Gender

The general information of the respondents, as the shared basic requirements from the three universities, was:

(1) Having at least 5 years work experience, excluding Thammasat students, which have at least 8 years work experience.

(2) Earning at least a bachelor's degree

According to Table 8, the respondents of the study were 77 managers. The number of male respondents was almost equal to the number of female respondents (49.4 and 50.6%, respectively). Most male subjects in the study received master's degrees (27.3%) whereas most of female respondents (28.5%) received bachelor's degrees.

Table 8. Sex and Education

Sex	Education level					
	Bachelor's Degree		Master's Degree		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	17	22.1	21	27.3	38	49.4
Female	22	28.5	17	22.1	39	50.6

4.1.2 Age

The median age of participants was 37 years old, as shown in Table 9.

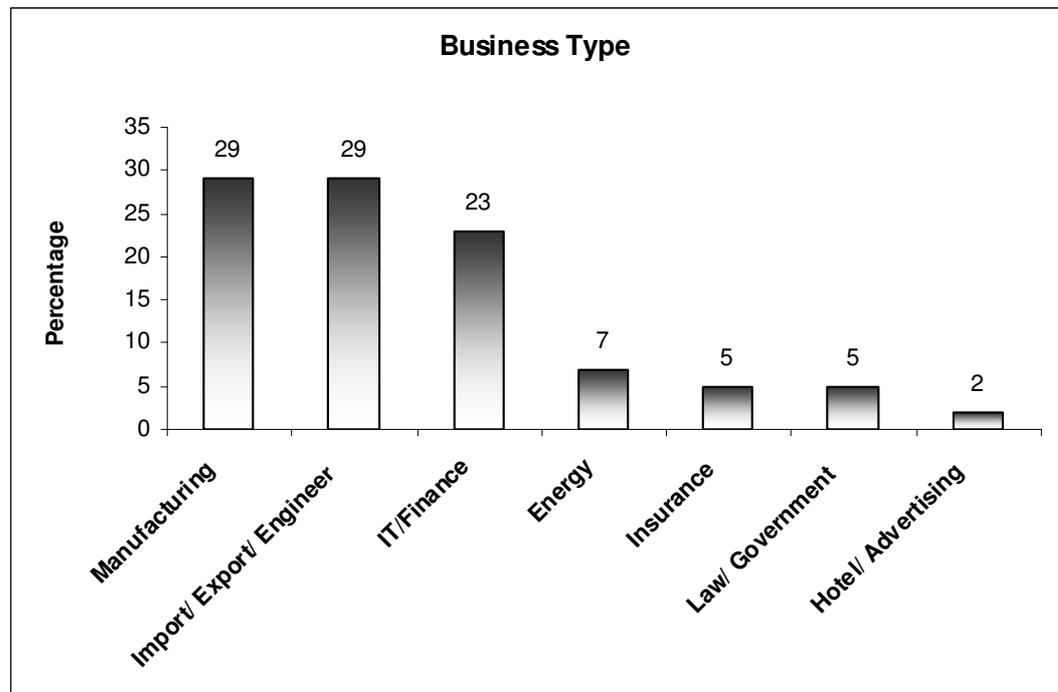
Table 9. Age

	Mean	Median	STD Variation
Age	38	37	6.5

4.1.3 Type of Business

The majority of respondents were from the manufacturing section, which accounted for 29 percent. Import/export sections and engineering came second (29 %), whereas information technology and finance sections were ranked third at 23 percent.

Figure 3. Type of Business



4.1.4 Getting to Know the Respondents

Table 10 shows the number of staff under the employers' supervision, their work experience and recruitment frequency in their organization. The findings showed the median amount of the respondents' work experience was six years, and

the mean number of their subordinates was 10. Also, their companies had a recruitment frequency of around two times a year.

Table 10. The Respondents' Relevant Information

Information	Mean	Median	STD Variation
Number of Working Years	8	6	6.5
Staff Under Supervision	14	10	13.9
Recruitment Frequency	4	2	4.3

4.1.5 Experience with Candidates with Online Degrees

Table 11 asked whether the managers had ever met an applicant with an online degree, the result showed that close to 90 percent of the recruiters (88.3%) had never met online degree holders.

Table 11. Experience Meeting with Online Degree Holders

Questions	Percentage	
	Yes	No
Meeting with the Candidates	11.7	88.3

4.2 RESPONDENTS' ATTITUDES

4.2.1 Background Information with Online Degrees

As illustrated in Table 12 below, regarding the teachers' role in online learning, the majority of recruiters (94.8%) understood that the instructors could monitor students' attendance and assignments online. Ninety percent of them mentioned that online degrees would be beneficial for distant people.

However, almost 90 percent of the managers perceived that people studying online would have poor interpersonal skills with others and miss the opportunity to interact with classmates and instructors.

Asked whether they understood the learners' motivation to study online, the majority of participants (77.9%) reported that they understood the reasons why people chose to earn a degree online. Almost three-fourths of the participants agreed that an online degree would be helpful for busy people

Nearly sixty eight percent of respondents expressed that a degree could be conducted online. More than half of them (57.1%) mentioned that students had to study on their own, without any guidance from teachers. Moreover, almost 56 percent mentioned that online degrees were available in Thailand. Nonetheless, only one-third of the recruiters acknowledged that they understood how the online courses were conducted and evaluated.

Table 12. Participants' Background Information with an Online Degree

Questions	Percentage	
	Yes	No
Monitoring attendance online	94.8	5.2
Advantages for distant people	90.9	9.1
Poor interaction with others	89.6	10.4
Understanding motivations	77.9	22.1
Advantages for busy people	74.0	26.0
Degrees available online	67.5	32.5
Individual study	57.1	42.9
Degrees available in Thailand	55.8	44.2
Understanding the course delivery and evaluation	32.0	68.0

4.2.2 Qualifications of Applicants with an Online Degree

From Table 13, the majority of the respondents (71.5%) considered that an online degree made students obsessed with technology and had difficulty to socialize with others. Meanwhile almost seventy two percent of the participants preferred regular degree holders. The results show that 67.5 percent of the respondents were doubtful with the competencies. Besides, 61 percent of the recruiters mentioned that it was difficult to measure the quality of an online education.

More than half of the recruiters (55.9%) indicated that an online degree might not reflect the real attributes of degree holders. In addition, in response to the statement "Online degree is not equal to a regular one", 46.8 percent of participants agreed, while the same percentage was indecisive. Nevertheless, 61 percent of them were uncertain whether an online degree was easier than a regular degree.

Table 13. Qualifications of Applicants with an Online Degree Compared with a Traditional Degree

Questions	Agree Percentage	Uncertain Percentage	Disagree Percentage
Poor socialization	71.5	22.0	6.5
Less preference	71.5	15.6	13.0
Doubtful competencies	67.5	23.4	9.1
Doubtful measurement	61.0	20.8	18.2
Wrong reflection	55.9	28.5	15.6
Less equality	46.8	46.8	6.4
Less difficulty	28.6	61.0	10.4

4.2.3 Hiring Decisions Towards Candidates Receiving an Online Degree

Table 14 presents the recruiters' hiring decision towards online degree holders. Almost three-quarters of the managers believe that doubts with the quality of the degree could inhibit the opportunity to recruit a competent person. Moreover, 60 percent of the sample supported the idea that candidates with an online degree should be treated equally with regular degree holders.

From the findings, however, more than half of the participants (64.9%) hesitated to recruit a capable applicant with an online degree. Fifty-eight percent of them were doubtful whether an online degree could create an equal job opportunity as a regular degree does. Nevertheless, there was no prevalent difference between the people in agreement or disagreement, each accounted for 20.8%.

Asked if a degree received online signified a person's responsibility and self-discipline, half of the managers (50.7%) were uncertain while 33 percent of them agreed with this fact. Moreover, to check whether they were interested to send their staff to earn an online degree, 49.4 percent of them were uncertain while 28.6 percent did not want to do so. Slightly less than half of the participants (46.7%) were unsure whether an online degree would affect their recruiting decisions while 40 percent of them mentioned that the type of degree received did affect their hiring decisions.

Table 14. Hiring Decisions

Question	Agree Percentage	Uncertain Percentage	Disagree Percentage
Doubts inhibiting the recruitment of capable people	74.0	23.4	2.6
Equal treatment	60.0	32.0	8.0
No hesitation to recruit	14.3	64.9	20.8
Equal job chance	20.8	58.4	20.8
Responsible people	33.3	50.7	16.0
Probability for support the online degree	22.0	49.4	28.6
Degree types not important	13.3	46.7	40.0

4.3 SUGGESTIONS TOWARDS CANDIDATES WITH ONLINE DEGREES

Employers in this study presented a number of comments towards the candidates with an online degree as follows:

4.3.1 Socializing and team working skills were important in order to succeed in a company. The hiring people in this study suggested that students studying online should participate in social activities with other peers and instructors.

4.3.2 A person taking an online degree should gain internship or training before graduating, so that she or he could gain practical experience.

4.3.3 The universities offering online degrees should promote and make the public know about the available courses, course conduction and degree measurement. This will boost people's confidence with the degree.

The findings and suggestions of the study will be summarized and discussed in the next chapter.