Comprehension of Core Values among Student Leaders in University of Malaya

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Introduction

There are close interconnections and interdependencies between higher education, society and economy. The final stakeholders who are the employers’ of the products of higher education have become more concerned with the types of students that higher education is producing. Based on a survey on graduate market conducted by the Association of Graduate Recruiters (2007), employers opined that graduates from higher education were lacking in soft skills, such as effective communication, leadership, critical thinking, problem solving and team spirit. Thus, the need to revise and include aspects of what are expected of by the stakeholders is becoming essential (Enders, 2004).

It is fundamental to maintain a favourable employer-employee relationship at the workplace. Employers expect fresh graduates to acquire and apply their knowledge and skills, catering to the needs of the modern knowledge-based economies and the demands for relevance in research and knowledge creation (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 1997; Enders & Fulton, 2002). It is important for students of higher learning to uphold the core values of their university that they enrol in and graduate from. It is also crucial for both staff and students to operate from similar ethical frame of reference for decision making. The aim of this study is to examine the comprehension of core values among student leaders in University of Malaya. The importance of this study lies with premise that one who actualises the university core values is more likely to live up the same ethos of excellence at present and also in future particularly in the workplace.

Background of University of Malaya

University Malaya started as a public university in 1949 and was later relocated to Kuala Lumpur when Singapore became a Republic. However, its establishment as a medical school started in 1909. Due to the ideas and thoughts of the Alumni Association of the King Edward VII College and Medical College Students Union then, a university named the University of Malaya was chartered under the Carr-Saunders Commission in 1949. The formation of the University of Malaya on 8 October 1949 in Singapore was under the