

CHAPTER SIX

EVALUATION RESULTS OF INTEGRATED GRADUATE PORTAL (IGP)

This chapter presents the evaluation results obtained from the evaluation survey that was conducted for two groups of stakeholders (graduates and employers) and the discussion.

6.1 Introduction

In order to evaluate whether the portal satisfies the user requirements, an evaluation survey was carried out and the data collected was analyzed. The result obtained is presented in this chapter.

6.2 End-User Testing

Evaluation is the one of the development phases in system development and it is carried out so as to ensure that a system runs successfully, meets its objectives, error detection and satisfies the user requirements (Mansourvar, 2011). Sabatin (2007) cited inspection based and user-based methods as the common methods used for system evaluation. In order to evaluate the portal and its different proposed functions, the author made use of the user-based method because it is a way to test if a system is successful in terms of usability, user interface and functionality areas (if it meets up with its purpose of development) (Sabatin, 2007).

The evaluation was carried out through a test and survey. Two evaluation questionnaires which consist of ten questions each were designed for the graduates and employers that are key stakeholders in the IGP (questionnaires can be found in Appendix E and F). These two groups of stakeholders were selected as they are the

two most important stakeholders of the IGP. After that, a random target consisting of number of graduates and employers (30 respondents) have been approached by email and asked to register in the portal as graduates (who reflect the opinion of other graduate users) and employers (who reflect the opinion of other employer users). In order to evaluate whether the developed prototype with integrated features satisfy the user requirements, the respondents were asked to evaluate the portal by answering an evaluation questionnaire.

The graduates and employers were asked to go through different functions available for them, users had to use the portal for the first time, even though a first impression may be an emotional reaction heavily influenced by visuals or environment considerations, this is also useful, since if users coming to a site have a very positive or negative first impression, it could certainly affect their desire to go further (Powell, 2000; Sabatin, 2007).

This survey included both subjective and objective questions which aimed to test the functionality and usability of the portal from an end-user point of view. The survey was conducted online using an electronic form. Thirty respondents were asked to evaluate the portal by completing the evaluation survey but the author was able to get twenty-five responses back. Twelve graduates completed the graduates' evaluation questionnaire while thirteen employers completed the employers' evaluation question. The results of the evaluations are presented in the following sections.

6.2.1 Presentation and Creation of E-portfolio Contents

E-portfolio contents are the graduates’ content to be showcased to prospective employers to assist in facilitating graduate marketability. The creation of e-portfolio contents is important for graduates as it is the content that will be used to market them to prospective employers. Some of their e-portfolio contents such as their cover letter, professional mission statement and resumes will likewise be rated by the lecturers in order to assist the graduates in selection of good content for their e-portfolio. In the evaluation, 92% of the employer respondents stated that the e-portfolio content in the IGP is well presented while 8% of the respondents disagreed.

Figure 6.1: Presentation of E-portfolio Content in the IGP



When employers were also asked if the graduates’ content available in the IGP is sufficient to increase their marketability, 54% of the respondents agreed with this view while 46% of them disagreed with this view. Even though the number of respondents who agreed that the graduates’ content available was sufficient, it is worthy to note that the percentage of those who disagreed was likewise many (45%).

As a result, it can be deduced that more contents still need to be identified that should be added to the e-portfolio content of the graduates in order to facilitate their marketability.

Figure 6.2: Graduates Content Available in the IGP

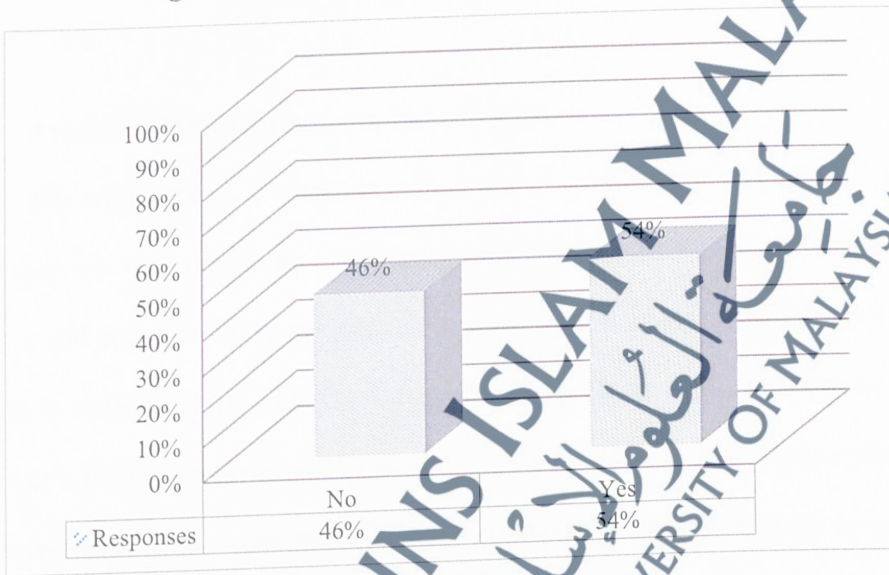
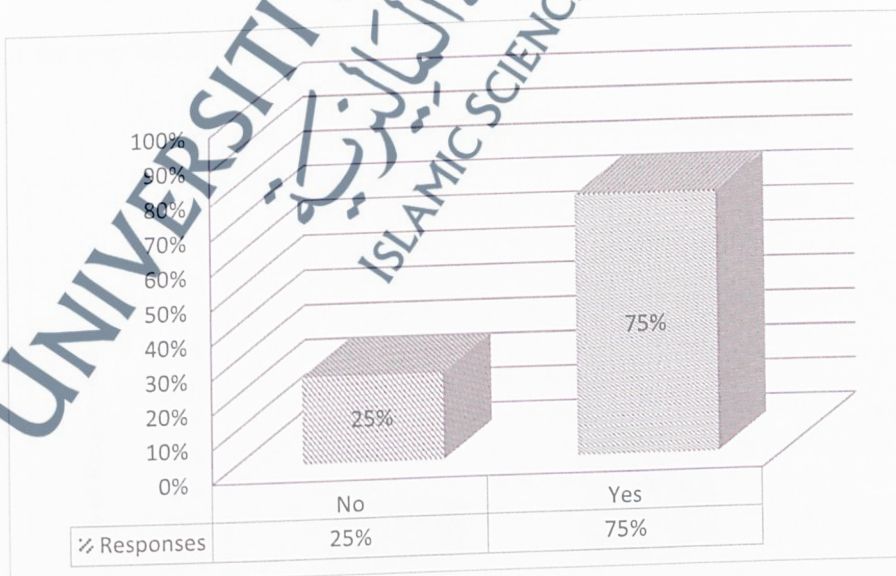


Figure 6.3: Creation of E-portfolio Contents by Graduates

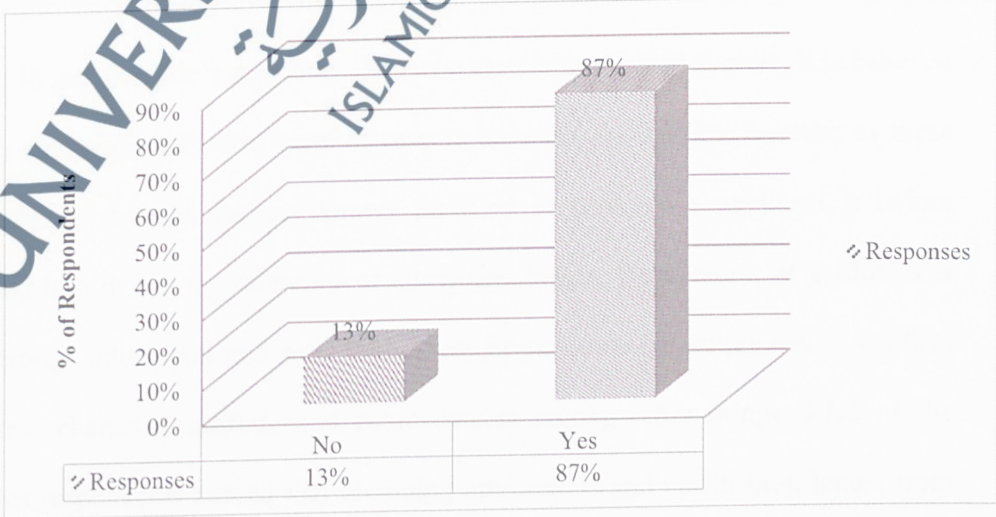


75% of the graduate respondents agreed that the creation of their e-portfolio content was easy to perform in the IGP while 25% of them stated that it was not easy to create their content. Easy creation of e-portfolio contents will increase the motivation of the graduates to make use of the IGP to facilitate their graduate marketability.

6.2.2 Available Job Requirements Information

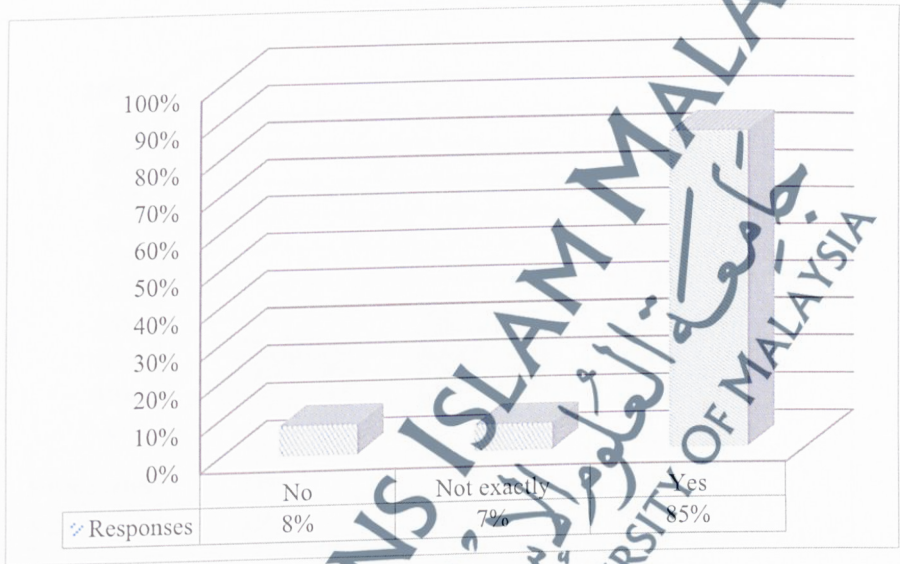
Job requirements is important to graduates marketability because it is only when they are aware what the employers wants that they will have knowledge of the contents and document to be presented to employers and the needed skills they should possess in order to work with them (Pandian, 2010; Daud, 2011). Awareness of the employer’s job requirement will likewise assist in facilitating graduate marketability. Graduates respondents were asked if the job requirements provided by prospective employers in the IGP are sufficient. The result obtained showed that 87% of the respondents agreed that the job requirements information is sufficient for them while 13% of the respondents disagreed.

Figure 6.4: Available Job Requirements Information



The employer respondents were asked about the creation of job vacancies and job requirements. The result indicates that 85% of the respondents found it easy to create jobs while 8% of them did not.

Figure 6.5: Creation of Job Vacancies and Requirements by Employers

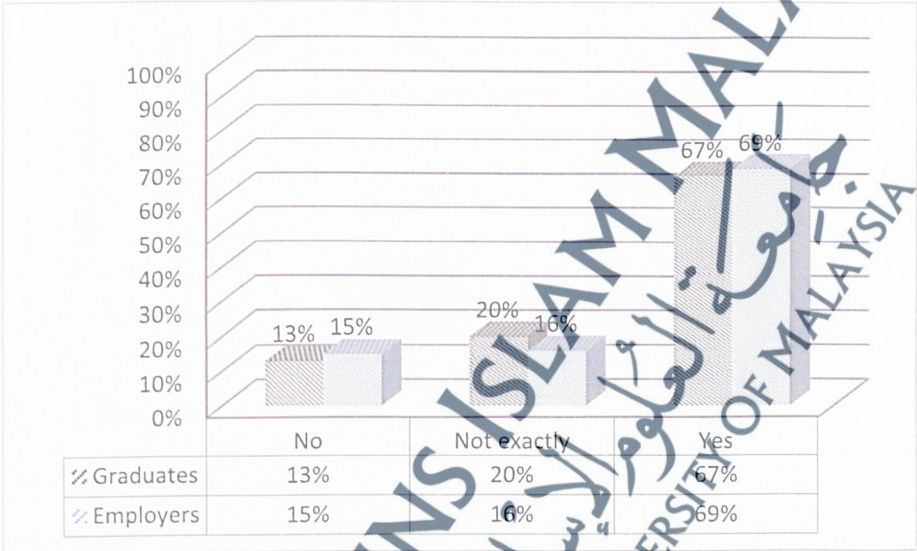


6.2.3 Verification of Graduates’ by Lecturers

Verification of graduates is proposed to be carried out in the IGP by lecturers through provision of testimonials, attestation and reference letters. When employers are able to get graduate’s reference and attestation letters from lecturers, it is believed that the employers will feel more at ease to consider the applicants better as these letters signify that the lecturer knows the kind of person the applicant is before providing him or her the reference or attestation letters. Verification of graduates is done through attestation and reference letters by lecturers for employers to confirm graduates’ character, attitude and achievements among other things. 67% of the graduates respondents agreed that obtaining attestations and verification letters from

graduates is a good verification method; 20% said not exactly while 13% said no. However, in the employers group of respondents, 69% of them said yes, 16% said not exactly and 13% said no. This is shown in the figure 6.6 below.

Figure 6.6: Graduates' verification by Lecturers

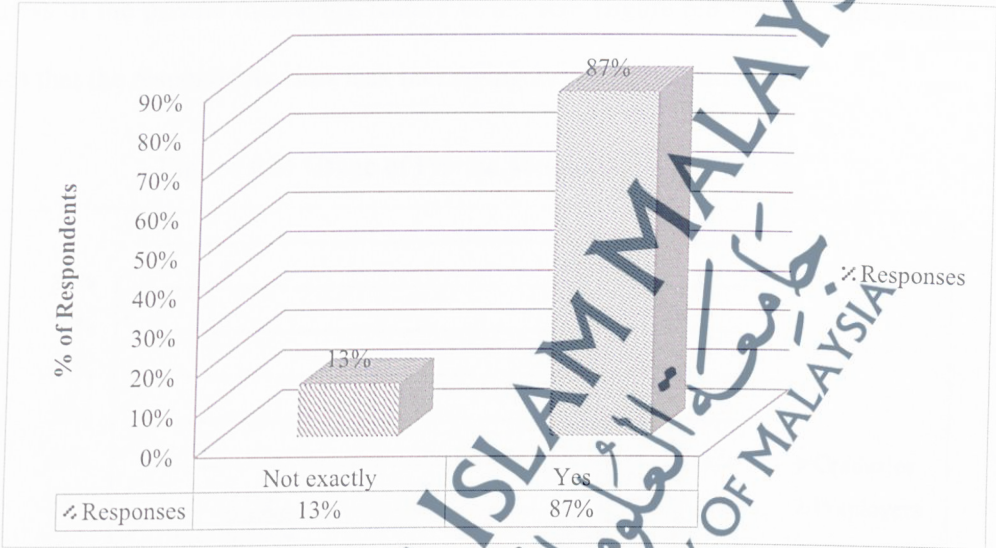


6.2.4 Selection of Possessed Skills

Possessed skills are important for the graduates to select in the portal as it is one of the information needed to market themselves to prospective employers. Graduates are required to possess the skills needed by different employers in their workplaces as there are some job specific skills that might be demanded for by the employers. Mansor et al (2007) stated that graduate marketability depends to a great deal on the skills graduates possess as employers place special importance in them and on the type of degree obtained. Hence, the IGP should be able to allow graduates to select the skills they possess and add other jobs specific skills that the employers may require which they already possess in order to facilitate their marketability. Regarding the question of possessed skills selection in the portal, 87% of the graduates'

respondents stated that the selection of possessed skills is easy to carry out while 13% stated that it is not easy to carry out.

Figure 6.7: Possessed Skills Selection by graduates

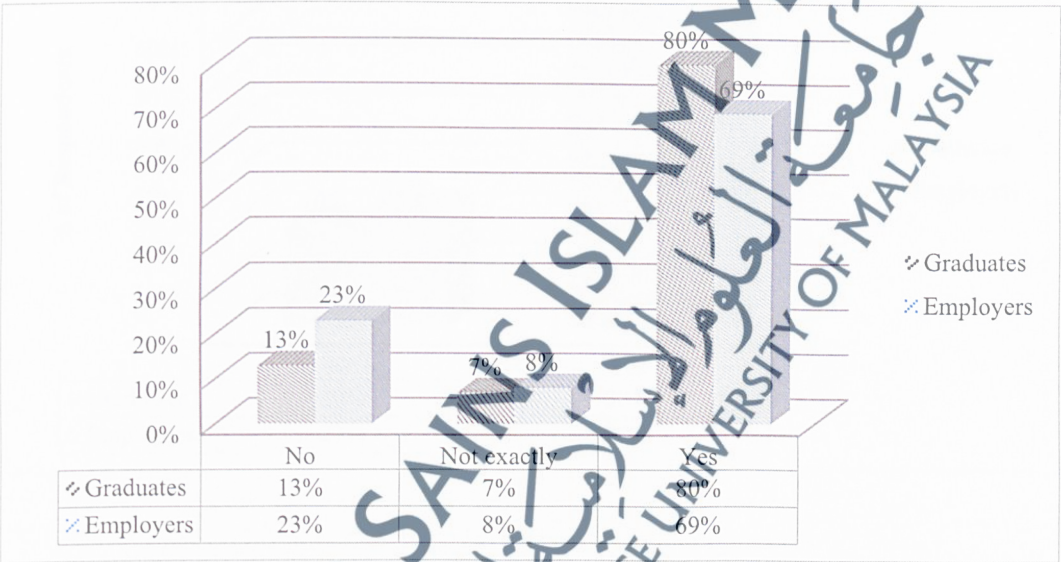


6.2.5 Usage of Private Messaging

Private messaging allows users to communicate with one another by sending direct messages to one another. This is important because collaboration is important in any system that requires different groups of users to interact with one another (Mansourvar, 2011). The wide communication gap is affecting the marketability of graduates and hindering them from getting jobs as the employers believe graduates do not possess the skills or have the requirements they need (Eurobarometer, 2010). The IGP serves as a bridge between the graduates, universities and employers to further communication between all stakeholders. This can be carried out through the use of private messaging, e-mails, discussion forums and chats. It is believed that better communication will aid the graduates in being aware of the employers' requirements and being able to achieve it. The university will likewise be able to determine the

current skills and requirements of the employers which they can train the current students in the university to obtain before graduating. The results indicate that majority of the graduates (80%) and employers (69%) respondents confirmed the usefulness of the private messaging feature in the IGP (figure 6.8 below). This result signifies that the respondents view task messaging as an important feature.

Figure 6.8: Usage of Private Messaging in IGP

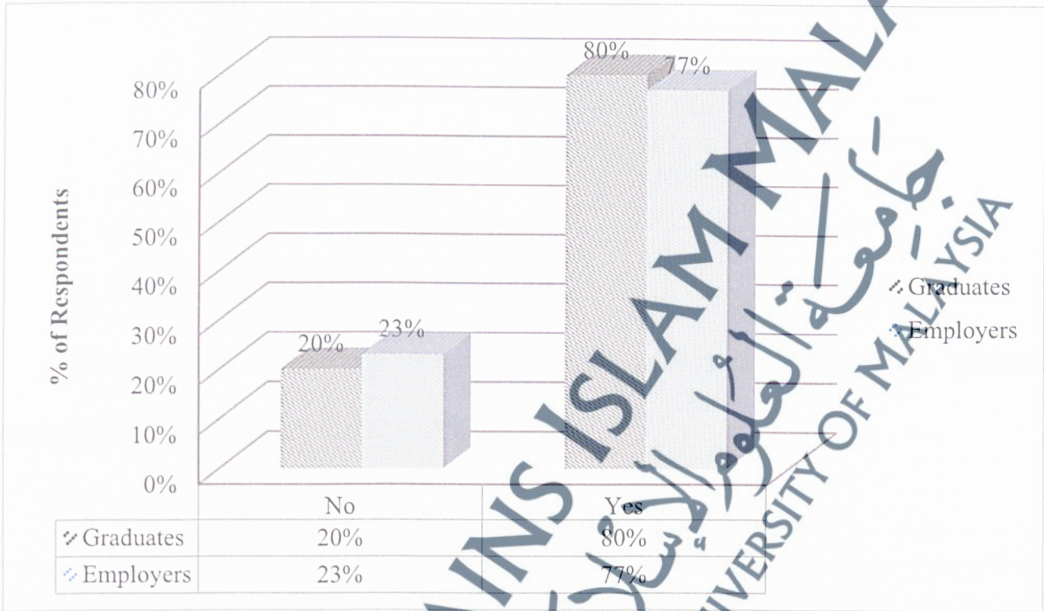


6.2.6 Interface

The interface has to do with the graphics used in the portal such as the icons, colours and the display output in the interface design. The interface of the IGP is designed in a way that that the elements mentioned above is included in the proposed portal. Users can navigate easily within the portal and find all the information that they want. The layout was also designed in a simple and uncomplicated way. When respondents were asked if the interface of the IGP is user friendly, 80% of the graduate group of respondents agreed that the portal is user-friendly while 20% disagreed. 77% of the employers group of respondents agreed that the portal is user

friendly while 33% disagreed. The portal was designed in a way that the users will be able to find and see information easily and without stress. Thus, this may be one of the reasons why the respondents stated that the portal is user-friendly.

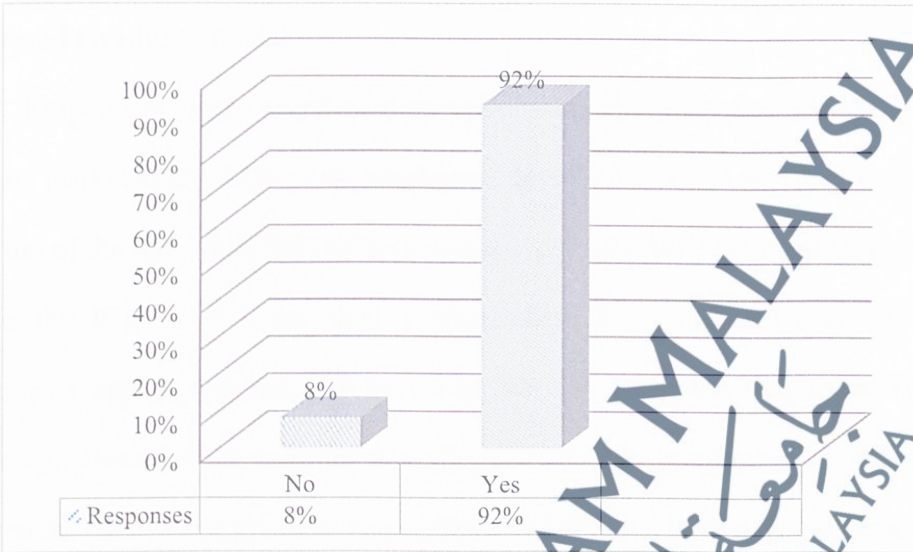
Figure 6.9: Interface of IGP



6.2.7 Search Facility

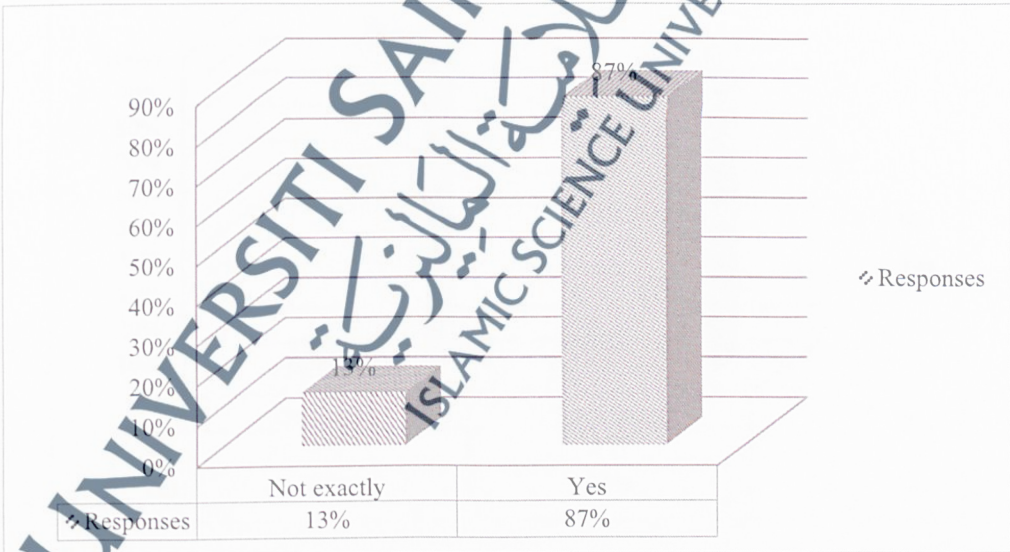
The search facility in the IGP provides users with different search information such as graduates' resumes, jobs available, attestation and reference letters by lecturers and others. The registered users who are graduates in the portal can access the job vacancies posted in the portal and access the information of the companies through the keywords search or search for information like job category, degree, full-time or part time job through the advanced search method. Hence, users' time can be saved as they will be able to find exact data. In the use of graduates resume search, 80% of the employer respondents said that the resume search is useful; 8% said not exactly while 12% said it is not useful (see figure 6.10).

Figure 6.10: Graduates' resume Search by employers



In the use of job vacancies search by graduates, 87% of the graduate respondents found it useful while 13% did not.

Figure 6.11: Job Vacancies Search by Graduates



6.2.8 Facilitation of Graduates' marketability through the interest to use Integrated Graduate Portal

Respondents were asked of their opinion on the interest to use the IGP for graduate marketability. 92% of the employers' respondents agree that they will like to make use of the IGP while 98% of the graduates' respondents stated that they will like to use the IGP to facilitate their marketability. The graduates and employers respondents agreed that the IGP is useful for the graduates, employers and the university. These results indicate that the graduate and employer respondents are satisfied as 98% of the graduate respondents and 92% of the employer respondents confirmed that they have interest to use the Integrated Graduate Portal.

Figure 6.12: Facilitation of graduate marketability through the interest to use Integrated Graduate Portal



From the answers obtained above from the employers and graduate respondents and the percentages of response which are greater than 50% according to the criteria for successful portal, it can be stated that the IGP satisfies the identified user requirements of the employers and graduates

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the evaluation result from the graduates and employers respondents on the IGP Portal prototype. Most of the users claimed that the new portal with the integrated features is very user-friendly. It allows graduates to create their e-portfolio contents, resumes and search job vacancies. It also allows the employers to search graduates resumes and e-portfolio content, create and manage jobs, facilitate collaborate between the university, graduates and employers. In this way, the portal has established a link between the graduates and potential employers. Based on the results, the IGP is deemed to achieve the objective to be an integrated portal that can facilitate graduate marketability.

Although, the objectives of this research have been achieved, the portal can further be improved in future by adding more e-portfolio contents by graduates and identifying more user requirements which can be added into the IGP.