

Preparing Higher Education Learners for Workforce Readiness in the Small Island Nation of Grenada

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Abstract

University graduates and young adults today are entering the labor market with higher educational qualifications than previous generations. However, many graduates report feeling unprepared for the workforce (Evans, 2023). A quantitative study was conducted to explore the perspectives of higher education learners, educators, and industry partners to capture insights on learners' preparedness for the workforce.

An online survey was conducted with 84 participants selected from the School of Arts and Sciences at St. George's University. Industry managers and community partners were also invited to share their perspectives on the research topic. The results of the study indicate the following: (a) more than half of student respondents received little to no practical training during their academic programs, (b) educational institutions emphasize the attainment of theoretical knowledge more than practical skills- thus creating a gap in adequately preparing students for the workforce. The recommendations brought forward suggest that higher education Institutions should (a) integrate authentic learning experiences, empathize with practical applications of knowledge, (b) enhance sustainable partnerships with industry to prepare students for the seamless transition from school to the workplace, (c) offer continuous professional development opportunities for learners and faculty (d) align academic curriculum with industry expectations (e) adopt a unified coordinated approach to course development and workforce preparation.