HOW TO ATTRACT GOOD IT GRADUATES FOR SOFTWARE QUALITY ASSURANCE

By

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ABSTRACT

Being competitive is vital for surviving in today's global market place. A high level of Quality is a key attribute of competitiveness. Therefore Quality Assurance (QA) is a critical factor in any industry, especially in the field of Information Technology (IT). However in IT, though QA is a critical component, it is a highly misunderstood field. As a result a shortage of skilled QA Engineers exists today in Sri Lanka. This is mainly due to undergraduate IT students not considering QA as a good career path.

The primary objective of this research paper is to determine why a majority of IT graduates do not consider Quality Assurance as a career option. Consideration was given to answering the question of whether QA Engineers are satisfied with their current work duties, whether the target segment of applicants for QA positions should be changed and to collect recommendations to motivate QA Engineers in Sri Lanka.

In pursuit of these objectives, the research focuses on an extensive literature review. Following which, the results of an unstructured interview is presented. The set purpose of the unstructured interviews was to investigate the scope of work entrusted to QA Engineers in Sri Lanka and their perceptions, attitudes and behavioral responses towards Software Quality Assurance. Based on these results, an extended field survey was carried out targeting four different groups of individuals to answer the primary objective of the research.

Based on the overall findings, the study concluded that good graduates were not interested in joining QA. Research revealed that this is due to industry salary scales, and them not considering QA as an important function of the IT sector. This negative impact on the students' perceptions of QA is contributed to by the tasks currently handled by QA Engineers and their low job satisfaction levels. Therefore students perceived QA as a less desirable career option.

DECLARATION

"I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university to the best of my knowledge and belief, it does not contain any material previously published, written or orally communicated by another person or myself except where due reference is made in the text. I also hereby give consent for my dissertation, if accepted, to be made available for photocopying and for interlibrary loans, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organizations"

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To the best of my knowledge, the above particulars are correct.

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ABBREVIATIONS

APIIT	-	Asia Pacific Institute of Information Technology
BIT	-	Business Information Technology
COL	-	University of Colombo
CS	-	Computer Science
CSE	-	Computer Science Engineering
DEV	-	Developer
ICT	-	Information & Communication Technology
IIT	-	Informatics Institute of Technology
IS	-	Information Systems
IT	-	Information Technology
MRT	-	University of Moratuwa
QA	-	Quality Assurance
QC	-	Quality Control
SE	-	Software Engineer
SLIIT	-	Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology
SQA	-	Software Quality Assurance
UCSC	-	University of Colombo School of Computing

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