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Determinants of Accounting Students' Decision to Switch to Non-Accounting Majoring: A Case Study of Multimedia University, Malaysia

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Abstract

The scarcity of chartered accountants in the accounting field is presently regarded as global concern, including Malaysia. Thus, this study aims to unravel the complex aspects contributing to the declining numbers in the presence of professional accountants in Malaysia. The study comprehends the factors driving accounting students to switch to non-accounting majors at Multimedia University, Melaka. Primary drivers such as learning difficulties, intrinsic factors, and perceptions advocacy are analyzed to reveal their impact in the main intentions of accounting students switching to non-accounting majors by employing the theory of plan behavior through nuance literature review understanding whereby the research methodology encompasses hypothesis formulation. Based on G*Power sampling technique, primary data collection via questionnaires will be distributed to foundation and diploma in accounting students with a minimum sample size of 119 respondents to ensure the strength and reliability of the study's findings.

Keywords: Learning difficulties, Intrinsic factors, Perceptions.

Introduction

The Government of Malaysia targeted 60,000 of professional accountants by the year of 2030 to cater demand from multiple industries, however it is impossible to achieve as the number of registered accountants 38,500 as of June 2023, based on data from The Malaysian



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Institute of Accountants (MIA). This scenario is closely related with the declining in accounting enrollment in the higher learning institution in Malaysia.

The shortage in the supply of accountants in many countries is due to the steady decline in enrollment in accounting programs has been a major source of concern for those involved in the field (Billiot, et al., 2004; Porter & Woolley, 2014; Drewery, et al., 2020). The challenge of luring students to pursue an accounting degree at the university level, as (Jackling and Keneley, 2009) point out, is a significant contributor to the shortages of professional accountants in many regions of the world.

This study is focused on analysis of the determinants of accounting students' decision to shift to non-accounting majoring and the effect on the supply of chartered accountants in Malaysia.

Objectives

1. To analyse the factors that contribute to accounting students' decision shift to non-accounting majoring.
2. To analyse the effects of non-accounting majoring towards the supply of accountancy profession in Malaysia.

Research Scope

1. Research samples

The study will employ the G*Power sampling technique whereby it will use primary data collection via the distribution of questionnaires to foundation and diploma in accounting students in Multimedia University, Melaka. The output parameters in G*Power suggested a minimum sample size of 119 respondents.

2. Factors

Factors suggested to the contribution of non-accounting major intention are learning difficulties, intrinsic factors, and perceptions.



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3. Framework

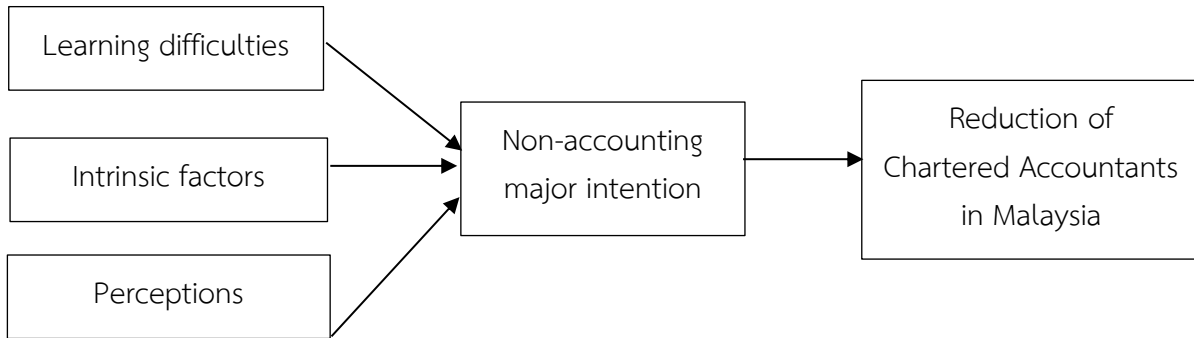


Figure 1: Proposed research model of the Determinants of accounting students’ decision to switch to non-accounting majoring: a case study of Multimedia University, Malaysia

Literature Review

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) originated as the Theory of Reasoned Action in 1980 with the aim of predicting the intention of individual to take part in a behavior at a point of time and place.

TPB relies on three key factors or influences which are attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control Tucker, et al. (2019). These factors suggest explanation for the intention of non-accounting majors once they are combined, making them the basis for developing a model to predict behavior based on individual intentions, thus it is aligned with the current study.

According to Ajzen (2012), control elements can encompass both internal and external factors. Internal factors covering the abilities, willpower, skills, and compulsions, while the external factors including the opportunity, time constraints, environmental limitations, and dependence on others. However, Altawalbeh and Al-Mughrabi (2024) suggest that it is crucial to keep in mind that TPB measures perceived control over behavior rather than actual control over conduct. The external factors explained the three suggestion of non-accounting major intention behavioral of learning difficulties, intrinsic factors, and perceptions.

Non-accounting major intention

The current issue in accounting students shifted to non-accounting majoring in Malaysia’s higher learning institute is crucial as it give negative impact towards supply of



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Perceptions

Perception is the act of compiling, recognizing, and interpreting sensory information to provide an overview and understanding of the environment (Cahyadi, et al., 2019). Thus, how students perceive the course, is important because it can attract or discourage them from majoring in accounting. If the course is dynamic, relevant and intellectually stimulating, it will attract them to the accounting major. However, if the course is perceived as boring and uninteresting, it may lead to the loss of high aptitude students, as they progress toward a degree (Adams, et al., 1994).

H₃ - Perception have significant impact on acctg students' decision to switch to non-accounting majoring

Research Operation

Methodology

The researchers are considering the descriptive survey methodology as it was deemed the most appropriate approach for this study. The questionnaire will be used to gather the desired information.

Research process

The survey questionnaires will be written in English. The design of the questionnaire will be based on a self-administered Zakaria, et al. (2012) adapted survey with a minimal modification to suit the context of the study. It will comprise of major questions on student's intention of learning difficulties, intrinsic factors upon their future career, and general perceptions by the students so as to their referents. The questionnaires will be distributed to foundation and diploma in accounting students from Multimedia University, Melaka in year 2024. The aim is to analyse the factors which driving the accounting students to switch to non-accounting majors which lead to the declining number of chartered accountants in Malaysia.

Data Collection

A questionnaire with a minimum target of 119 responses is required based on G*Power software which will be distributed randomly to the selected courses of foundation and diploma in accounting students only.



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Data Analysis

The study will use Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) which is also known as IBM SPSS Statistics to evaluate the research model by examining the parameters within the inner and outer models. (Ringle, Wende & Will, 2015).

Conclusion

This study developed and analyses to find out whether there is a positive relationship between the independent variables (learning difficulties, intrinsic factors, and perceptions), and the dependent variable (non-accounting majoring). From the analysis, it shows a significant relationship between learning difficulties, intrinsic factors, and perceptions towards non-accounting majoring.

Suggestion

This study concentrates within Multimedia University only; thus, it may influence others and give them the possibilities to generalize on the findings. In addition, researcher finds a lack of study focusing on the constraints factors which influencing Malaysian accounting student's intention to pursue accounting majoring throughout the paper. Therefore, it is suggested there will an intensive set of studies conducted to enhance their study in this area.

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