UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

A QUANTITATIVE STUDY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING MALAYSIAN STUDENTS' DECISION TO PURSUE AN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MASTER'S DEGREE IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Malaysians who are pursuing a Master degree are decreasing by each year. Information technology is important as the world is moving towards Industry 4.0 and is in need of skilled workers that are respectable in computer science related fields. Therefore, this research aims to study the factors influencing Malaysians to pursue Master in Information Technology (IT). The objectives of this research are to identify the factors influencing one's decision to pursue Master in IT, analyse the result of this research along with the identified factors and determine which of the factors have the greatest influence on deciding to pursue Master in IT. The factors are identified through extensive literature review by revising past studies regarding factors that can influence one's intention to study at a higher education institution (HEI). The identified factors which are also the independent variables are individual attributes, societal influences, financial factor, HEI reputation and HEI marketing strategy. A research model was developed based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour to analyse the identified factors to determine which of the factors is significant and has the most influence on the dependent variable; intention to pursue a Master's degree in IT. This research uses questionnaire as its instrument and it has been tested via pilot study, which have been adopted for the full-scale study. Online and paper distribution method were used to conduct the survey. The responses are analysed and tested with normality tests, descriptive analysis, reliability test, inferential analysis via correlation and multiple regression analysis and independent sample t-test. Findings indicate that individual attributes have the greatest influence on the intention to pursue a Master's Degree in IT followed by HEI marketing strategy and societal influences. In addition, there is a substantial difference in gender that influence these factors. The significance of this research would be beneficial to the higher education institutions as the service provider, enrich the existing literature related to Malaysian higher education and act as a reference for the Ministry of Higher Education to enhance the education system.

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Finally, this thesis is dedicated to UiTM as part of my contribution toward enriching the literature and helping FSKM to understand the intention of Malaysian to pursue a Master's degree in IT or its related fields. This piece of triumph is dedicated to both of my parents who supported me until I'm in the final stages of my Master's degree. Alhamdulilah.

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