

**AN ANALYTICAL SURVEY ON COLLEGE STUDENTS EXPERIENCES:  
THE QUALITY OF EFFORTS EXERTED  
AND THEIR PERCEPTION OF THE GAINS  
THE CASE OF PPP/ITM AMERICAN DEGREE PROGRAM**

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**JUNE 2000**

## **PENGHARGAAN**

**Setinggi-tinggi penghargaan dan ribuan terima kasih diucapkan kepada semua pihak yang terlibat secara langsung dan tidak langsung bagi membolehkan Penyelidikan ini disiapkan dengan sempurna.**

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## ABSTRACT

In an effort to improve the quality of students' outcomes, applied and analytical research was conducted on the students experiences in the university. The Center of Preparatory Studies (The American Degree Program, PPP/UiTM) was selected. The Students Experiences Questionnaire was administered to some 400 students during the second semester of 1998. The survey focused on the following areas: college environment; institutional effectiveness; estimated gain on a variety of personal and developmental indicators; extent of participation in college activities, and the quality of efforts exerted. Key findings, based on completed questionnaires of 236 students, included the following:

- 1) Generally, the survey participants found that the quality of student services were satisfactory. The survey also indicated that they had made their greatest gain in acquiring knowledge and skills relevant to the field of Science, Mathematics and Technology.
- 2) Writing activities were a prominent part of the university experience for respondents.
- 3) It was also noted that less than 30% of the respondents checked out books from the library and only about 38% used the library.
- 4) Over 60% of the respondents often use information they had learned in science to understand some aspects of their work.
- 5) 70% and more of the respondents had indicated they have developed the ability to learn on their own.
- 6) Less than 40% participated in students clubs and organizations.

The study provides a detailed descriptive statistics of the survey. The quality of efforts exerted by students in the areas of Science and Mathematics and the estimated gains they have perceived were statistically analyzed for the reliability of the variables and its correlation effect. It was found that the variable items and its inter-item reliability were high (alpha range 0.70-0.86). The Pearson correlation coefficient on the quality of effort exerted by the students revealed that it was positively and significantly correlated to the estimate of students gains with  $r = 0.498$  and  $p = 0.000$ . A review, detailed data analysis and tables, implications and recommendations are included.

## **CHAPTER 1      INTRODUCTION**

Pusat Pendidikan Persediaan , Institut Teknologi MARA (PPP/ITM) or the Center for Preparatory Studies, MARA Institute of Technology was established in 1982. The center was set up upon the request by the Public Services Department (PSD) to operate courses in intensive English for students sitting for examinations such as the Australian Government English Test (AGET), Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), and the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). However, in 1983, the Prime Minister directed all government scholars to undergo preparatory courses before they continue their tertiary education overseas. Since 1985, PPP/ITM has been given the task to operate preparatory programs to students bound for overseas as requested by the Ministry of Education.

After experiencing the preparatory program at PPP/ITM, the students are deemed to be more prepared and possessed the right attitude to pursue their studies abroad. These students are fully sponsored by the government such as the Public Services Department, the Ministry of Education and MARA as well as other sponsoring agencies such as PETRONAS. Since 1995, PPP/ITM has opened its doors to qualified students who are self-sponsored to be enrolled in some of its programs.