

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
SITUATIONAL FACTORS, NATURE
OF WORK, CAREER PROSPECT
AND AGRICULTURAL RELATED
CAREER INTENTION: THE
MODERATING ROLES OF
SELF-EFFICACY**

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ABSTRACT

Given the number of workforces in agriculture sector in Malaysia keep declining over the years. There is a cause for concern on the above issue due to its relation to the unemployment among students which affected the growth potential of an economy. Furthermore, the increase in unemployment indicates that capital resource in the labour market is underutilized. Agricultural sector is believed to as one of the solutions to overcome unemployment issue and able to provide great prospect in long term. However, the extent to which students were likely to engage in agricultural related career near future need to be explored. There is also limited local studies on career intention in the context of agriculture. Thus, it is crucial for local scholar to investigate how agricultural sector can attract students to involve and contribute in this sector. This study develops an integrative framework for exploring and understanding the predicting factors (situational factors, nature of work and career prospect) on agricultural related career intention among students. This study also postulates that self-efficacy would moderate the relationship between independent variables and agricultural related career intention. The sample (n = 365) was drawn from the population of students enrol in agricultural related course in Malaysian public universities. The respondents were surveyed using questionnaire that elicited responses to questions related to the objectives. The 5 items Likert scale was used in this study. Then, the data were analysed by using SPSS. In determining the relationship between variables and moderator, multiple regression analysis and hierarchical regression analysis were conducted. The results showed that perceived social support, perceived parental support and career prospect played a crucial role inducing student's intention towards agricultural related career intention. Moreover, the study demonstrated that self-efficacy is a significant moderator that has a positive and strong relationship between nature of work and agricultural related career intention. However, self-efficacy did not moderate the relationship of other independent variables (perceived social support, perceived parental support and career prospect) and agricultural related career intention. From the theoretical perspective, this study examined the different effects of the independent variables on agricultural related career intention among students. The result of this study is also expected to change Malaysians' perception towards individual involvement in agricultural related sector. Based on the study's results, discussion of the present results as well as theoretical and practical implication of the study, the future study was presented.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the background of the study, the problem statement, the objectives of the study, the research questions and significance of the study, the scope of the study, definition of key terms and the organization of the thesis.

1.2 Background of the Study

Careers in agriculture have been in existence since the history of human evolution (Hamidu, 2015). Career in agriculture can be divided into two categories which are employment and self-employment. Agriculture sector offers a vast potential and a prosperous business opportunity and with full and active government supports present big occasions to create a job opportunity (D'Silva, Shaffril, Uli & Samah, 2009). Along with that, there is a need for an extensive development of agriculture sector so that it will become new treasure for the country (Saravanan, 2017). In Malaysia, agriculture remains as an important source of economic growth throughout the years (Shaffril, Asmuni & Ismail, 2010). The sector is expected to grow rapidly because there are abundant of natural resources in the country (Istikoma & Rahman, 2015). For example, in year 2016, the palm oil planted areas in Malaysia have reached a total of 5.74 million hectares, a marginal increase of 1.7% from 2015 (MPOB, 2017). The rapid growth of palm oil industry is due to the high demand for vegetable oil and its derivatives. The government of Malaysia has emphasized that the agricultural sectors will be profitable businesses through modern technology in the production of agriculture products. Therefore, efforts were implemented to enhance agricultural growth which subsequently expected to create jobs. In 2016, agriculture sector contributed RM89.5 billion to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and provided total employments in the agricultural sector at 1,609,900 people or 12.6% of the total workforce in Malaysia (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2017).