

# UMS STUDENTS' PREFERENCES OF LECTURERS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY.

Azaze @ Azizi Hj. Abdul Adis  
Marketing Programme, Business & Economics School.

It is good to hear when the government asked all higher institutions in Malaysia to emphasize on soft skills in teaching system. It will position our education system into becoming more competitive and be able to produce good quality products in the career market. In relation to that matter, lecturers will begin to think of creative ways and strategies to ensure their lecture delivery will be more effective.

However, the lecturer realized that student motivation has decreased that result with high absenteeism when attending lecture. Lecturers are facing difficult situation to find solutions in order to make their lecture effective and interesting by asking students involvement. In order to make the teaching orientation more interesting, the lecturers also wanted to know what student's preferences are and ways on how they can satisfy the students needs and wants during their lecture session. This study investigates the criterion of the lecturers in Universiti Malaysia Sabah that students preferred. Four characteristics of lecturer were considered that are approach, demographic, knowledgeable and personality.

Previous studies have contributed remarkable findings with regards to students' preferences (see Swami et al.,2007).

Recent study by Swami et al., (2007) suggested that most of students in Malaysia, Britain and the USA showed a preference for highly Conscientious, Extraverted, Stable and Agreeable lecturers, and not for lecturers who showed Neurotic traits. Besides that, it is important for teachers or lecturers to have confidence in the disciplinary techniques they select for use in classrooms (Lewis et al., (2007). The most useful techniques for generating positive reactions are recognition and reward for responsible behaviour, and discussions with students where a negotiated outcome is achieved (Lewis et al., (2007). This means that the approach of the lecturers would influence students' acceptance in the class.

In this study, stratified sampling technique was used in this study where 300 final year students from 9 of 11 schools in UMS were interviewed. Only 5 percent from the total of 6,073 final year students (in 2007) were selected. The reason of choosing final year students is because they are more mature and experience in campus's life system. Correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis and T-test were used to analyze the data collected.

The analysis has shown that there is no significant different of opinion in

between male and female students. The result shows that approach has significant relationship with student preferences. This means if the approach of the lecturer in giving their lecture and tutorial are interesting and presented in a creative way, it will make the students' acceptance of knowledge to be more effective. However, in terms of demographic features, knowledge and the lecturers' personality, they were not influences in students' preferences. In addition, the students also believed that if the lecturers' age is between 35 to 44 years old and above, they have good experience in teaching. As conclusion, this finding has given a useful information to all lecturers not only to UMS lecturers, but to all lecturers of all universities in Malaysia.

## References:

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