

Students perspectives on studying at University: a qualitative study using self-determination and planned behavior theories

ABSTRACT

This research attempts to explore students' perceptions about continuing their studies at university. As well as understanding why they continue their studies and why they choose a particular study program. This study has used a qualitative method for the purpose of deepening the perceptions conveyed by the respondents of this study. This study has interviewed a total of 15 students from one of the IPTA in Malaysia, thematic analysis has been used in the data analysis. The results of the study found that many students consider studying at university as a place to develop their minds and personalities. In addition, the findings of the study also found that students gain specialized knowledge especially in the field or program they choose. Universities must also provide a conducive environment and ensure development especially for academic staff to facilitate student learning. The findings of the study also found that students enter university for various reasons, such as pursuing interests or worrying about their future jobs. While other respondents stated that they entered the university to meet the demands of their families or to follow their friends. Finally, respondents chose a university based on a particular program because they found it easy or because it was the only option available to them. Although most of the respondents are more focused on self-improvement, most of those who come to university are based on their own future and limited options.