

The Perception of UTAR Foundation Students Towards Agricultural Studies and Its Job Prospect.

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ABSTRACT

This study has two aims, first to determine the interest of foundation students in UTAR on pursuing degree studies in agricultural studies and second to determine the factors that affect their perception on agricultural studies and related career. Krejcie and Morgan (1986) table was used to determine the amount of respondents (269 respondents) needed to fulfil the requirements of the study as which for the data calculation this study employed the method of self-developed questionnaires, which consisted of three sections (Section A: Demographic, Section B: Emotions and thoughts towards agriculture, Section C: Perception towards agriculture) to obtain the necessary data. Universal sampling method were used to gather data from the respondents especially from foundation of science students (885 foundation in science students). The data collected were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. Overall, there were 269 respondents with a mean age of 18-19 years whom were of Chinese ethnicity (n= 254, 94.4%) and 68% of them were girls. 16.5% of respondents would not be influenced based on perception and would consider agriculture related sector. The odds ratio percentage showed that the factors that were tested are both nearly to root cause as they recorded 83.5% (perception) that would deter the students from joining this field. Having a family member working in the agricultural field (OR: 6.219, 95 % CI of OR: 1.604 - 24.103), knowing someone in the agricultural field (OR: 8.554, 95 % CI of OR: 2.406 - 30.410) and satisfaction with salary given to graduates in the market (OR: 1.771, 95 % CI of OR: 0.846 - 3.705) were found to be associated with being favourable towards selecting agricultural science as field of study. This clearly defines that respondents do not favour agriculture education or its careers prospect as to other field of studies as based on the findings obtained.