THE EFFECT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY ON THE SOCIAL CAPITAL AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF ECONOMICS STUDENTS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS, UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA

MUHAMMAD SODBIR BIN HAMZAH

MASTER OF ECONOMICS
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA
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BY

MUHAMMAD SODBIR BIN HAMZAH

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ABSTRAK


Kata kunci: Kemahiran Bahasa Inggeris, Modal Sosial, Pencapaian Akademik
ABSTRACT

The use of English language becomes increasingly important, either in educational sector or working sector. The role of social capital should be taken into consideration in helping the students to achieve their academic success. Previous findings indicated that students with limited use of English faced problems in advance subjects. Thus, this study examines the effect of English language proficiency towards social capital and academic achievement. This study employed the survey research design and the sample comprised of 81 undergraduate students enrolled in Economics courses from year two and three in Universiti Utara Malaysia. The instruments were adapted based on the constructs in the structural models developed. The data has been analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling to enable simultaneous analysis of all the constructs and estimate the magnitude of the direct and indirect effects between the constructs. The findings show that there is a significant direct effect of English language proficiency towards academic achievements, social capital within family and social capital outside family, and from social capital within family and outside family towards academic achievements. The mediating effect of social capital outside family towards English Language Proficiency and academic achievement among economics students in UUM was significant but it was not significant for social capital within family. The findings suggest for more activities geared towards increasing students’ English language proficiency to help them to increase their academic achievements.

Keywords: English language proficiency, Social Capital, Academic Achievement
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELP</td>
<td>English Language Proficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWF</td>
<td>Social Capital Within Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOF</td>
<td>Social Capital Outside Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Academic Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEM</td>
<td>Structural Equation Medeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCWF</td>
<td>Items for Social Capital Within Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOF</td>
<td>Items for Social Capital Outside Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGPA</td>
<td>Cumulative Grade Point Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGPAgrp</td>
<td>Cumulative Grade Point Average grouped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EngGrade</td>
<td>Grade received for English for Communication II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPT</td>
<td>English Placement Test</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The use of English language as medium of communication becomes increasingly important. It is also an important factor for students to further their study and for employment purposes. Bachman (1990) defines language proficiency as the language ability or ability in language use while Oller (1983) defines language proficiency as an ability of several distinct but related constructs. An individual with inability or limited language proficiency will face difficulties in finding employment opportunities (Md Yasin, Wan Mohd Shaupil, Muhktar, Ab Ghani & Rashid, 2010; Jalaluddin, Mat Awal & Abu Bakar, 2009) and eventually will become a hindrance towards the growth of Malaysia because English language proficiency is now assumed to be one of the determinants for Malaysia growth (Hj Sarudin, Zubairi, Nordi, & Omar, 2008). Therefore, universities around the world have imposed a strict entrance procedure where students are required to present a certificate indicating their language proficiency such as IETLS and TOEFL. Malaysian students taking undergraduate courses locally will need the same certificate known as Malaysia University English Test (MUET), introduced in the year 2000 with the objective of enhancing English language ability of pre-university students (Md Yasin et al., 2010). The test will help to determine their proficiency in speaking, listening, reading and writing.
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REFERENCES


