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## EXPLORING DETERMINANT FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO STUDENTS' CHOICES IN SELECTING ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM

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**Abstract.** This study aims at exploring the determinant factors contributing to students' choice in selecting English Study Program (A Study on English Study Program at FKIP Tanjungpura University in Pontianak). It has been noticed that some of the students have a low qualification of English skill, therefore, it has become a problem for those students to follow the lesson. It has assumed that the students do not have sufficient information on their selection of choosing English Study Program. The problems of this study are the determinant and the dominant determinant factors influenced the students' choice in selecting the English study program of FKIP University of Tanjungpura in Pontianak. The purposes of the study are: (1) to find out the determinant factors and (2) to identify the dominant determinant factors, and as well as (3) to identify the deviation attitudes of the students in selecting English study program. The method uses questionnaires which contain some information to be answered by the students. There are 30 respondents as a sample of this research. The findings show that (1) the determinant factors are a personal choice, the reputation of faculty, the reputation of the study program, teachers and parents, and a location. Meanwhile, there are four the dominant determinant factors, such as a personal choice (137), the reputation of the study program (119), teachers (111) and parents (107). Therefore, those determinant factors should be considered by the study program to attract the candidate students.

**Keywords:** determinant factors, students' choices, English Study Program

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Institutions of higher education are facing ever-increasing difficulties at attracting students. The emergence of new institutions that offer various kinds of educational streams with varies of prospecting study programs. With those multiple choices of study programs with own prospects, therefore, the students have the flexibility to choose the most important ones to encounter future challenges.

In the context of selecting study programs, there are several factors which might have a degree of determinants, such as from least strong to the most strong. The determinants in this matter are factors which consider as the influential factors of selecting mode. Knowing those factors are merely importance for further policy taking and consideration.

The selecting of appropriate study program for the parents is not an easy way. According to Baharun et al(2011), most parents want their children to study at prospective study program. They want their children will get a job easily soon after they are graduated. Therefore, the parents have to do some surveys or seeking information about study programs which are suitable for their children. Based on the writer's experiences, before the enrollment time to the university or

colleges, some parents requested for information on the study programs. They even needed recommendations for some prospective study programs.

Some reasons of conducting this study are: (1) there are some indicators which shown some mistakes in selecting the study program by the students, (2) some students are not eligible to study in this study program, and (3) the English language knowledge mastery of some students is not fulfilled the minimum criteria of being accepted at the English study program. The mentioned reasons for conducting this study had referred to the writer's observation and teaching experience with the existing students.

A Study Program is successful in attracting students to select the program because of some factors, such as (1) the student's aim to master the English language, (2) the status of English language labeling as an international language gives pride for the students, and (3) a perception that English mastery gets more job opportunities. Thus, this study is intended to know whether those expectations are matching with the students' expectations.

Due to some reasons for not knowing or no information about colleges or universities, therefore, the parents are not

many alternatives to choices. They even not understood how to get better information about opportunity study in tertiary education. Unlike colleges or universities in cities, there is sufficient information about the study programs provided.

The study had done by Agrey and Lampadan (2014) in Central Thailand to first-year students of the university mentioned five factors emerged as being those that significantly influenced decision-making on which institution of higher learning to attend. These had included support systems both physical (bookstore, guidance/counseling office) and non-physical (scholarships, credit transferability, spiritual programming); secondly, learning environment (modern learning environment and facilities, reputation, beautiful campus, library and computer lab) and job prospects with a high rate of graduates being employed; thirdly having good sporting facilities; fourthly, a student life program (health care services, residential accommodation) and activities (wide range of extracurricular activities), and finally, a safe and friendly environment (safe campus as well as supporting faculty).

This study is intended to find out the determinant factors which influenced the students in selecting English language Study Program at FKIP Tanjungpura University in Pontianak. The findings of the study will become some considerations in formulating the appropriate policies. Referring to some difficulties in study English language faced by some students, this study will contribute some beneficial resolutions in helping the students to have a correct choice of selecting study programs.

## II. METHODS

The subject of this study was the students of the English study program at FKIP University of Tanjungpura Pontianak registered as the students in academic year 2016/2017. The researcher focused on 30 students as a sample academic year 2016/2017. Those students were given questionnaires which contained the factors of their choice in selecting an English study program at university of Tanjungpura. The students returned the questionnaires to be analyzed. Every item of the questionnaires were analyzed to see the respondents answers.

The object of this study is the attribute aspects of determinant factors which influenced the students' choice in selecting English study program of FKIP Tanjungpura University in Pontianak. The determinant factors derived from experts (Braxton, 1990; Ciriaci, 2011; Drewes, 2006) are individual, parents, teachers, and career.

These aspects had carefully administered in the appropriate statements of the questionnaires. The responses were analyzed and described accurately.

The technique applied in this study is non-measurement that is, using questionnaires. The questionnaires cover some aspects of determinant factors of students' choices in selecting English language study program. The data obtained from the instrument will be analyzed as to present final finding(s) of the study. Besides, the questionnaires, this study also applies interview. The purpose of an interview is to clarify the respondent's responses to the statements in the questionnaires. It is necessary to confirm the respondents' responses to assure

whether the respondents are honest or not in answering the questionnaires.

## III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Determinant factors influenced the students' choice in selecting the English study program of FKIP University of Tanjungpura Pontianak, West Kalimantan.

TABLE 1  
 PARENTS AND FAMILY EDUCATION

No	Level of Education	Father	Mother
1	Less than high school	20%	40%
2	Some high school	6,67%	10%
3	Graduated from high school	46,7%	36,7%
4	Professional diploma (D1..D3)	10%	3,33%
5	Bachelor's degree (S1, D4)	13,3%	10%
6	Advanced degree (S2..S3)	3,33%	0%
7	Other (please specify)	0%	0%

Based on Table 1, from the aspect of education, most fathers' education is graduates from high school (secondary school) or 46,7%. The next rank is less than high school that means their education might be graduated from elementary school or used to study at elementary school (not completed elementary school). Those fathers who are graduated bachelor's degree are high enough or 13,3%. However, there is the father who has graduated from a master degree (S2).

Unlike father, mothers' education has differed from fathers' education. The highest percentage of mothers' education is at a level of less than high school. It means that most mothers' education is around elementary graduates or some of the elementary education. The next high percentage of education level has graduated from high school. There was the same percentage of mothers whose education is some high school meaning they have studied at high school but not completed high school (10%) and bachelor's degree (S-1 or D-IV) (10%), and no mother's education is an advanced degree.

From the data on parents' education, it has concluded that parents' education is averagely graduated from "high school" or somewhat at the level of secondary school.

TABLE 2  
 VALUES AND GOALS

No of Students	Statement of Goal and Value						
	Completing High School		Begin considering of Attending University			Value	
	Yes	No	K 1-6	K 7-9	K 10-12	Yes	No
Students	20	10	3	20	18	28	1
Percentage	66,7	30	10	30	60	90	3,33
Note	1 absent		0 absent			2 absent	

Based on Table 2, most of the respondents had thought about a study at college and university with their children after completion of high school. Parents and children discussed higher and professional education. In this research, there was 66,7% of the respondents had discussed higher education for their children and 30% did not, explicitly. The data showed that students had begun to think about a farther study at

college or university when they were at senior high school (60%).

There are 30% of respondents had thought about the study at college or university when they are still at K 7-9 or Junior high school, and only 10% of the respondents had thought about the study at college or university at an elementary school.

TABLE 3  
 SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND INFLUENCE

Aspects of Factors	Score	Aspects of Factors	Score
1. Personal choice	137	12. College publications	54
2. Teachers	111	13. Personal letters from institution	51
3. High school counselors	74	14. Telephone call from institution	38
4. Mother	107	15. English Study Program	54
5. Father	104	16. University representatives	49
6. Brother (s)	66	17. Visit campus	0
7. Sister (s)	67	18. Others (please specify and rate)	0
8. Friends	59		
9. Relatives/siblings	54		
10. Religious advisor	53		
11. Recommendation of former students			

Table 3 show some factors that influenced the respondents in selecting their choices study at English study Program. The most influential factor is “personal choice” (137). The other respective influential factors are teachers with a score (111), father with a score (107) and mother with a score (104). Therefore, the students have trusted their teachers and parents.

The role of school counselors in directing the students to determine their study program, in this case, English study program at Tanjungpura University shows significantly influence.

TABLE 4  
 OTHER FACTORS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Aspects of Factors	Score	Aspects of Factors	Score
1. Closeness to home	76	9. Religious atmosphere	81
2. Location (e.g. capital city)	101	10. Variety of activities offered	90
3. Availability of housing	75	11. Specialized programs offered	85
4. Cost of living is affordable	76	12. Student-professor ration	47
5. Tuition cost is affordable	90	13. Family tradition	83
6. Scholarship available	123	14. Preparation for graduate school	0
7. Reputation of institution (e.g. faculty)	119	15. Others (please specify and rate)	
8. Reputation of program (English study program)			

Based on Table 4, the other significant determinant factors that influenced students’ choices are 1) reputation of an institution, 2) reputation of the study program, 3) location of college (at the capital city), 4) tuition cost is affordable, 5) scholarship available, and 5) religious atmosphere.

Dominant determinant factors influenced the students’ choice in selecting the English Study Program of FKIP University of Tanjungpura.

TABLE 5

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND INFLUENCE

Aspects of Factors	Score	Aspects of Factors	Score
1. Personal choice	137	12. College publications	54
2. Teachers	111	13. Personal letters from institution	51
3. High school counselors	74	14. Telephone call from institution	38
4. Mother	107	15. English Study Program	54
5. Father	104	16. University representatives	49
6. Brother (s)	66	17. Visit campus	0
7. Sister (s)	67	18. Others (please specify and rate)	0
8. Friends	59		
9. Relatives/siblings	54		
10. Religious advisor	53		
11. Recommendation of former students			

Based on Table 5, four dominant determinant factors that influenced student’s choice in selecting English Study Program: 1) personal choice, 2) teachers, 3) mother, and 4) father. Among the dominant determinant factors of the highest score is the personal choice (137), teachers (111), mother (107) and father (104).

TABLE 6

OTHER FACTORS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Aspects of Factors	Score	Aspects of Factors	Score
1. Closeness to home	76	8. Reputation of program (English study program)	81
2. Location (e.g. capital city)	101	9. Religious atmosphere	90
3. Availability of housing	75	10. Variety of activities offered	85
4. Cost of living is affordable	76	11. Specialized programs offered	85
5. Tuition cost is affordable	90	12. Student-professor ration	47
6. Scholarship available	97	13. Family tradition	83
7. Reputation of institution (e.g. faculty)	123	14. Preparation for graduate school	0
		15. Others (please specify and rate)	

Based on Table 6, the other factors based on the students’ opinions are (1) reputation of institution (123), (2) reputation of program (119), (3) location (101), (4) scholarship available (97), (5) tuition cost is affordable (90), (5) religious atmosphere (90), and (6) preparation for graduate school (83).

#### Students’ Opinion/Notes

Besides the data above, the respondents also have given some questions about (1) reasons for their choices in selecting the study program, (2) comments on their lecturers/professors, (3) factors that might be obstacles in study, and (4) their opinions on the future development of the study program. The respondents’ responses on the above questions are explained based on majority opinions.

#### *A. Reasons for their choices in selecting the English Study program*

Most of the respondents (about 85%) said that they are interested in the English language because they wanted to master English so that they could understand many things (perhaps: able to read news/articles/stories written in English language), inspired by teachers and encouraged by parents, as well as, easy to get job.

#### *B. Respondents' comments on their lecturers/ professors*

Majority of the respondents (90%) had given remarks on the lecturers/professors, particularly, their capacity and professional on teaching and learning activities. The lecturers had prepared for teaching, broad knowledge and polite. The materials are also always up-to-date and using technology (internet).

#### *C. The factors that might be obstacles in study*

Regarding the factors as the obstacles in study, the respondents have varieties of response, such as (a) 35% mentioned that English is difficult so that they have to study hard, (b) 20% mention the problem on financial because they need quite much money for living cost such as food and rented house/room, (c) transportation, (d) communication (credit), and (e) entertainment.

Some respondents said that they spent more money on holiday (Saturday & Sundays) rather than school days. They felt pity for their parents who are farmers, running a small shop and part-time worker (wage), and felt ashamed for regular begging for money from parents/family.

#### *D. Respondents' opinions on the future development of English Study Program*

All respondents (100%) mentioned that the English Study Program gave a promising program in the future. They believed that those young generations who had a good reputation in the English language have brought better future and easy to get a job. Besides, they can manage their own business, such as: establishing the English Course, guides, translators, and so forth. Therefore, they conclude that the English Study Program is one of the study programs in FKIP University Tanjungpura as the most favorite.

#### *E. Other Information*

The questionnaires also included other data liked parents' education and students' GPA after 5th semester. Most of the respondents' mothers were housewives (70%), and a few were temporary teachers at some private primary schools), non-formal school (10%), and other 10% had not stated.

1) *Parents' Jobs*, As the mothers, the fathers (80%) are majority stated working in private sectors. Private sectors mean those who are working for self (farming, collecting wood for sale), part-time employed worker (wage worker), and not permanently employed by companies (reserved driver, plantation) and doing a contracted job. In other words, they are not employees but doing any jobs which could earn money. Another 10% were employed permanently as teachers

(government and private schools), small-scale trading company (palm oil plantation), shops, and foul industry. Meanwhile, the other 10% had not stated by the respondents.

2) *Students' GPA (Grade Point Average)*, It was surprising that the respondents' GPA after the 5th semester was between 2.80 to 3.53. They had good remarks.

#### *DISCUSSION*

This study focuses on the Students' Choices on Selecting English Study Program at FKIP University Tanjungpura Pontianak aiming at students' views or opinions on the prospectus of English Study Program and English language learning. Some issues about the English language that the English language is important to learn the English language as an international language, mirror of the world, and relation to job seekers. Those issues could raise the public's interest in sending their children to study in this study program, and from time to time the number of candidate-students register to this study program is increasing.

There are many determinant factors influenced the student's choice in selecting college or university. Kinzie et al(2004) and Gibbons and Vignoles (2009), mentioned that some determinant factors, such as factors which had the prospect of giving career and opportunities to access to work, and social factor. All parents hoped that their children had employed as workers of the company, government institutions, and private business.

The parents' aims are in line with the respondents' responses on the questionnaires (1) study at English Study program have more opportunities to get work, (2) more prospectus for a better career, and (3) establish own business like run an English course. Therefore, those reasons will be the determinant factors for the students' choices in selecting the English Study Program.

From the questionnaires, the items about institution (faculty) reputation, study program reputation and location (capital city) are the determinant factors which had been mostly chosen by the respondents. It is a strong power to attract prospective students. Therefore, a good reputation of an institution would provide a good education. The idea of a good reputation was in line with Hossler (1999) and Hagel (2008).

In line with the respondents' responses, the factor of affordable tuition is another factor which has been chosen by majority respondents. Those responses come from those parents of having an average income. Those parents are part-time workers, farmers, and small scale trading. Therefore, affordable tuition is one of the choices. This factor is also the reason for choosing state college or university because the state university or college always offer low tuition cost.

Another factor that has been selected by the respondents is the availability of scholarship. At present, the Education and Culture Ministry provides a scholarship for low economic income family and bright students.

The factor of a location at the provincial capital city also attracts students' attention of choice. The reasons, among those, are facilities supporting study such as bookstores and libraries are available, entertainment facilities and so forth.

Besides, accessibilities to other facilities, such as internet, information and affordable housing are taken into consideration by the students. Heller (1997) and Houston (2008) mentioned factors regarding price in higher education and rethinking quality and improvement in higher education. Thus, selection of a location for establishing schools or colleges is one of the highly considering factors.

The government colleges always offer low or affordable tuition compared to private colleges. Most of the students consider that tuition cost is affordable therefore they choose government colleges as their first choice. On the other hand, some local private colleges offer scholarships, such as prestige and low economic family. For instance, colleges run by the foundation-based religions, such as Catholic, Christian, and Islam also like to offer scholarships for their students. Therefore, the tuition fee is one of the factors influenced students' choices.

Regarding the students' choice of selecting English Study Program, most of the students responded that they chose the English Study Program because of its reputation. The study, in particular, a program has been known by the public of West Kalimantan. The parents are very proud of their children able to study in this study program. Thus, the main reason for the parents to send their children to study in the study program because it is easier for the graduates to get a job.

Some other responses that the study program (also faculty) had a clear target that the graduates had employed as a teacher, either government or private employment, thus, there has opportunities for them to work. The information about the study program has spread widely through the region. They got the information from several media.

The information obtained from the questionnaires mentioned that religious atmosphere also becomes a consideration. Most respondents had positive views on religion atmosphere towards a state college or university. Tanjungpura university as a state university and not affiliated to any religions as the basis of teaching. Based on this point of view, the faculty is not concerned with the religion. Religion had taught as a subject matter with the objectives of morality development. Thus, religion is not a barrier for them to study in this faculty.

The faculty offers a variety of activities as an extra-curricular or non-academic activity, as mentioned in the curriculum. The non-academic activities are sports, student's organization and so forth. The variety of activities also attracted students' attention because they could develop their soft skills and social competencies.

Students realize that they need other activities outside of their academic pursuits and so institutions should be aware of this as they review their master plans for campus facilities. Campus facilities are commonly for an enrichment of the campus activities outside of class. Therefore, it is necessary for academic institutions to prepare those sorts of facilities.

Several limitations of the study must be noted. The respondents of this study were limited to the sixth semester or third-year students. It recommended that further is conducted involving high school students and other colleagues, i.e.,

including a wider geographic area involving and also the sample.

Another limitation of this study is dealing with the researcher himself regarding with time. The researcher has to prepare the time for doing the research and doing his routine activities: teaching, giving guiding and consultation on students' theses. Due to those reasons, the researcher himself found that there are some weaknesses in doing the report.

The study has given indicators of students' and parents' choices. The choices depend on students' and parents' opinions. Noted that, the reputations, tuition cost, and facilities are the priority in choosing a campus.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

This study reveals several factors that affect students' final selection of a university, particularly, the choices of selection English Study Program of Teacher Training and Language Education Faculty (FKIP) of Tanjungpura University Pontianak. The non-physical factors that influenced the students' choices are the reputation of the study program (faculty), affordable (or low) tuition cost and location of the university at the capital city.

The students' choices had greatly influenced by parents, teachers and personal choice. Relating to the parents' influences, this was in line with their social life or culture where parents had highly respected by the children. Children tend to obey their parents though some parents have not understood the education system at the tertiary level.

The number of graduates employed had influenced the students' choices. Since the English Study Program has sent their graduates as teachers both permanent and temporary employees and the parents are proud of their children could actively communicate in the English language.

The factors are still significant, i.e., a safety, a friendly environment, and an atmosphere of religious belief. Those factors encourage students to have pleasure because of that the religions are on beliefs.

The physical factors are involving the facilities offered by the faculty. The students need to refresh after being studying hard for hours, i.e., they need to do some sports. That is in line with some respondents' responses that campus facilities have become a consideration in selecting the appropriate study program and faculty.

#### Suggestions

With reference to the findings of this study, there are some variables necessary for the considering, i.e., (1) the role of information for the society, namely the parents influence the selection of the study program, (2) the role of the teachers in giving or directing their students, (3) campus facilities are another dominant factor in finalizing the students' decisions, (4) the study program reputation, (5) friendly campus environment, and (6) religious atmosphere maintained well. Those factors managed and maintained well.

For the future, the institution should not only rely upon those factors, but do some innovative, namely facilitating academic activities at a location so that the students and

parents would understand the goals, vision, and missions of a study program. It will give better insights to the parents, students, and family about what is the most appropriate one.

This study suggested being done to the students of twelve grade so they will have comprehensive knowledge and information about the study program interested in.

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