

**THE INFLUENCE OF PERCIEVED STRESS AND CULTURE  
SHOCK AMONG INTERNATIONAL POSTGRADUATE  
STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT  
IN UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA**

By

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**Thesis Submitted to the Centre for Graduate Studies,  
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in Fulfillment of the Requirement for Project Paper,  
Master of Science (Management)**

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## ABSTRACT

This study was to determine the influence of student background, perceived stress and culture shock to the academic achievement of postgraduate international students in UUM Kedah, Malaysia. The specific aim is to identify and look at the relationship and influence of international postgraduate students perceived for stress and culture shock with their academic achievements.

Collected through questionnaire surveys postgraduate students in UUM Kedah, Malaysia at the School of Business (College of Business) (n = 139). Questionnaire is needed to find data information about demographic backgrounds of respondents and factors stress that their perceived and culture shock. The data are then analyzed using SPSS version 14.0. The findings show that there are correlation between perceived stress and culture shock on academic achievement, but there is no influence between culture shock and academic achievement, only perceived stress that affect the academic achievement. Therefore, the results can be input for the university to give more attention to postgraduate international students with academic stress experienced by them. In addition, there are suggestions and recommendations are discussed for future research.

## ABSTRAK

Tujuan utama dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui pengaruh latar belakang siswa, stres yang dirasakan dan kejutan budaya terhadap prestasi akademik mahasiswa pascasarjana di UUM Kedah, Malaysia. Tujuan khusus adalah untuk mengidentifikasi dan melihat apakah ada hubungan dan pengaruhnya pelajar antarbangsa pasca-siswazah menghadapi stres dan kejutan budaya dengan pencapaian akademik mereka.

Pengumpulan data dikumpulkan melalui survei kuesioner pelajar antarbangsa pasca-siswazah di UUM Kedah, Malaysia di Sekolah Bisnis (College of Business) (n = 199). Kuesioner di perlukan untuk mengetahui matlumat data responden tentang demografi latar belakang mereka dan faktor stres yang dirasakan dan kejutan budaya. Data yang diambil kemudian di analisis menggunakan SPSS versi 14.0. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa terdapat hubungan antara stress yang dirasakan dan kejutan budaya terhadap pencapaian akademik, tetapi tidak ada pengaruhnya antara kejutan budaya dan pencapaian akademik, hanya stress yang dirasakan saja yang mempengaruhi pencapaian akademik. Oleh kerana itu, hasilnya dapat menjadi masukan terpuji bagi pihak universiti untuk memberikan perhatian lebih pada pencapaian akademik pelajar antarbangsa pasca-siswazah dengan stress yang dialami oleh mereka. Selain itu, terdapat saran dan rekomendasi yang dibahas untuk penelitian masa hadapan.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 The Background of Study

Education is very important for everyone. Through education, many students with different level of studies at university are seeking education in other countries rather than their own with different of reasons. In the 21st century education in Malaysia will face significant challenge as it is in century that the country is set to become industrialized. It is imperative therefore, to understand what it is that needs to be given attention for the education system to prepare adequately for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Knight (2009) estimates that by 2025 the demand for international education will grow to 7.2 million from 1.2 million students, a quantum leap in 2000. However, not all of this demand will be meet by students' mobility.

In 2006, UNESCO reported the most recent total for international student enrollment in Malaysia is 30,407 international students. A little more than a third of this population came from China. On March 9, 2008, Malaysian newspaper, *The Star* said that the number of international students had increased between 2006 and 2008 by 30%, bringing the overall numbers to 65,000 foreign students enrolled in private and public institutions of higher education compared to 48,000 at 2006.

The Malaysian Higher Education Ministry set up MOU an international students division to cope with the increasing number of Middle East country and other foreign students pursuing higher education in Malaysia and turning the country into a global powerhouse of educational excellence. Malaysia should produce human capital

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