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UNVEILING STUDENTS' CAREER INTEREST: A STUDY OF SALES CAREERS IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Investigates the determinants of students' interest in pursuing sales careers in the Malaysian context. Employing empirical methods, this research examines various factors influencing students' perceptions, attitudes, and motivations towards sales professions. Through surveys and interviews, key determinants such as educational background, perceptions of sales roles, career aspirations, and socio-economic factors are analyzed. The study sheds light on the complexities of career decision-making among Malaysian students and provides valuable insights for educators, recruiters, and policymakers aiming to promote sales careers and address talent shortages in the industry.

KEYWORDS

Sales careers, Career interest, Students, Malaysia, Determinants, Perception, Attitudes, Motivations, Career decision-making, Talent shortage.

INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly evolving landscape of career choices, understanding students' interests and motivations towards specific professions is crucial for guiding educational policies, shaping workforce development strategies, and addressing talent shortages in key industries. "Unveiling Students' Career Interest: A Study of Sales Careers in Malaysia" embarks on an exploratory journey to unravel the determinants of students' interest in pursuing sales careers within the Malaysian context. By examining the factors that shape students' perceptions, attitudes, and motivations towards sales professions, this study aims to provide valuable insights for educators, recruiters, and policymakers seeking to promote sales careers and bridge talent gaps in the industry.

Sales careers play a pivotal role in driving economic growth, fostering innovation, and driving market expansion. However, despite their importance, sales professions often face challenges in attracting and retaining top talent, with perceptions of sales roles often influenced by stereotypes, misconceptions, and lack of awareness about the diverse opportunities and rewards they offer.

Against this backdrop, our study seeks to illuminate the underlying dynamics that influence students' interest in pursuing sales careers in Malaysia. Recognizing the diverse range of factors that shape career decision-making processes, we aim to explore the interplay between educational background, perceptions of sales

roles, career aspirations, and socio-economic factors in shaping students' career choices.

The Malaysian context provides a unique setting for our investigation, characterized by a dynamic economy, cultural diversity, and rapid technological advancements. As Malaysia continues to transition towards a knowledge-based economy, the demand for skilled sales professionals capable of driving innovation, building relationships, and delivering value to customers is expected to rise.

Through a comprehensive examination of students' career interests, our study seeks to uncover actionable insights that can inform educational interventions, recruitment strategies, and policy initiatives aimed at promoting sales careers and nurturing a robust talent pipeline in Malaysia. By understanding the factors that influence students' perceptions and motivations towards sales professions, stakeholders can design targeted interventions that address misconceptions, highlight career opportunities, and provide pathways for professional development and advancement in the field of sales.

In the pages that follow, we delve into the complexities of students' career decision-making processes, exploring the multifaceted factors that shape their perceptions, attitudes, and aspirations towards sales careers in Malaysia. Through rigorous analysis and thoughtful reflection, we aim to contribute to the collective effort to build a skilled, diverse, and resilient

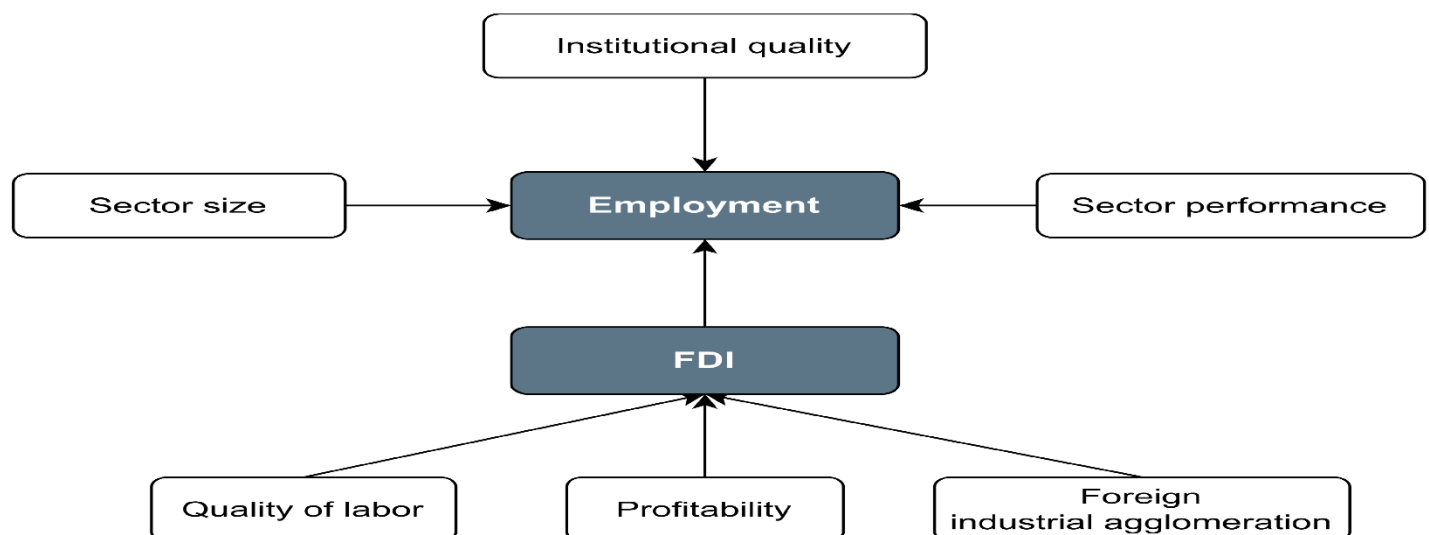
workforce capable of driving Malaysia's economic prosperity and social development in the 21st century.

METHOD

The process of unveiling students' career interest in sales careers in Malaysia involved a systematic and multifaceted approach. Initially, a quantitative survey instrument was meticulously designed to capture data from a diverse array of Malaysian students across various educational backgrounds, disciplines, and demographics. The survey was crafted to elicit insights into students' perceptions, attitudes, and motivations towards sales careers, encompassing factors such as educational background, career aspirations, and socio-economic status. Distribution of the survey was executed through both electronic and paper-based methods to ensure broad participation and representation within the sample population. Concurrently, qualitative methods were employed to delve deeper into the nuanced dynamics shaping

students' career interests. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of students selected through purposive sampling, allowing for in-depth exploration of individual experiences, attitudes, and motivations related to sales professions. These interviews provided rich qualitative data, offering contextual insights and capturing diverse perspectives that complemented the quantitative findings.

Data analysis involved a rigorous process of coding, categorization, and thematic analysis. Quantitative survey data were analyzed using statistical techniques such as regression analysis and factor analysis to identify patterns, correlations, and associations among variables. Meanwhile, qualitative interview transcripts were subjected to thematic coding and constant comparison to identify recurring themes, emergent categories, and nuanced insights into students' perceptions of sales careers.

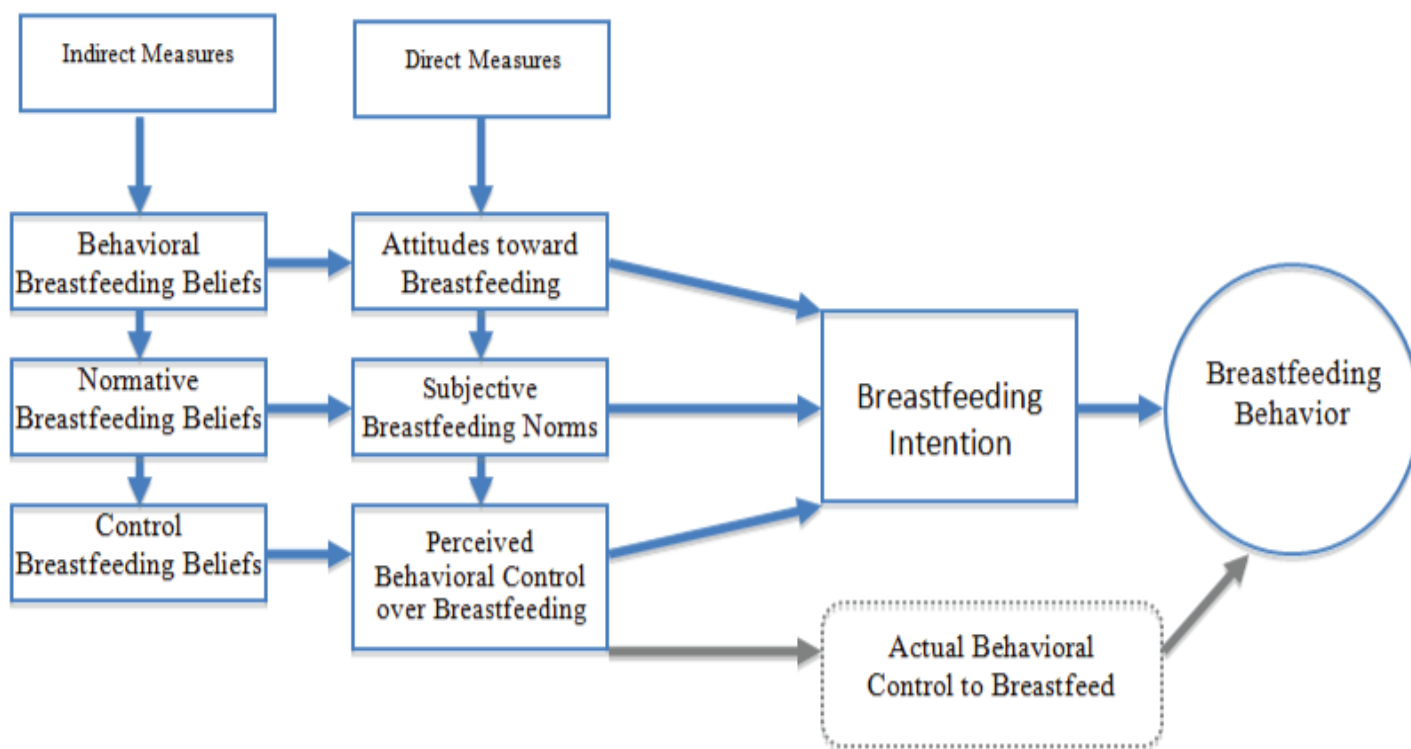


Data triangulation was employed to integrate findings from both quantitative and qualitative sources, enhancing the validity and reliability of the study's conclusions. By triangulating data sources and methods, a comprehensive understanding of students' career interest in sales careers in Malaysia was achieved, capturing the complexities and nuances inherent in their decision-making processes.

To unravel the determinants of students' interest in pursuing sales careers in Malaysia, a mixed-methods approach was adopted, integrating both quantitative and qualitative techniques to provide comprehensive

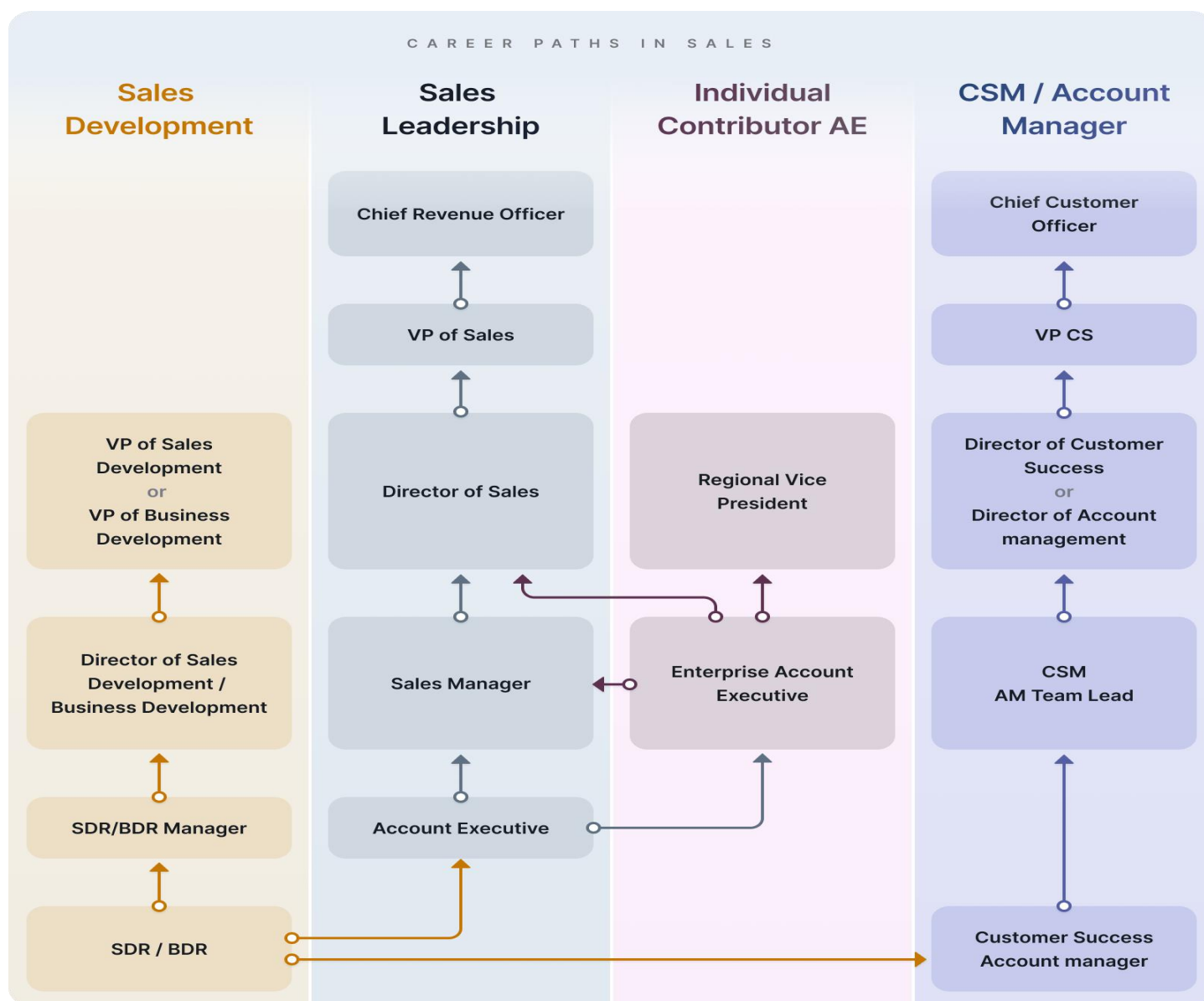
insights into students' perceptions, attitudes, and motivations.

Firstly, a quantitative survey instrument was developed to collect data from a large sample of Malaysian students across diverse educational institutions and academic disciplines. The survey included questions designed to assess students' interest in sales careers, perceptions of sales roles, career aspirations, educational background, and socio-economic factors. The survey instrument was distributed electronically and through paper-based methods to ensure broad participation and representation across different demographic groups.



Simultaneously, qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews, were conducted with a subset of students to gain deeper insights into the underlying factors influencing their career interests and perceptions of sales professions. The interviews

allowed for in-depth exploration of students' experiences, attitudes, and motivations towards sales careers, providing rich contextual understanding and capturing nuanced perspectives that may not be captured through quantitative surveys alone.



Sampling techniques were employed to ensure diversity and representativeness within the study population, encompassing students from various academic disciplines, educational backgrounds, and socio-economic strata. Stratified sampling methods were used to ensure adequate representation across different demographic groups, including gender, age, ethnicity, and geographic location.

Data analysis involved a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques. Quantitative data collected through surveys were analyzed using statistical software to identify patterns, correlations, and associations between variables. Descriptive statistics, regression analysis, and factor analysis were employed to examine relationships and trends within the data.

Qualitative data from interviews were analyzed thematically to identify recurring patterns, themes, and categories related to students' perceptions, attitudes, and motivations towards sales careers. Codes and themes were identified through iterative coding and constant comparison, allowing for the emergence of key insights and findings.

Furthermore, data triangulation was employed to integrate findings from quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, enhancing the validity and reliability of the study's conclusions. By triangulating data sources and methods, a comprehensive understanding of students' career interests and perceptions of sales careers in Malaysia was achieved.

Ethical considerations were carefully addressed throughout the research process, ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for participants' rights and privacy.

Overall, the mixed-methods approach allowed for a nuanced exploration of the complex factors influencing students' interest in pursuing sales careers in Malaysia, providing valuable insights for educators, recruiters, and policymakers aiming to promote sales professions and address talent shortages in the industry.

RESULT

The investigation into students' career interest in sales careers in Malaysia yielded several key findings. Quantitative analysis revealed that while a significant proportion of students expressed interest in sales careers, perceptions of the profession varied widely among different demographic groups and educational backgrounds. Factors such as educational attainment, socio-economic status, and prior exposure to sales roles emerged as significant predictors of students' career interest in sales.

Qualitative insights from interviews provided nuanced perspectives on the factors influencing students' perceptions and motivations towards sales careers. Many students cited the perceived financial rewards, flexibility, and opportunities for personal growth and advancement as appealing aspects of sales professions. However, concerns about job stability, negative stereotypes associated with sales roles, and

limited awareness of career pathways within the sales industry were also highlighted as significant barriers to entry.

DISCUSSION

The discussion delves into the implications of these findings for educational institutions, employers, and policymakers aiming to promote sales careers and address talent shortages in Malaysia. Strategies to enhance career awareness, provide experiential learning opportunities, and foster mentorship and networking within the sales industry are highlighted as potential avenues for attracting and retaining talent.

Moreover, efforts to dispel misconceptions about sales careers and highlight the diverse opportunities for professional growth and development within the industry are emphasized as essential components of talent recruitment and retention strategies. Collaboration between academia, industry stakeholders, and government agencies is identified as a critical driver for creating pathways for career advancement and fostering a thriving sales ecosystem in Malaysia.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, "Unveiling Students' Career Interest: A Study of Sales Careers in Malaysia" sheds light on the complex dynamics shaping students' perceptions, attitudes, and motivations towards sales professions in Malaysia. By elucidating the determinants of students' career interest in sales and highlighting opportunities for intervention, the study provides valuable insights

for stakeholders seeking to promote sales careers and address talent shortages in the Malaysian market.

Moving forward, collaborative efforts among educational institutions, employers, and policymakers are essential for implementing targeted initiatives that enhance career awareness, provide mentorship and training opportunities, and create supportive ecosystems for career development within the sales industry. By fostering a culture of innovation, inclusivity, and professional growth, Malaysia can position itself as a hub for sales excellence and drive economic prosperity and social development in the 21st century.

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