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**ASSESSING TAX AWARENESS AMONG UNDERGRADUATE
STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITY TEKNOLOGI MARA: A STUDY
ON ATTITUDE, MORAL, KNOWLEDGE & PERCEPTION
TOWARDS TAX AUTHORITIES**

Noorliana Safian¹, Khairiyah Md Shahid^{2*}, Shawal Sahid Hamid@Hussain³, Nor Syamaliah Ngah⁴,
Farah Murni Merican⁵, Norazlin Abd Aziz⁶, Azlin Mohd Hussain⁷

¹ Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia
Email: noorliana_safian@uitm.edu.my

² Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia
Email: khairiyah870@uitm.edu.my

³ Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia
Email: shawalhussain@uitm.edu.my

⁴ Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia
Email: syamaliah@uitm.edu.my

⁵ Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia
Email: farahmurni@uitm.edu.my

⁶ Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia
Email: norazlin525@uitm.edu.my

⁷ Faculty of Law, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia
Email: azlina072@uitm.edu.my

* Corresponding Author

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Abstract:

This study investigates the factors influencing tax awareness among undergraduate students at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), with particular emphasis on tax knowledge, attitudes, morale, and perceptions of tax authorities. Grounded in the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), the research explores how these elements shape students' intentions and behaviours regarding tax compliance. Employing a quantitative approach, data were collected through a cross-sectional survey administered to a representative sample of 384 undergraduate students. The findings reveal that tax knowledge and positive attitudes towards taxation significantly enhance tax awareness, reinforcing previous literature that highlights the critical role of education in fostering compliance. Moreover, students' perceptions of the role and effectiveness of tax authorities were found to substantially influence their tax morale and intentions to comply. These results suggest that integrating

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comprehensive tax education into university curricula and enhancing the visibility and accessibility of tax authorities may meaningfully improve future taxpayers' awareness and compliance. The study offers valuable insights for policymakers and educational institutions aiming to cultivate a more informed and compliant taxpaying population in Malaysia.

Keywords:

Tax Awareness, Tax Attitude, Tax Morale, Tax Knowledge, Role of Tax Authorities, Tax Compliance, Theory of Planned Behavior

Introduction

Taxation is a crucial economic instrument for every country, serving as a primary source of national income. The objectives of taxation include funding development and welfare programs, maintaining economic equality, improving the economic well-being of society, encouraging the production and distribution of essential goods, and discouraging the production of non-essential products and excessive imports to protect domestic industries. In Malaysia, paying taxes is one of the key ways citizens contribute to national development. In 2022, a total of 4,187,743 citizens filed their taxes. Of this number, 1,251,614 were individual filings, 2,936,129 were joint filings (husband and wife), and 1,472,038 were filings with no tax paid due to insufficient income. Over the past decade, approximately 25% of income tax revenue has consistently come from individual taxpayers (Government of Malaysia, 2024).

However, Malaysia still experiences a low level of tax compliance, as highlighted by Abd Hamid et al. (2017). Out of 14.9 million individuals who registered a tax file with the Inland Revenue Board of Malaysia (IRBM), only 15.24% (approximately 2.27 million) actually paid taxes. This implies that nearly 85% of registered taxpayers are not fulfilling their tax obligations. Such low compliance levels can result in insufficient public funds, which in turn may hinder the government's ability to manage national debt and finance essential services.

In addition, Zailan and Dahlan (2019) emphasised that institutions of higher learning play a vital role in delivering tax education—not merely to disseminate information, but also to shape students' reasoning and cognitive attitudes toward taxation. Increasing tax knowledge is therefore essential for both social and economic development. Given the importance of taxes in the Malaysian economy, Hastuti (2014) noted that tax awareness is fundamental to developing effective tax education and fostering a sound understanding among university students.

Tax education should not be limited to accounting students; rather, it should be extended across disciplines in public universities to enhance tax knowledge and awareness among all undergraduates. Such education is crucial to ensure that recent graduates possess the foundational tax knowledge necessary to comply with their tax obligations, particularly as they enter the workforce as salaried individuals.

Thus, this study aims to explore the challenges faced by undergraduate students in relation to tax awareness within their academic environment. Institutions of higher education serve as key platforms for introducing students to the taxation system. Tax awareness among Malaysian undergraduates is a pressing concern that demands attention. Despite the importance of tax compliance and financial literacy, many students lack the required knowledge and understanding of their tax obligations. This gap in awareness can lead to future issues, including financial penalties or legal consequences.

Therefore, the objective of this study is to examine the factors influencing tax awareness among undergraduate students in Malaysian public universities, focusing on variables such as tax knowledge, tax education, tax attitudes, tax morale, and the perceived role of tax authorities.

Literature Review

Overview of Tax Awareness among Public University Students in Malaysia

Tax awareness among students in public universities is a crucial factor in ensuring future compliance and understanding of tax obligations. Tax awareness refers to an individual's knowledge and understanding of their tax responsibilities, the importance of paying taxes, and the overall functioning of the tax system (Sanusi, 2021). For university students, cultivating this awareness is particularly important as they transition into the workforce and begin to fulfill their tax obligations. Several studies have assessed the level of tax awareness among Malaysian university students, revealing varying degrees of knowledge and comprehension. Sanusi (2021) found that tax knowledge, tax attitudes, and tax morale significantly influence students' tax awareness. The study also highlighted that the education sector acts as a moderating factor in the relationship between the role of tax authorities and tax awareness. This suggests that students who possess a strong understanding of tax principles, maintain positive attitudes toward taxation, and hold strong moral convictions about tax compliance are more likely to be aware of their tax responsibilities. Furthermore, educational institutions can enhance the influence of tax authorities by offering comprehensive tax education, thereby improving students' overall tax awareness. The findings imply that integrating tax education into university curricula and promoting a culture of tax compliance could significantly strengthen the awareness, knowledge, and attitudes of future taxpayers.

Tax awareness in Malaysia refers to taxpayers' understanding, attitudes, and behaviours toward the tax system. A study by Radzi (2023) highlighted that tax awareness is influenced by multiple factors, with knowledge being a key determinant. Providing taxpayers with basic tax information can significantly enhance their awareness. Conversely, a lack of tax awareness often results in a reluctance or outright avoidance of paying taxes, whether intentional or unintentional. Amin (2022) found that nearly 50% of respondents were unaware of the reasons for paying taxes. In Malaysia, this lack of awareness has contributed to widespread non-compliance, often attributed to limited understanding of tax legislation. The Inland Revenue Board of Malaysia (IRBM) plays a critical role in promoting tax awareness, particularly among primary and secondary school students. Awareness initiatives can take various forms, including educational programs and outreach activities. Nonetheless, instilling a solid foundation of tax awareness is essential to foster accurate comprehension of Malaysia's tax system. Equipping individuals with the necessary knowledge can help dispel misconceptions and clarify misunderstandings, while also preparing students in Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs) for their civic responsibilities as future taxpayers.

Tax Awareness

Tax awareness refers to the extent to which individuals and organisations understand the tax system, tax laws, and their responsibilities as taxpayers. It is a critical factor in enhancing voluntary tax compliance. Several studies have explored the determinants of tax awareness and its implications, particularly among students, businesses, and individual taxpayers.

Tax knowledge has consistently been identified as a key contributor to tax awareness. For instance, Amin (2022) found that tax knowledge significantly influenced tax awareness among 205 students from public and private universities in Malaysia. The study revealed that an increase in tax knowledge led to better tax awareness, which subsequently promoted higher tax compliance. This finding is consistent with Nurlis (2020), who studied 750 Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Indonesia and discovered that both tax knowledge and the modernization of tax administration significantly impacted tax compliance, with tax awareness acting as a mediating factor. Similarly, Chandra et al. (2020) demonstrated that taxpayer awareness, tax knowledge, and the implementation of modern tax administration systems all had positive and significant effects on compliance.

The role of education, both formal and informal, has also been shown to enhance tax awareness. Abbas (2021), in a study involving students from the 2020 tax education programme in Indonesia, found that tax awareness increased following the programme. Students who frequently accessed the tax authority's website also exhibited higher awareness levels. In Malaysia, Nor Marliana et al. (2023) reported that both formal and informal tax education significantly influenced tax awareness among the younger generation, who represent future taxpayers. This finding is further supported by Sanusi et al. (2021), who examined 232 students from various public and private Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs) and found that tax knowledge, tax morale, and attitudes were positively related to tax awareness.

Moreover, integrating tax-related content into the higher education curriculum has been shown to be beneficial. Linda (2018) observed a significant improvement in students' tax awareness at the Ekuitas School of Business after they were exposed to tax content embedded in the Islamic Religion course, a compulsory subject. In a similar vein, Hastuti (2014) discovered no significant difference in contextual and ethical tax awareness between business and non-business students at Soegijapranata Catholic University (SCU). However, business students were more likely to appreciate the importance of tax education and advocate for its inclusion in the curriculum.

Tax perception and attitude also influence levels of awareness. Baykan (2019), who studied accounting and non-accounting students from the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences in a private university in North Cyprus, reported only moderate levels of tax awareness. Nevertheless, the study found a significant correlation between tax awareness and tax perception, indicating that how individuals perceive taxation may affect their understanding and compliance.

Furthermore, studies have explored tax awareness from the administrative and structural perspectives. Siti Norashikin et. al (2023) highlighted that taxpayer awareness involves understanding and the ability to independently calculate and pay taxes under the Self-Assessment System (SAS) employed in Malaysia. In another study, Handoko et al. (2020) examined tax awareness as a mediating variable in the relationship between tax knowledge, tax

sanctions, and compliance among taxpayers at KPP Pratama Medan Timur. Interestingly, they found that while tax knowledge alone negatively affected compliance, tax awareness and sanctions helped moderate and improve compliance levels.

In conclusion, the literature demonstrates that tax awareness is a multidimensional construct influenced by tax knowledge, education, perception, curriculum design, and the structure of the tax system. These findings highlight the importance of promoting tax literacy through education and public outreach as part of broader strategies to improve voluntary tax compliance.

Tax Attitude

Tax attitude, as conceptualised within the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), refers to an individual's positive or negative evaluation of tax compliance behaviour. Attitudes are considered a key determinant of behavioural intention, and thus play a central role in predicting taxpayers' willingness to comply with tax regulations. The TPB, developed by Ajzen (1991) and originally stemming from the Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), provides a comprehensive framework for analysing such behavioural tendencies. According to TPB, attitudes towards a particular behaviour—such as paying taxes—directly influence the intention to perform that behaviour, assuming the behaviour is under volitional control (LaMorte, 2022).

A significant number of studies have utilised the TPB framework to examine the relationship between taxpayers' attitudes and their compliance intentions. Ramayah et al. (2009), for example, applied TPB to assess the determinants of e-filing adoption in Malaysia and confirmed that favourable attitudes significantly influenced taxpayers' intention to comply. Similarly, Damayanti et al. (2015) extended TPB by integrating trust and uncertainty orientation, and found that taxpayers' attitudes towards compliance were significant predictors of their compliance intentions. These findings are consistent with Ajzen's (1991) assertion that attitude remains a stable and influential predictor within the TPB structure.

Other studies have attempted to deepen the understanding of tax attitudes by incorporating additional constructs or examining specific belief outcomes. Bobek and Hatfield (2003) explored how feelings of guilt and concerns over illegal behaviour shaped attitudes towards tax cheating. Their findings revealed that negative outcome beliefs, such as emotional discomfort and moral disapproval, contributed to more compliant attitudes. Taing and Chang (2020) also expanded on the traditional TPB framework by examining the effects of tax morale, fairness, and complexity. Their results confirmed that perceived fairness and morale significantly influenced attitudes and thus compliance intentions, indicating the multidimensional nature of attitude formation in tax contexts.

However, the influence of attitudes is not always consistent across all contexts. In Turkey, Benk (2011) found that perceptions of tax equity—a factor often associated with attitudinal assessments—did not significantly influence compliance intentions. Instead, normative expectations and legal sanctions played a more dominant role. These results suggest that while attitude is a crucial factor, its impact may be moderated by cultural, legal, or institutional settings.

In the Malaysian context, Gayatri (2018) found that attitude, together with subjective norms and perceived behavioural control, positively influenced taxpayers' intention to comply. Interestingly, this study also revealed a negative relationship between tax knowledge and compliance intention, suggesting that higher knowledge may lead to greater scrutiny of the tax system, potentially weakening positive attitudes under certain conditions.

Taken together, the literature confirms that tax attitude is a fundamental construct within TPB-based compliance studies. While generally a strong predictor of tax compliance intention, the influence of attitude may vary based on additional variables such as moral beliefs, trust in authorities, perceived fairness, and cultural context. Nonetheless, the consistent integration of attitude as a key component in various models underscores its theoretical and practical importance in understanding taxpayer behaviour.

Tax Morale

Tax morale refers to the intrinsic motivation of individuals and businesses to comply with tax laws and regulations, beyond the influence of enforcement mechanisms such as detection and punishment. The concept has received substantial scholarly attention due to its critical role in explaining voluntary tax compliance.

Horodnic (2018) identifies several macroeconomic factors influencing tax morale, including higher GDP, increased government expenditure, and immigration, which are positively associated with tax morale. Conversely, higher inflation, income inequality, and elevated tax rates tend to diminish intrinsic motivation to comply. Complementing this perspective, Luttmer and Singhal (2014) assert that tax morale significantly affects tax compliance beyond traditional enforcement measures, highlighting its independent effect in fostering compliance behaviour.

Yuniadi (2019) underscores the importance of tax morale as a crucial determinant for enhancing tax compliance, positioning it as a foundational intrinsic motivator. This notion is supported by Torgler et al. (2008), who report a strong inverse correlation between tax evasion and tax morale, emphasizing the substantial influence of intrinsic motivation on compliance behaviour.

The cultural dimension of tax morale has also been explored, with Javier (2024) noting that while numerous studies have examined the relationship between culture and tax morale, significant gaps remain—particularly in the qualitative understanding of culture's deep and intangible impacts on tax morale.

Socio-economic and demographic variables have been shown to significantly affect tax morale. Daude et al. (2012) find that factors such as age, religion, gender, employment status, and educational attainment shape individuals' tax morale levels. Bilgin (2014) confirms these findings in Turkey, indicating that social capital and demographic factors, including confidence in political institutions, religion, and national pride, positively influence tax morale. Contrastingly, in Spain, social capital variables appear less influential, with age, education, and income exerting more substantial effects (Bilgin, 2014).

Further, Rodriguez-Justicia and Theilen (2018) observe a nuanced effect of education on tax morale: higher education correlates positively with tax morale among welfare state beneficiaries but negatively among net contributors. This divergence is more pronounced in countries with better public services and fairer tax systems. Similarly, Cyan et al. (2016) report that in Pakistan, groups with lower labour force participation exhibit more positive attitudes toward tax compliance. They also note that tax morale is highest in major urban centres serving as government hubs, with females generally demonstrating higher tax morale than males. However, this gender difference diminishes with age, resulting in lower tax morale among elderly females compared to elderly males.

In the Nigerian context, Igbeng (2012) finds that elevated tax morale among taxpayers correlates positively with greater compliance with tax policies. This study further highlights the necessity for improved taxpayer services and greater transparency in tax administration to sustain and enhance tax morale.

Overall, the literature consistently highlights tax morale as a multifaceted construct influenced by economic, demographic, cultural, and institutional factors. Its strong association with voluntary tax compliance underlines the importance of fostering intrinsic motivation alongside conventional enforcement strategies to improve tax compliance outcomes globally.

Tax Knowledge

Tax knowledge plays a critical role in shaping tax awareness, which in turn influences tax compliance behaviour. It is defined as the understanding of tax laws, procedures, and the significance of taxation in supporting national development and public welfare. A well-informed taxpayer is more likely to appreciate the rationale behind tax obligations and demonstrate higher levels of compliance. Numerous studies have highlighted the significance of tax knowledge in fostering tax awareness and ethical tax behaviour.

Diatnyani (2010) found that taxpayer knowledge has a positive and substantial influence on tax compliance. This finding suggests that individuals who possess a deeper understanding of tax-related matters are more likely to fulfil their obligations responsibly. Supporting this view, Rahayu (2010) argued that tax knowledge shapes taxpayers' attitudes toward the fairness of the tax system. A higher level of knowledge contributes to a more informed and fair perception of tax responsibilities, ultimately leading to voluntary compliance. This includes awareness of general provisions and tax procedures, which are essential for taxpayers to understand their duties and rights within the legal framework.

Further strengthening this argument, Nadiah Abd. Hamid (2022) identified tax knowledge as one of the key determinants of tax awareness. This is consistent with the findings of Azmi et al. (2020), who asserted that tax awareness can only effectively lead to tax compliance when it is supported by strong foundational knowledge. In their view, individuals who comprehend taxation are more likely to be aware of the ethical implications of tax evasion and, as a result, act responsibly. Al-Ttaffi et al. (2020) echoed similar sentiments, stating that taxpayers with greater knowledge of tax regulations are generally more inclined to comply. Marti (2010) also emphasized the importance of proper tax knowledge, pointing out that misunderstandings or ignorance—whether intentional or unintentional—often lead to non-compliance.

However, not all empirical findings agree on the significance of tax knowledge in promoting compliance. Nurhafizah Ahmad et al. (2023) reported that tax knowledge did not have a significant influence on compliance behaviour in their study, suggesting that other factors such as tax morale and the severity of penalties were more influential. Similarly, Handoko (2020) found that variations in taxpayers' levels of tax knowledge did not correlate with their compliance levels. This implies that even well-informed individuals might choose not to comply due to other behavioural or motivational factors. Siti Nurhazwani Kamarudin (2024) also concluded that tax knowledge was not a key determinant of compliance, which is further reinforced by Rediyana and Mulya (2019), who found that individuals with higher tax knowledge—especially experts—were sometimes more prone to manipulating tax laws or committing tax offences.

Overall, the literature presents mixed findings regarding the role of tax knowledge. While a substantial body of research supports the notion that tax knowledge positively influences tax awareness and compliance, other studies raise questions about its sufficiency as a standalone factor. This discrepancy suggests that tax knowledge must be examined in conjunction with other variables such as tax morale, ethical values, and enforcement mechanisms to gain a more comprehensive understanding of taxpayer behaviour.

Role of Tax Authorities

The role of tax authorities has been widely acknowledged as a significant institutional factor influencing taxpayer awareness and compliance. Tax authorities not only enforce compliance but also shape taxpayer attitudes through education, outreach, and service delivery. In the Malaysian context, the Inland Revenue Board of Malaysia (IRBM) is the main agency responsible for executing tax policies, educating the public, and promoting tax compliance.

According to Abdul (2021), tax authorities play a crucial role in influencing taxpayer compliance decisions. He emphasized that IRBM should continuously provide tax education, especially to the younger generation, to enhance their understanding of the tax system and foster a stronger compliance culture. The IRBM is also responsible for informing taxpayers about any amendments to tax laws, as awareness of such changes may encourage adherence to tax obligations.

Hamid (2022) supported this view by finding that IRBM's role positively affects tax awareness through a variety of compliance-promotion initiatives. These include targeted campaigns and public engagement activities aimed at building trust and knowledge among taxpayers. Gangl (2020) further elaborated that tax authorities employ multiple tools to increase awareness, including tax promotion campaigns, knowledge-sharing platforms, interpretation guidance, tax audits, fines, incentives, and assistance services. These strategies are aimed at reducing the knowledge gap and motivating voluntary compliance.

In line with this, Hassan et al. (2016) highlighted IRBM's proactive approach in disseminating tax-related information to the public through various media such as television, radio, newspapers, and digital platforms. Educational outreach is not limited to individual taxpayers but extends to students, businesses, employers, and tax agents. These initiatives signify the authorities' recognition of the importance of widespread and inclusive tax education.

Further supporting this, studies by Poshakwale et al. (2020) and Timothy and Abbas (2021) indicated that additional regulatory efforts from tax authorities can influence taxpayer compliance behaviour. These regulations, when effectively communicated and enforced, can shape taxpayer attitudes and practices. Yayuk Ngesti Rahayu et al. (2017) also found that well-formulated tax regulations from authorities have a significant impact on taxpayer compliance. Similarly, Razilina A. Razak (2022) noted that the nature of interaction between tax authorities and taxpayers is a key determinant in shaping compliance behaviour, highlighting the importance of mutual trust and communication.

Moreover, Suyanto (2021) emphasized the need for tax authorities to provide integrated educational counselling, continuously review their services, and improve service quality to enhance compliance. However, not all findings are consistent. Sanusi (2021), in contrast, found no significant correlation between the role of tax authorities and tax awareness. This could be attributed to limited outreach, lack of promotional efforts, or insufficient educational initiatives by the authorities in certain contexts.

In conclusion, the literature suggests that tax authorities play a fundamental role in enhancing tax awareness through education, regulation, and public engagement. Although most studies support the positive influence of tax authorities on awareness and compliance, a few contrasting findings indicate that the effectiveness of these roles may depend on the intensity and quality of implementation efforts.

Hypotheses Development

Tax Attitude and Tax Awareness

Tax attitude can be defined as an individual's assessment of concepts, items, or persons in the context of tax perceptions (Syatila Che Saruji et al., 2019). Numerous studies have found that a positive tax attitude—reflecting individuals' perceptions and behavior toward taxation—significantly enhances tax awareness, often using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) as a framework. Taxpayers with favorable attitudes toward taxation are more likely to understand their obligations and recognize the importance of compliance. For example, Taing and Chang (2020) found that attitudes toward tax fairness and complexity significantly impact compliance intentions, demonstrating the role of awareness in shaping such behaviors. Similarly, Damayanti et al. (2015) confirmed that attitudes significantly influence compliance behavior, especially in contexts involving trust and uncertainty, further supporting the link between awareness and behavior. This current study aims to examine the relationship between tax attitude and tax awareness among undergraduate students at UiTM, based on insights from previous research.

H¹: There is a positive relationship between tax attitude and tax awareness among students

Tax Morale and Tax Awareness

Tax morale refers to the intrinsic motivation to pay taxes, stemming from a sense of moral obligation or the belief in contributing to society (Nor Marziana, 2014). Previous research has consistently shown that tax morale is positively related to tax awareness. For instance, Horodnic (2018) found that factors such as increased government spending and GDP contribute to higher tax morale, which in turn raises tax awareness. Similarly, Yuniadi Mayowan (2019) and Torgler et al. (2008) emphasized that intrinsic motivation enhances both tax compliance

and awareness. Luttmer and Singhal (2014) also noted that tax morale has a significant impact on compliance behavior. This study aims to examine the relationship between tax morale and tax awareness in the context of undergraduate students at UiTM.

H²: There is a positive relationship between tax morale and tax awareness among students

Tax Knowledge and Tax Awareness

Tax knowledge has been identified as one of the key factors influencing tax awareness, encompassing familiarity with tax laws, procedures, and responsibilities (Augustine Ayuba et al 2016). Several studies have shown that increased tax knowledge equips taxpayers with the necessary information to understand and fulfil their tax obligations. For example, Ayuba, Saad, and Arifin (2016) emphasized that tax knowledge enhances tax awareness by helping individuals comprehend tax regulations. This view is supported by Horodnic (2018) and Luttmer and Singhal (2014), who found that higher tax morale—often linked to greater tax knowledge—improves tax compliance. This study aims to examine the relationship between tax knowledge and tax awareness among undergraduate students at UiTM.

H³: There is a positive relationship between tax morale and tax awareness among students.

Role of Tax Authorities and Tax Awareness

Prior studies have emphasized the crucial role that tax authorities play in raising tax awareness through taxpayer assistance, enforcement, and effective communication. Effective interaction by tax authorities leads to higher levels of tax knowledge, builds trust, and ensures that taxpayers are well-informed about their responsibilities. This is supported by several researchers, including Abdul (2021), Hamid (2022), Gangl (2020), Norul Syuhada Abu Hassan et al. (2016), Poshakwale et al. (2020), and Timothy and Abbas (2021), who all highlighted the importance of educational programs, consistent communication, and regulatory measures implemented by tax authorities in enhancing tax compliance behavior. This study aims to confirm the relationship between the role of tax authorities and tax awareness among undergraduate students at UiTM.

H⁴: There is a positive relationship between tax morale and tax awareness among students.

Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a cross-sectional survey design to examine the factors influencing tax awareness among undergraduate students at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM). The study specifically focused on the relationship between tax knowledge, tax attitude, the role of tax authorities, tax morale, and tax awareness—the latter serving as the dependent variable.

A total of 384 students were selected as respondents from various faculties across UiTM. Convenience and snowball sampling techniques were utilized to reach a diverse sample of students. Data were collected through an online survey, which allowed for broader accessibility and ease of distribution.

The questionnaire used in the survey was divided into six sections:

Section A: Demographic Information

Section B: Tax Awareness (Dependent Variable)

Section C: Tax Knowledge

Section D: Tax Attitude

Section E: Role of Tax Authorities

Section F: Tax Morale

All items in the questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree to measure participants' level of agreement with each statement.

A pilot test was conducted with 30 students to ensure the reliability and clarity of the questionnaire. Feedback from the pilot test informed minor adjustments to improve the overall quality of the instrument.

The collected data were analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were conducted to examine the relationships between the independent variables (tax knowledge, tax attitude, role of tax authorities, and tax morale) and the dependent variable (tax awareness).

Findings & Discussion

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The overall number of acceptable completed questionnaires was 411 from UiTM students in Malaysia. The questionnaire required the respondents to provide their background information, such as gender, age, ethnicity and current education level. Table 1 provides a summary of the demographic of the respondents.

Table 1: Demographic Profile

Demographics	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	113	27.5
	Female	298	72.5
Age	18 years old	90	21.9
	19 years old	37	9
	20 years old	36	8.8
	21 years old	72	17.5
	22 years old	108	26.3
	23 years old	52	12.7
	24 years old	12	2.9
	25 years old and	4	1.0

	above		
Faculty	Administration Science and Policy	296	72
	Accountancy	1	0.2
	Built Environment	3	0.7
	Applied Science	4	1
	Business Management	13	3.2
	Computing, Informatics and Mathematics	67	16.3
	Creative Art	1	0.2
	Law	3	0.7
	Communication & Media Studies	3	0.7
	Sport Science and Recreation	20	4.9

A frequency analysis was conducted to examine the demographic profile of respondents, including gender, age, academic status, and faculty distribution. This analysis provides insights into the composition of the sample and helps contextualize the findings on tax awareness.

Of the 411 respondents, 72.5% were female (298), and 27.5% were male (113). The majority were aged 18–25, with the largest group being 22 years old (26.3%), followed by 18-year-olds (21.9%)—a distribution typical of university students.

In terms of faculty, most respondents came from the Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies (72%), followed by Computing, Informatics, and Mathematics (16.3%), with smaller representations from Sport Science and Recreation (4.9%), Business Management (3.2%), and others. This indicates a concentration from faculties more aligned with tax-related topics.

Regarding academic status, 63.5% were degree students (261), while 36.5% were diploma students (150). Degree students' higher representation may reflect their greater exposure to specialized coursework, including topics related to tax awareness.

Research Objective I: To Examine the Level of Tax Awareness Among UiTM Undergraduate Students.

Table 2: Respondent's Level of Tax Awareness

Mean	4.2397
Std. Deviation	0.65545

Table 1.2 shows the respondent's level of tax awareness at a high level with a mean value of 4.2397. It suggests that the respondents have a good level of tax awareness. This shows that the majority of students have a basic comprehension of tax principles and duties.

Research Objective II: To Identify the Significant Relationship Between Tax Attitude and Tax Awareness Among UiTM Undergraduate Students.

A Spearman's rank-order correlation was conducted to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables. This method was chosen as it is suitable for non-parametric data and does not require assumptions of linearity or homoscedasticity, ensuring reliable results for the relationships between the variables.

Table 3: Correlation between Tax Attitude with Tax Awareness among University Technology Mara (UiTM) Undergraduate Students.

Tax Attitude		
Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation	Correlation Coefficient	0.705**
	Sig (2 tailed)	0.000
	N	411
Results		H ¹ accepted

According to Table 1.3, there is a significant positive relationship between Tax Attitude and Tax Awareness among Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) undergraduate students ($r = 0.705$, $p = 0.000$, $p < 0.01$). Based on Guilford's Rule of Thumb, the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.705$) indicates a high correlation, suggesting a strong relationship between tax attitude and tax awareness. This means that as tax attitude improves, tax awareness also increases. The significance of this correlation underscores the importance of fostering a positive attitude towards taxation, as it plays a critical role in enhancing students' understanding and awareness of their tax responsibilities.

Research Objective III: To Identify the Significant Relationship Between Tax Morale and Tax Awareness Among UiTM Undergraduate Students.**Table 4: Correlation between Tax Morale with Tax Awareness among University Technology Mara (UiTM) Undergraduate Students**

Tax Morale		
Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation	Correlation Coefficient	0.658**
	Sig (2 tailed)	0.000
	N	411
Results		H ¹ accepted

According to Table 1.4, there is a significant positive relationship between Tax Morale and Tax Awareness among Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) undergraduate students ($r = 0.658$, $p = 0.000$, $p < 0.01$). Referring to Guilford's Rule of Thumb, the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.658$) indicates a moderate to high correlation, suggesting that a strong sense of tax morale is positively associated with increased tax awareness. This means that as tax morale increases, tax awareness also tends to increase. The significance of this correlation underscores the importance of fostering strong tax morale, as it can play a crucial role in enhancing students' understanding of their tax responsibilities.

Research Objective IV: To Identify the Significant Relationship Between Tax Knowledge and Tax Awareness Among UiTM Undergraduate Students.

Table 5: Correlation between Tax Knowledge with Tax Awareness among University Technology Mara (UiTM) Undergraduate Students

Tax Knowledge		
Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation	Correlation Coefficient	0.598**
	Sig (2 tailed)	0.000
	N	411
Result		H1 accepted

According to Table 1.5, there is a significant positive relationship between Tax Knowledge and Tax Awareness among Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) undergraduate students ($r = 0.598$, $p = 0.000$, $p < 0.01$). Referring to Guilford's Rule of Thumb, the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.598$) indicates a moderate correlation, suggesting a meaningful relationship between tax knowledge and tax awareness. This implies that as tax knowledge increases, tax awareness also increases. The significance of this correlation suggests that improving students' understanding of tax-related matters can effectively enhance their awareness of tax responsibilities.

Research Objective V: To Identify the Significant Relationship Between the Role Of Tax Authorities and Tax Awareness Among UiTM Undergraduate Students.

Table 4.9: Correlation between Roles of Tax Authorities with Tax Awareness among University Technology Mara (UiTM) Undergraduate Students.

Role of Tax Authorities		
Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation	Correlation Coefficient	0.521**
	Sig (2 tailed)	0.000
	N	411
Result		H1 accepted

According to Table 4.9, there is a significant positive relationship between the Roles of Tax Authorities and Tax Awareness among Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) undergraduate students ($r = 0.521$, $p = 0.000$, $p < 0.01$). Based on Guilford's Rule of Thumb, the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.521$) indicates a moderate correlation, suggesting that the effectiveness of tax authorities' roles is moderately associated with increased tax awareness. This means that as the roles of tax authorities become more prominent or effective, tax awareness among students also improves. The significance of this correlation underscores the importance of educating students about the roles of tax authorities, as a clear understanding of these roles can meaningfully enhance their awareness of tax obligations.

Conclusion & Recommendation

This study investigated the influence of tax knowledge, tax morale, attitude, and the roles of tax authorities on tax awareness among undergraduate students at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM). The findings revealed significant positive relationships between all four independent variables and tax awareness. These results suggest that when students possess greater

knowledge of taxation, uphold strong tax morale, have a positive attitude toward taxes, and understand the roles played by tax authorities, their overall awareness of tax responsibilities increases accordingly.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence on the psychological and informational determinants of tax awareness among young adults in a developing country. By examining the interrelations between knowledge, attitude, morale, and institutional influence, this research adds a multi-dimensional understanding to the literature on tax behavior, particularly in the context of youth and early-stage taxpayers.

From a social standpoint, the study emphasizes the critical need to inculcate tax awareness from a young age. As future income earners and contributors to the nation's development, university students represent a vital demographic for fostering long-term compliance and civic responsibility. Creating tax-conscious individuals early can lead to a more responsible, informed, and cooperative society in the future.

For tax regulators and policymakers, the findings provide actionable insights. Strengthening educational campaigns targeted at youths, especially in higher education institutions, could significantly enhance tax compliance culture. Introducing tax-related modules, workshops, and simulation-based learning at the university level could bridge knowledge gaps and positively shape attitudes. Furthermore, improving public perception of tax authorities by increasing transparency and public engagement may also reinforce students' tax awareness.

This research is not without limitations. The scope of the study was confined to undergraduate students at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), and therefore, the findings may not be fully generalizable to students from other universities or different educational backgrounds. Additionally, the sample only includes undergraduate students, excluding postgraduate cohorts who may possess different levels of knowledge, experience, or attitudes toward taxation.

Future studies should consider expanding the sample to include students from a variety of public and private institutions across different regions in Malaysia to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Including postgraduate students or young professionals may also offer comparative insights into how education and exposure impact tax awareness. Moreover, qualitative approaches such as interviews or focus groups could be employed to explore in-depth perceptions and motivations related to tax awareness, which may not be fully captured through quantitative methods alone.

In conclusion, enhancing tax awareness among university students is not only vital for building a more compliant future taxpayer base but also crucial for cultivating a socially responsible and economically informed society. Stakeholders across educational institutions and tax authorities must collaborate to design and implement initiatives that nurture tax literacy and responsibility at an early stage.

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