FACTORS AFFECTING CAREER CHOICE AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA, SINTOK, KEDAH

AFIDATUL ASMA BINTI HASSAN

MASTER OF SCIENCE MANAGEMENT
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA
JANUARY 2015
FACTORS AFFECTING CAREER CHOICE AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA, SINTOK, KEDAH

By

AFIDATUL ASMA BINTI HASSAN

Thesis Submitted to
Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business,
Universiti Utara Malaysia,
in Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Master of Science (Management)
PERMISSION TO USE

In presenting this dissertation/project paper in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Post Graduate degree from the Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), I agree that the Library of this university may make it freely available for inspection. I further agree that permission for copying this dissertation/project paper in any manner, in whole or in part, for scholarly purposes may be granted by my supervisor(s) or in their absence, by the Dean of Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business where I did my dissertation/project paper. It is understood that any copying or publication or use of this dissertation/project paper parts of it for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission. It is also understood that due recognition shall be given to me and to the UUM in any scholarly use which may be made of any material in my dissertation/project paper.

Request for permission to copy or to make other use of materials in this dissertation/project paper in whole or in part should be addressed to:

Dean of Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business
Universiti Utara Malaysia
06010 UUM Sintok
Kedah Darul Aman
ABSTRACT

One of the critical aspects of an individual’s life is career choice as a career chosen will determine the role pattern need to be played by the individual in the society in the future and the career choice is one of the important processes in life. The aim of this study is to investigate the factors that influencing the career choice of the students. This study is focus on undergraduate students in university Utara Malaysia, Sintok, Kedah. Undergraduate students were chosen because right upon graduation, they were the one who will be dealing with the decision on career choice. A total number of 315 students responded to the questionnaire. Statistical Package software for Social Science (SPSS) Version 22.0 was used to analyze the collected data. Reliability analysis, multiple regressions and correlation were applied to this study. Pearson correlation analysis results showed that the influence of family, personal interests, and economic considerations have a positive relationship to career choices. Moreover, the results of regression analysis showed that the personal interests exerted great influence on the choice of a career compared to family influence and economic considerations. Recommendations for further study in the future in order to investigate other important factors that influence students' career choices.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Bismillahirrahmanirahim. Praise to Allah S.W.T the Most Gracious, Most Merciful, and the Most Beneficent for His blessings so that this dissertation had finally completed and hence, my Master of Science Management.

I am heartily thankful to my supervisor, Mr. Shahmir Abdullah whose give encouragement, guidance and support from the initial to the final level that enabled me to develop an understanding in this study area. Without his support and ideas, this study will be far from complete. Furthermore, special thanks to the undergraduate students in Universiti Utara Malaysia for giving me the opportunity and cooperation to obtain the data collections for this study.

I would like to show my gratefulness to my family especially my parent and my siblings who give their love, sacrifice and support throughout my life. And thanks also to my friends whose always gives great ideas and courage in helping me in this study.

Lastly, I offer my regards and blessings to all of those who supported me in any respect during the completion of this paper. Thank you.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permission to use</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstrak</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgement</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Abbreviations</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of Study .................................................................... 1
1.1 Problem Statement .................................................................. 4
1.2 Research Questions .................................................................. 6
1.3 Research objectives .................................................................. 6
1.4 Scope of the Study .................................................................. 6
1.5 Limitations ............................................................................. 7
1.6 Significance of the Study ...................................................... 7
1.7 Definition of Terms .................................................................. 9
1.8 Organization of Remaining Chapter ......................................... 11

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction ........................................................................... 12
2.1 Review of Previous Research Studies ......................................... 12
   2.1.1 Career Choice ................................................................. 12
   2.1.2 Family Influence ............................................................. 15
   2.1.3 Personal Interests ............................................................ 17
   2.1.4 Economic considerations ..................................................... 19
2.2 Career Development Theories ..................................................... 22
2.3 Relationship between family influence and career choice ........................................ 28
2.4 Relationship between personal interests and career choice .................................. 32
2.5 Relationship between economic considerations and career choice ....................... 35
2.6 The Research Framework ................................................................. 37
2.7 Hypotheses .......................................................... 38

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
3.0 Introduction ................................................................................. 39
3.1 Definition of variables ............................................................ 39
3.2 Research Design ................................................................. 40
  3.2.1 Type of Study ................................................................. 40
  3.2.2 The Quantitative Analytical Approach .................................. 41
  3.2.3 Sources of Data .............................................................. 42
  3.2.4 Unit of Analysis .............................................................. 42
  3.2.5 Population and Sampling Frame ........................................ 43
3.3 Measurement of Variables .................................................... 44
  3.3.1 Validation of Instruments .................................................. 44
  3.3.2 Reverse-scored Item ......................................................... 45
  3.3.3 Back translation ............................................................. 46
3.4 Data Collection and Administration ....................................... 47
3.5 Sampling Design ................................................................. 48
  3.5.1 Probability sampling: Simple Random Sampling ....................... 48
3.6 Data Analysis Techniques ..................................................... 48
  3.6.1 Validity analysis ............................................................ 49
  3.6.2 The Reliability analysis .................................................... 49
  3.6.3 Descriptive Statistic ......................................................... 50
  3.6.4 Hypothesis Testing ......................................................... 50
  3.6.5 Inferential statistics: Pearson Correlation .............................. 51
  3.6.6 Multiple Regressions ....................................................... 52
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION</strong></td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Reliability Analysis</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Frequency Analysis</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.2.1</td>
<td>The Demography of Respondents</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Descriptive Statistics</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Hypotheses Testing</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.4.1</td>
<td>Correlation Result Analysis</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.4.2</td>
<td>Multiple Regression Analysis</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.5.1</td>
<td>Hypothesis Testing Result</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.5.1.1</td>
<td>Results of Correlation</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.5.1.2</td>
<td>Result of Multiple Regressions</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Hypotheses Summary</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION</strong></td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Recommendation and Suggestion for Future Research</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.1.1</td>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.1.2</td>
<td>Suggestion for Future Research</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Sources of Instruments</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Reverse-code item</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Data Collection Instruments Responses</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Demographic statistic</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Descriptive statistics</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Correlation analysis</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Regression Analysis</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Hypotheses Summary</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.1</td>
<td>Theoretical framework</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SES</td>
<td>Socio-economic status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDA</td>
<td>Training and Development Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCCT</td>
<td>Social Cognitive Career Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDS</td>
<td>Career Decision Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEI</td>
<td>Higher Education Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S</td>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SII</td>
<td>Strong Interest Inventory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRS</td>
<td>General Reference Sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoHE</td>
<td>Ministry of Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for Social Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UUM</td>
<td>Universiti Utara Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA</td>
<td>Grade Percentage Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COB</td>
<td>College of Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLGIS</td>
<td>College of Law, Government and International studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS</td>
<td>College of Science and Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DV</td>
<td>Dependent Variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Independent Variable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Career choice has become one of the critical aspects of an individual’s life as a career chosen will determine the role pattern need to be played by the individual in the society in the future. According to Sidek Mohd Noah (2002), Parson states that career choice is one of the most important processes in an individual’s life as one would enter the real working environment. Therefore, career choice has become one of the biggest problems face by the students.

The trait and behavior researchers such as Holland, Super and Nowak beliefs that career choice must be consistent with the desire and interest of the individual. The consistent and secure career choice decision will reduce and prevent the individual’s tendency to change the job or change the field of study in a short period of time. Career selection is an ongoing process which starts from the childhood perception on job up to the school level, higher education and adult perspectives as presented by Super (Ishamumudin Hj. Ismail, 2007).

Generally, graduates in the age of 19 to 24 years age group which still in a deep career fields exploration level. In the career selection process, there are many factors that become the foundation of selection for certain fields of career among the students or graduates. Commonly, students around the world had faced the undertaking of career’s decision. The selection of career, field of study, courses in
The contents of the thesis is for internal user only
References


Ji-Hyeon Kim (2001). The Relationships Among Gender, Gender Identity Factors And Career-Decision-Situation-Specified Personality Traits, (Doctoral Dissertation). *Retrieved From Proquest Dissertations And Theses. UMI Number: 3038041*


Peterson M. (1973). Application of Vocational Development Theory to Career Education. *Information Series No. 80. VT 020 368*


Maser (Eds.), *Anxiety and the anxiety disorders* (pp. 681-716). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.


