

FACTOR INFLUENCING STUDENT'S CAREER CHOICE
AT UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA (UTeM)

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Report submitted in fulfillment of the requirement for the Bachelor Degree of
Technology Management Innovation Technology (BTMI)

Faculty of Management Technology and Technopreneurship (FPTT)

Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka

JUNE 2014

“I declare this report is a result of my own work except for the excerpts that have been cited clearly in the references”.

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my father, who taught me that the best kind of knowledge to have is that which is learned for our own sake and then share it together with the others. It is also dedicate to my mother, who taught me that even the largest task can be accomplished if it is done one step at a time.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like express my special appreciation and thanks to my supervisor Mr. Isma Addi Jumbri, you have been such a tremendous mentor for me. I would like to thank you for encouraging my research and for accepting me as one of your supervise. Your advice on both research as well my study have been priceless. I would also like to thank my friends, Nor Fatini, Nor Ain, Norzaidatul, Siti Fatimah and others for helping me with this research. I also want to thank for your hardship, comments and suggestions, thanks to you. I would especially like to thank all the UTeM's students. All of you have been there to support me when I collected data for this research.

A special thanks to y family. Words cannot express how grateful I am to my mother, father, siblings and others for all the sacrifices that you've made on my behalf. Your prayer for me was what sustained e thus far. At the end I would also like to thank all of my friends who supported me in writing, and incented me to strive towards my goal.

ABSTRACT

Many factors will affect career choices selection among students. Identifying these factors would give parents, educators, and industry an idea as to where students place most of their interest in their career selection process. It would also allow students to examine processes they use for career selection. The literature review has provided recommended models in career choices. The review of the literature showed that three areas of a student's life affect the career choices they make: environment, opportunity, and perception of personality. All three factors are played varying roles in career outcomes. The purpose of this study was to determine factors influencing career choice among students at Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM), focus on City Campus for final year students for three different courses (BTMI, BTMM and BTEC). A quantitative methods guide this study. A survey method in the form of a structured questionnaire was used in this study in order to identify the factors that influence career choice among individuals. A purposive sample of hundred (100) final year students of FPTT, UTeM will be participated in this study. Data will be analyse by using the percentages and tables. The study was about define the most influence factors within the environment factors, perception of personality factors and opportunity factors that most significant to FPTT, UTeM's final year students in their career choice selection.

ABSTRAK

Banyak faktor yang akan memberi kesan kepada pemilihan kerjaya dalam kalangan pelajar. Mengenalpasti faktor-faktor ini akan memberikan ibu bapa, pendidik dan industri idea akan kemana pelajar meletakkan kebanyakan minat mereka dalam proses pemilihan kerjaya. Ia juga akan membolehkan pelajar untuk mengkaji proses yang digunakan untuk pemilihan kerjaya. Kajian literatur telah menyediakan model yang disyorkan dalam pemilihan kerjaya. Kajian semula literatur menunjukkan bahawa tiga bidang dalam kehidupan pelajar yang adalah mempengaruhi mereka dalam menentukan pemilihan kerjaya: Persekitan, Peluang dan Tanggapan personaliti. Kesemua tiga faktor memainkan peranan yang berbeza dalam pemilihan kerjaya. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk menentukan faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi pemilihan kerjaya dikalangan pelajar di Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka(UTeM), tumpuan kepada Kampus Bandar untuk pelajar tahun akhir bagi tiga kursus yang berbeza (BTMI, BTMM dan BTEC). Satu kaedah kuantitatif digunakan dalam kajian ini. Kaedah tinjauan dalam bentuk soal selidik berstruktur telah digunakan dalam kajian ini untuk mengenalpasti faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi pemilihan kerjaya di kalangan individu. Seratus (100) sampel yang merupakan pelajar tahun akhir FPTT, UTeM akan mengambil bahagian dalam kajian ini. Data akan dianalisis dengan menggunakan peratusan dan jadual. Kajian ini akan menentukan faktor yang paling mempengaruhi diantara faktor persekitaran, faktor tanggapan personaliti dan faktor peluang yang paling utama untuk pemilihan kerjaya dalam kalangan pelajar tahun akhir FPTT, UteM.

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LIST OF ABBRIVIATION

BTEC	=	Bachelor of Technology Technopreneurship
BTMI	=	Bachelor of Technology Management Innovation Technology
BTMM	=	Bachelor of Technology Management (High Tech) Marketing
FPTT	=	Faculty of Management Technology and Technopreneurship
MRA	=	Multiple Regression Analysis
SPSS	=	Statistical Package for Social Science
UTeM	=	Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Several studies show that, new students all over the world are usually faced with a dilemma in making career choice decision in their lives (Bandura et al. 2001; Cherian 1991; Issa and Nwalo 2008; Macgregor 2007; McMohan and Watson 2005; Watson et al. 2010). In most cases, the choice of careers, subjects, and courses of study and the subsequent career paths to follow is a nightmare for prospective under graduate students (Issa and Nwalo 2008). Career, according to Cambridge Advance Learners' Dictionary (2005) refer to "job or series of job that you do during your working life". Meanwhile, "in the wise choice of a vacation there are three broad factors: (1) a clear understanding of yourself, your aptitudes, abilities, interests, ambitions, resource, limitations and knowledge of their causes; (2) a knowledge of the requirement, conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities, and prospect in different lines of work; (3) true reasoning on the relations of these two groups of facts" (Parsons,1990, p.5). 'Career choice' is a subject that has attracted academic, professional as well as public attention, due to its multifaceted nature.

Since a career is a result of the interplay between individuals within organizational and social structures, it yields well to analysis from diverse perspectives ranging from occupational psychology to organizational sociology (Ozbilgin, M et al 2005, p.1).

Career selection is one of many important choices students will make in determining future their plans. This decision will impact them throughout their lives. The essence of who the student is will revolve around what the students wants to do with their lifelong work. Work is an essential and mostly a desired part of our lives. Its role goes for beyond the need to provide food, shelter and other essentials for life. Work provides people with a sense of purpose, challenge, self fulfillment and development, as well as the essential income to enable them to participate in other spheres of life (Baruch Y 2004, p.39). “Everyone should have an honest occupation” (Rosenstock & Steinberg, cited in O’Brien, 1996, p. 3). Work is a source of identity as well as of creativity and mastery. Work provides us with status and offer opportunities for social networking.

Many find love and affection and meet their partners during and through work. Works help us to pass the time and give our life structure (Baruch Y 2004, p.39). Every students carries the unique history of their past and this determines how they view the world. That history created, in part by the student’s make career choices. It then follows that how the student perceives their environment, personality, and opportunity also will determine the career choice students make.

1.1 Background of the study

The first factor in career choice is environment. It is may influence the career students choice. For example, students who have lived on an island may choose a career dealing with the water, or they may choose to leave the island behind, never to have

anything to do with water again. Maybe someone in the student's life has made a significant impact or impression, leading to a definite career choice. Parents' educational background may influence student views on whether or not to continue their education. Someone they saw on television may have influenced the student, or parents may have demanded that they assume a family business. These are various environmental factors that would lead a student to a chosen career. Additionally, Environment is a term which has many connotations – it has physical, economic, social and cultural dimensions. From an environmentalist point of view, it is defined as the sum total of all social, biological, chemical and physical factors which compose the surroundings of man (Southwick, 1976). Olatunji, (2003) argues that we have three types of environment, which are the natural environment, the biological environment and also the social environment.

How students see themselves in a role in which personality is the second determining factor that may influence a chosen career. Some careers demand that you have the personality to match the qualities of the occupation. For example, sales people have to be outgoing. Splaver (1977) said “personality” plays an important role in the choosing of the right career. A student's personality must be a self-motivated type, as to investigate career possibilities from early on in their lives, and not the procrastinating type that waits until they are compelled to decide. Students must take seriously the role grades play in limiting opportunities in the future. Splaver went on to say, “It is important for you to have a good understanding of yourself, your personality, if you are to make intelligent career plans” (Splaver, 1977, p.12).

Opportunity is the third factor that has shaped career choices for students. Opportunity may influence how students have perceived their future in terms of the reasonable probability of a future in particular career fields. The issue of poverty has played an important determining role in the opportunities available to all. The income level of families may determine what career a student chooses during a specific time in the student's life; choices that will determine a large part of that student's future. Some students will have to budget education according to their personal income. Thout (1969) addressed those in desperate need, “Where necessary, these persons [Individuals

described as living under the poverty level] must be assisted through special training programs to overcome educational and social handicaps so that minimum job standards can be met”(p. 1). Students in many cases will need the proper mentoring opportunities to succeed. These support groups will be another opportunity that if properly implemented, can help a student in the career choice process. The support system must have been in place and readily available for the student to utilize. The creation of support groups will have to be in place to sustain the student through times of financial, emotional, and educational need.

The perceptions of these students upon entering a structured cooperative work program varied from “eager” to “skeptical and suspicious” to “a resume’ builder.” Students see the world in many different ways Thomas O’Brien (1996). The various views were described in the interviews that took place during implementation of that Workbound program. Opportunities that students pointed out in these interviews motivated students to pursue future career choices with every one of these students. These motivational values will affect them for the rest of their lives. The perceptions and eventual decisions these students made were based on the microcosm of the previous opportunities during the first seventeen to eighteen years of their lives. These formative years include the history from which students draw, to make decisions concerning the rest of their lives. That is not to say there isn’t a time later on in life for modifying and re-grouping; however, this will not come without cost.

In an attempt to see how students took advantage and followed through on opportunities, the researcher interviewed University Wisconsin-Stout’s Assistant Director of Admissions, Barbara Tuchel, who indicated that students take the path of least resistance to enter the University. If a parent had exerted enough pressure on the student to enter a particular career field and the student had no current plans, then students followed their parents’ suggestion. Tuchel thought that students should be thinking about career decisions in their senior year of high school. It should become apparent at that time that the student will have to do something. Tuchel stated that the environment plays a large part in a student’s career choice. Students traditionally stay at

home to either obtain education or start employment. Tuchel mentioned that marriage also played a large part in career decisions. She stated that the economics of marriage either solidified the commitment to go on to higher education or stopped career plans short, depending on the stability of the marriage (B.J.Tuchel, personal communication, June 18, 2002). Examples such as these are opportunities that can play a large determining factor in student's career choice.

1.2 Problem Statements

As a final year students, it is necessary for the students of UTeM to start thinking on their career planning as the day of graduation are just around the corner. Unfortunately, there is no clear process that students at Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM) have used to make decisions on their career choices selection. Therefore, students at UTeM should have the opportunity to explore all of the choices available in order to make a logical and well educated plan when choosing on their career selection, as the career world will be their next path of journey for a very long time and it also will become the starting point for the biggest planning events in their life.

1.3 Research Question

The questions of the research were the following:

1. Does the factor of environment, opportunity and perception of personality influence students in their career choices?
2. What the most factor influence students in their career choice?
3. What are the other factors that influence students in their career choice?

1.4 Research Objectives

The objective to be achieves from/at the end of the research are:-

1. To identify whether the factor of environment, opportunity and perception of personality influence students in their career choices.
2. To analyze the most factor that influence students in their career choice.
3. To determine the other factors that influence students in their career choice.

1.5 Scope/Limitations of study

Limitations of the study included the following:

While the size of the study was not large enough to conclude reasonable assumption, the sample data was obtained from only the final year students of UTeM for the Faculty of Technology Management and Technopreneurship, which that includes the student from three different courses, Bachelor of Technology Management Innovation Technology (BTMI), Bachelor of Technology Management (High Tech) Marketing (BTMM) and Bachelor of Technology Technopreneurship (BTEC) and this may not have been indicative of the larger population, like the other Faculty that was listed under UTeM. Validity of the survey has relied on the students' genuine and thoughtful response.

1.6 Significant of the study

The significant of the study was as follows:

1. Student can have plan for their career choices in their future rather than one of happenstance.
2. Institution like university, college or school can used the data and finding in order to create interest among students regarding of their career choices selection.
3. The data and finding can help in the improvement of the curriculum and syllabus of the courses offered especially at FPTT, UTeM.