

Predisposing Factors on Social Sciences Students Career Path Development in the University: A Case Study of Final Year Students

Nor Najmah Bte Ahmad^{1*}, Mohamad Ridhuan Mat Dangi²,
Wan Nurashikin Bte Mahmood³, Siti Hafizah Bte Rahmat Ali⁴

^{1,3,4}Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Pahang,
26400 Bandar Tun Razak Jengka, Pahang, Malaysia

najmah_ahmad@pahang.uitm.edu.my, wnurashikin@pahang.uitm.edu.my, hafizah4143@pahang.uitm.edu.my

²Faculty of Accountancy, Universiti Teknologi MARA Selangor
40450UiTM Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

ridhuan@salam.uitm.edu.my

*Corresponding Author

Abstract: This exploratory study was carried out to examine several factors that can influence the students in seeking their career once after they finished their studies. This study provides essential information regarding the issue of career seeking among students and to find the determinants that able to influence decision making made by the students for their career choices. This study able to provides an overview about the students' knowledge in their understanding of career prospects. This study uses simple random sampling in selecting the respondents and the targeted population is the final year of social science students. A total of 330 out of 400 questionnaires managed to be returned completely. The respondents for this study are the final year Social Sciences students of UiTM Pahang from various semesters and from a different Diploma programmes. The results from this study shows that personal factors, such as personal values and aspirations, personal career ambition, and the intellectual ability can influence the graduates in the selection of career. Meanwhile for the family and relations factors, the findings revealed that the lecturers in university are significantly impact their influences in the career choice, followed by the relatives or friends that is in the same field and parental wishes can influence the graduates for their career decision making. As for the role played by the university, it shows that student seminar or assignment followed by interesting lectures able to influence graduates in their future career plan. While the occupational factor indicates that, the passion to have a stable and secure future influences their career decision making in the future.

Keywords: Career, Graduates, Job, Labour

1. Introduction

An individual will go through various phases in their life. One of them is to make a decision to have jobs or work in order to earn a living. Durosaro and Adebanye (2012) stated that many societies seek to integrate the concept of work and career in their life. According to the Oxford Dictionary (2009) defined career as "the series of jobs that somebody has in a particular area of work". Additionally, Adamson et al. (1998, p. 251) as cited in Eovarosson and Oskarsson (2011, p. 121), explain career as "the sequence of work-related experiences one has over the course of one's working life-time". The concept of work has several definitions, but it refers to the same idea which is the purposeful activities (Morin, 2004). Morin (2004) also stated that, "work can be pleasant or unpleasant, and may or may not be associated with the money exchanges and does not necessarily have to be accomplished in the context of job." Meanwhile Durosaro and Adebanye (2012) postulated that work is renowned as a source of good activity that able to sustain the society and develop its future.

There are various reasons and different thought to choose the desired jobs for a career. Many people could think that jobs are an integral part in life since jobs can provide a source of money to fulfil the basic needs such as foods, clothes, accommodation, education, recreation and others (Avugla, 2011). Normally, people occupy a job as they feel it is their duty and responsibility given to them to get things done and receive the payment upon the rendered

services. Some peoples prefer the jobs that can offer them values that are not only in terms of salary, but also other things that satisfy their needs. For example, according to the State of Arizona Career Center (n.d), individuals would prefer the occupations that offer opportunities to express their unique type; rewards for doing what they like to do and what they good at doing; and also when they view the tasks and problems which is interested and challenging. Based on these factors, individuals have their own unique ability that differs from others, thus their unique characteristics and quality would likely determine their choices of desired careers.

No matter how it is described, either job, work or career are used interchangeably to represent the occupation, profession, or the daily tasks and activities of an individual when entering the job environment. In this study, it will use the term career since it provides the meaning of more than a job which is a lifetime journey of building and make a good use of the skills, knowledge and experiences (Career Readiness Partner Council, n.d). As for the university graduates, the expected outcome from their graduations is they will need to think and plan for their career path as a next step to start a new phase in their life which is entering the job environment. According to Tomlinson (2007) university graduates depict as an elite social and occupational group who will demonstrate their potential through careers as knowledge workers. Usually, job market nowadays demands a high quality graduates to meet the employment criteria. Generally, the skills that mostly used in current employment that commonly related to the graduates' jobs are spoken communication, basic computer literacy, problem-solving skills, ability to work in teams and written communication, along with other numeracy skills, management skills and research skills (Purcell et al. 2008). This is also found in Islam, Abdul Hamid and Abdul Manaf (n.d) stated that graduates should equip themselves not only the technical skills but more importantly the soft skills. Thus, graduates are supposed to possess as many skills as possible which can assist them to achieve success in life.

In the effort to enter the job environment, graduates need to aware about their potential and is able to manage their lives and careers effectively. Past research found that individual who manage and plan their career would likely have a strong sense of high purpose and achieve high level satisfaction due to the effort of striving and attaining personal goals. As such, Witko et al. (2005) found that career planning is important to the students and they require specific information regarding courses, post-secondary information and careers. Meanwhile Hooley et al. (2011) suggest that, the students can have a plan to set their goals, objectives and discover the opportunities based on their interest, temperament, values, skills, personality, talents, hopes and dreams.

According to Miller and Marvin (n.d), although there are no ultimate measures on the true benefit of career planning at the individual level, it can lead to the personal sense and emotional well-being that comes when we working in the field we love rather than working for a payment. This gives a notion that an individual will achieve more satisfaction in their job they prefer rather than randomly accepting any job blindly. Graduates should prepare themselves by enhancing the academic skills, employability skills and the technical skills for the career planning. According to Minor (n.d), the individual should know their potential and the desired life to choose. By knowing this factor, a person can envision the career decision based on the occupation, the expected income, working hours, travels, security, leisure time and how the occupation will associate with friends and families since the career decision will eventually impact the individual's lifestyle dramatically (Minor, n.d). On the other hand, Ozlen and Arnaut (2013) found that family and technological environments were found to be influential on students' career choices. Parents' perception of their children's interest, abilities and their specific expectations for their child's success can influence choices, beliefs, and career preference. This is because parents are an important influence for an individual's career decision making in terms of the advice and support role shown by them (Baines, 2009). For that reason, the action taken in career decision making should be done thoroughly with sufficient information and preparation take place from the start.

The decision in the career choices of graduates also are influenced by various factors

such as personal and cultural values, family background, career expectations and so forth (Agarwala, 2008). Meanwhile Singaravelu et al. (2005) studies the choices of careers among graduates have divided it into certainty of career and major choices and environmental factors. The level of career certainty means that the students have come with a well-defined objective when taking courses in the universities. While the environmental factors such as family, school counsellors, teacher, friends and government are among the factors that can influence graduates for their career seeking in the future.

On the other hand, Demagalhaes et al. (2011) assess the relative importance of the extrinsic, intrinsic and other employment factors that have influenced the choices of career by the graduates. Similarly, this study also will assess what are the factors that are likely to affect the final year students to select their career of choice for their future plan. We believed that graduates choice in selecting a preferred career is influenced by many factors. In the effort of choosing a job, one should have to take into account about the career planning and decide the career field that they want to enter. Each person must know the right career and all its required elements such as the qualification, education level, experiences and so forth. The engagement in career development before entering the career field can enhance the readiness and fostering the optimistic level in relation to the work. Therefore, this study seeks to find the factors that influence the graduates' career decision making which is part of the process involve in the career path development.

2. Literature Review

It is believed that the students intention for the choice of program in college or university influenced by their aim to choose for their desire jobs in the future. The study by Mohd Zahari et al. (2005) explores the factors that influence students' decisions to enter the hospitality program and subsequently pursue their career in the hospitality industry. Therefore, it can be said that the students' choice of careers in the future commencing from their selection of program studies in tertiary education. This situation could depict that students should know and expose their self-potential as a preparation for working environment initially from their beginning of the study and to opt for the suitable program that suit their interest. Some careers may relate to the personality or the quality possessed by an individual (Olamide and Olawaiye, 2013). In other words, the graduates should plan their future career at an early stage if they want to achieve success in their career. By understanding the true self-potential and the personality, it will help the graduates to make a wise decision and indirectly shaped their future career.

The graduates not only have to discover their self-potential, but it also imperative for them to enclose a knowledge and understanding about the desired jobs that become the choices. This is asserted by Amani (2013) in her research found that graduates intention to join careers were highly determined by their level of occupational knowledge about certain careers. The study also revealed there is a positive correlation between the occupational knowledge and the career choice intentions. This makes sense because the knowledge about occupation will be the fundamental information for the graduates to choose their career in the future. In addition, graduates also should gather other information such as the requirements, work conditions, salary, opportunity, limitations or any other relevant information that relates to the careers. By having the knowledge and information about career, it will put the graduates under optimum preparation and readiness to enter the job environment. This action can serve as an effective step, especially for the careers that is often related to the professional fields such as engineer, doctor, law practitioners and so forth. These sorts of careers not only requires an individual to prepare themselves in educational background, but also other needed skills and knowledge that becomes the underlying factor to show the quality of the graduates.

Some researchers use related psychological theories to study the individuals' behaviour and the factors that influence them. This can be seen by the study of Law (2010) and Mohd Zahari et al. (2005) use the theory of reasoned action developed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975)

to analyse the intention of students made up their decision to select a particular career. This theory provides a theoretical framework emphasize on two variables which is the attitudes and behaviour, and the subjective norm that could trigger the behavioural intention of an individual to perform it. The theory describes a person's behaviour is driven by the behavioural intention where the behavioural intention is function of two basic determinants, one personal in nature and the other reflecting social influence (Mohd Zahari et al. 2005). The study by Mohd Zahari et al. (2005) illustrate that graduates receive strong encouragement from parents, relatives, and friends who also implicate their influences in the decision making. Similarly Law (2010) stated that intrinsic factors and parental influence has a significant influence on the career decision making rather than financial reward offers by the career. Meanwhile the findings from Borchert (2002) suggest that students must know themselves and their personality as it also important for them to make a career decisions based on their self-confidence in a decision-making process. By knowing the personality and self-potential, it provides a glimpse on matching of job in line with the personality of the individual. This is because certain occupations are suitable for certain personality types. For example, the sales people tend to be the individual with the characteristic of out-going. According to Olamide and Olawaiye (2013), the graduates should have the personality of self-motivated, which will help them to investigate the career possibilities from early on in their lives, and not the procrastinating type that waits till they are required to decide.

A career decision making would also affected by the gender factors. In the study of Durosaro and Adebanke (2012) found that male and female students differ greatly in their career choice readiness. Their study implies that there is a gender stereotyping in the career choices which depict female students tend to choose the career that are more feminist in nature while the male are opting for a career that masculine in nature. However, another study about gender perspective in career choice was performed by Eovarosson and Oskarsson (2011) revealed that there is no gender difference when the respondents choose the first job after graduation. Nevertheless, Eovarosson and Oskarsson (2011) in their study found that the most important factors that influence the career selection after graduation were the possibility of remaining in the same municipality (family related issues); solid company/establishment to work for; the career choice provides useful practical experience, and the job offers interesting work in the graduates' specialist field.

Past literatures also stated that parents and relatives can become the main factor that influences an individual for their career decision making. This is because family members are the closest person for an individual thus any opinion and judgement will likely affect the decision because there is high trustworthy is placed on this relationships. The study by Agarwala (2008) found that the most significant influence of the Indian students in career decision making is the father. Parents' perception of their children's interest, abilities and their specific expectations for their child's success can influence choices, beliefs, and career preference. This is because parents are an important influence for an individual's career decision making in terms of the advice and support role shown by them (Baines, 2009). This is supported by Taylor et al. (2004) who assert without parental approval and support, students and young adults are often reluctant to pursue or explore diverse career possibilities.

Other important factor that can influence one's decision making for the career selection is their motivation that leads them to take the choices. The study by Haase (2011) explores on this issue and conduct a study to the students of German Universities. Her study revealed that the motives can be grouped into three main components which is 'Status orientation', 'Self-realisation' and 'Self-determination'. According to Haase (2011), the status orientation associates with the students who strive for an employment with a large company directly after graduation, while the self-determination related to the students who prone to striving for being one's own boss, for example, establish a business or continue the family's business and become the boss. Whilst the self-realisation primarily impacted by the desire to realise business or product ideas. From this study, Haase (2011) concluded that varieties of reasons for the students' career choice seem to follow certain taxonomy that contributes to the development of

those three main components.

The atmosphere where the graduates took courses of study is likely affecting their decision in career selection. According to Hooley et al. (2011), school and university are not the only influence for graduate's career choice, but it is certain that this academic organization do exert influence on graduates approach to choose their desired career. Graduate able to get preliminary information and have facade overview regarding the career and understand the world of work from the school or university. The report from Hurley and Thorp (2002), found that teachers in school give the most influential factor in career decision making followed by counsellors. Witko et al. (2005) found that career planning is important for an individual and it should be embarked as early as in the school phase. Based on their study, the students perceive specific information regarding courses, post-secondary information and careers would be helpful and they also desired for career counselling and other work experience regarding for the career exposure process. The school or university has the greatest function to help the students polish up their interest in certain careers that they might want to apply.

3. Methodology

In this study, several factors were taken into consideration to be used as items that can influence the student's judgment for choosing the desired future career. It is important to examine the factors that can influence their choices since of the university students did not have any experience in the working field and they only rely for some limited information about certain careers. In this study, the factors that were underlined by the researchers include the family and relatives, personal factors, factors within the university and occupational factors. This study uses simple random sampling in selecting the respondents. The questionnaires used for this study comprises of Section A until Section I. Section A intend to examine the demographic factors of the respondents consist of the questions such as gender, semester, programme of study, expected occupational sector and the expected salary for the future jobs. The section B onwards are designed based on a five point Likert-Scale ranging from 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree where the respondents can tick the scale based on their experiences with the items provided in each Section. The items in Section B will identify the personal factors that influencing career preference, while Section C will identify whether the role of the family and relation have influences on career preference to graduates. Then, Section D was designed to analyse the factors within the university, classes or laboratory and its influences on the career choice. On the other hand, the questions in Section E will examine whether occupational factors can influence the career preferences among graduates.

Before the questionnaires were distributed, a pilot study was conducted towards 20 respondents specifically those who are in final year studies. This is to ensure the reliability and validity of the questionnaire since it was designed with referring the study of Avugla (2011) and Ghuangpeng (2011). The populations used in this study were selected based on the calculation of 15% of the total population. From this point, the available respondents to be used are 385 out of 2,564 total respondents. However, for this study 400 questionnaires were distributed in order to avoid any irregularities such as to reduce the rate of respondents not returning the complete questionnaires and too many missing items which left blank without data. A total of 330 questionnaires managed to be obtained totally. The respondents for this study are the final year Social Sciences students of UiTM Pahang from various semesters and from a different Diploma programmes such as Diploma in Accountancy, Diploma in Business Studies, Diploma in Banking, and the Diploma in Office Management. The selection of final year students as the respondents in this research is because they are more likely to think about career in mind as they will complete their study soon. Therefore, the selection for this group of students would be in a suitable position to respond appropriately to the questionnaires. The data are processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21. The overall analyses are mainly using the descriptive statistics analysis that emphasizes on the frequencies and a percentage of

the results. To test the goodness of the data and its internal consistency, reliability analysis also has been conducted by using the records from pilot study.

4. Analysis and Findings

4.1 Reliability Analysis

The reliability analysis are conducted to estimate the internal consistency, and to determine if all items use the same metric and whether any items have to be reverse-scale. The results of the reliability statistics have been analysed and presented in the table as shown below:

Table 1. The Reliability Statistic Results

Items	Reliability Statistic	
	Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
Personal Factors	0.896	9
Family and Relations Factors	0.879	6
University, Classes and Laboratory Factors	0.871	5
Occupational Factors	0.891	9

Based on the Table 1 above, the result for the reliability statistic analysis shows good indicators when the Cronbach's Alpha (α) is closer to 1 or equal to 1 which indicated that the questionnaire given to the respondents (N of Items) are reliable in terms of internal consistency and it is considered as valid and reliable to measure all the items used in this research as the aspect that influence the graduates career choice. Nunnally (1978) wrote that, "what a satisfactory level of reliability is depends on how a measure is being used. In the early stages of research . . . one saves time and energy by working with instruments that have only modest reliability, for which purpose reliabilities of .70 or higher will suffice. . . . In contrast to the standards in basic research, in many applied settings a reliability of .80 is not nearly high enough. ". Thus, the results of Cronbach's Alpha (α) or as known as Coefficient Alpha (α) for this study are 0.896, 0.879, 0.871 and 0.891 represents as good indicator for the reliability of the instrument used by the researcher. In other words, the Coefficient Alpha (α) shown in the table above suggests that the scale scores are reasonably reliable for respondent like those in the study.

4.2 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 2. Respondents' Demographic Profile

Demographic Factors		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	93	28.2
	Female	237	71.8
	Total	330	100
Part	Part 5	135	40.9
	Part 6	158	47.8
	Others	37	11.2
	Total	330	100
Programme of Study	Diploma in Accountancy	76	23.0
	Diploma in Business Study	121	36.7
	Diploma in Banking	72	21.8
	Diploma in Office Management	61	18.5

	Total	330	100
	Government Sector	165	50.0
	Private Sector	103	31.2
	Statutory Bodies	5	1.5
Expected Occupation Sector	Self Employed	56	17.0
	Others	1	0.3
	Total	330	100
	RM 0 – RM 1000	1	0.3
	RM 1001 – RM 2000	34	10.3
	RM 2001 – RM 3000	136	41.2
Expected Salary	RM 3001 – RM 4000	69	20.9
	RM 4001 – RM 5000	32	9.7
	Above RM 5000	58	17.6
	Total	330	100

The data in Table 2 above describes the demographic profile of the respondents comprises of 330 of the total respondents managed to complete and return the questionnaires. In the gender profile, the female respondents are outnumber the male respondents in this sample shown by 237 (71.8%) of female respondents and 92 (27.9%) are male respondents. The respondents of this study are selected from the final year students which is ranging from part 5, part 6 and others that represented by the total of 135 (40.9%) and 158 (47.8%) and 37 (11.2%) respectively. The students that categorized as others were the one who are unable to finish their graduation on time and these students are averagely above part 6 students. In this study, those above part 6 students stated that there are from the part 7 or part 8 students denote that they are extending the semester. Some of the reasons for them not able to finish the graduation on time are because of repeating the prerequisite subject, having personal or health problems and so forth. The sample for this study recorded the students from the Diploma of Business Study as the majority with the total of 121 respondents or 36.7% followed by Diploma in Accountancy by 76 respondents (23.0%). The respondents from Diploma in Banking are 72 or 21.8% while the respondents from Diploma in Office Management represented by 61 students or 18.5%.

In this research, the respondents also were asked for their expected occupation sector that they are interested to apply the jobs after the graduation. It is found that half of the total respondents stated they are interested to work in the government or the public sector as represented by 165 respondents or 50%. For the private sector, it is represented by 103 (31.2%) of the total respondents. On the other hand, 56 (17.0%) of respondents are interested to be self-employed or work on their own. Meanwhile, there is 5 (1.5%) respondents stated their interest to work with the statutory bodies and only 1 (0.3%) respondents stated others as the expected occupation sector. This study also attempts to know the expected salary for the job field that they choose once entering the job market. It was found that majority respondents which are 136 (41.2%) stated the amount ranging from RM 2001 until RM 3000 as their expected income. Meanwhile 69 or 20.9% respondents stated the amount RM 3001 – RM 4000 as their expected salary followed by 58 (17.6%) of respondents stated the expected salary above RM 5000. There are 34 (10.3%) respondents stated RM 1001 – RM 2000, while 32 (9.7%) stated the range of RM 4001 – RM 5000 as the expected salary. However there is also one respondent stated the expected salary would range from RM 0 – RM 1000. This result indicates that most of respondents have different expectations for the occupational sector and the range of expected salary for their future jobs.

4.3 Factors Influencing Career Preferences

The following section of the questionnaire used in this study aims to identify the factors that can influence the final year students in career decision making. As mentioned in the research methodology, this intention was carried out by developing the questionnaire in Section B until Section E. Among the factors that were heightened in this study are personal factors;

family and relations; factors within the university, classes or laboratory; and the occupational factors.

4.3.1 Personal Factors

Table 3. Personal factors that possibly can influence graduates in the career selection.

Items	Frequency Values in Percentage					Mean
	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	
1) The chance to be original and creative influences my choice.	0.0	0.3	20.0	61.8	17.9	3.97
2) My intellectual ability will influence my choice.	0.0	0.3	10.6	68.2	20.9	4.10
3) My values and aspirations influence my choice.	0.0	0.6	12.4	62.1	24.8	4.11
4) The feeling of importance will influence my choice	0.3	0.3	15.5	57.0	27.0	4.10
5) Personal preferences will influence my choice.	0.0	0.6	13.0	62.7	23.6	4.09
6) Personal carer ambitious will influence my choice.	0.0	0.0	13.4	62.6	24.0	4.11
7) Desire to apply knowledge will influence my choice.	0.0	0.6	15.5	58.8	25.2	4.08
8) Desire to work in country will influence my choice.	0.0	1.8	15.5	56.7	26.1	4.07
9) Sense of personal fitness will influence my choice.	0.0	0.9	22.7	56.7	19.7	3.95

The results in Table 3 listed several possible personal factors that are believed can influence their decision for the future career selection. In average, all respondents give positive feedback to the personal factors that can influence the individual in career selection. This is depicted by predominance response shows high percentage towards agree and strongly agree to all of the statements given. It can be seen that majority respondents think that the feeling of importance influences their decision to choose the career of choice. This is represented by 27.0% respondents choose strongly agree for this statement. It is followed by their desire to work in the country as 26.1% respondents chose this statement. Other than that, the respondents also stated that they want to apply their knowledge in their career field which is represented by 25.2% responses.

On other hand, in average, more than half of the respondents represented by 56.7% and above chose agree to all of the statements. The highest percentage shows 68.2% respondents agree that the intellectual ability have the important factor to influence their choices followed by their personal preferences for the desired career that drive them to make that choice (62.7%). The personal career ambitions and the personal values and aspiration recorded the percentage of 62.6% and 62.1% respectively. The respondents also agree that the chance to show their originality and to expose their creativity can be the factor to influence them in career decision

making.

Apart from that, the analysis of mean value shows the significant value represented by the mean of above 4.00 for the item 2 until item 8. However, the item 1 represents the chance to be original and creative reported the mean of 3.97, while the least value of mean is 3.95 represents the sense of personal fitness. In this result, it shows that the values and aspirations of oneself, and personal career ambitions share the same mean value of 4.11. This is followed by the intellectual ability with the mean of 4.10. This result indicates similar idea by Tieger and Tieger (1992) who believe that the big three factors which is the abilities, interests and values are the main factor that can influence the career decision making and assure the job satisfaction in the future. Therefore, for this research, it can be observe that personal values and aspirations, personal career ambition, and the intellectual ability can influence the graduates in the selection of career.

4.3.2 Family, friends and Relations

Table 4. The family and relations that can influence graduates’ career choice

Items	Frequency Values in Percentage					Mean
	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	
1) My friends or fellow students influence my choice.	3.0	14.2	26.7	44.2	11.8	3.48
2) Lecturers also influence my choice.	1.2	7.3	24.8	52.7	13.9	3.71
3) Other relatives influence my choice.	3.3	10.0	27.0	47.3	12.4	3.55
4) Parental wishes influence my choice.	0.6	5.5	16.1	47.0	30.9	4.02
5) Relatives/friends in the same field influence my choice.	2.1	7.9	21.2	48.5	20.3	3.77
6) Present family income influence my choice.	0.9	4.9	17.9	43.8	32.5	4.02

The result for the influences by family, friends and relatives on graduates’ choice of career is presented in Table 4 above. It revealed that, majority respondents (52.7%) chose agree that lecturers in university also can influence them in the career decision making process. About 32.5% respondents strongly agree that current family income also can become the factor of influence. In descending order, the respondents agree that relative or friends in the same field able to influence them (48.5%), other relatives (47.3%), parental wishes (47.0%), present parental income (43.8%) and friends or fellow students (44.2%) have their role on influencing the graduates to make career decision making.

Although there are students who are stated disagree and strongly disagree for all these statements, but the total number are not significant. As such, the highest percentage only recorded 3.3% respondents strongly disagree that other relatives could influence their choice and 14.2% disagree that friends or fellow students able to influence them. Meanwhile, it is averagely about 20% and above shows the respondents are neutral that is neither stating they agree nor disagree. From the mean value, it recognize 4.02 as the highest value represented by parental wishes and present family income as the significant factor that influence the career preference among graduates. This is followed by relatives or friends in the same field (3.77);

influence by lecturers (3.71); other relatives (3.55) and influence by friends or fellow students (3.48).

4.3.3 Factors within University/Classes or Laboratory

Table 5. Factors within University/Classes or Laboratory that influence graduates' career choice

Items	Frequency Values in Percentage					Mean
	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	
1) Interesting lectures/seminar influence my choice.	0.6	3.3	21.8	54.2	20.0	3.90
2) Student seminar/ assignment influence my choice.	1.2	3.0	30.0	54.5	11.2	3.72
3) Laboratory practice sessions influence my choice.	1.2	5.5	33.0	47.9	12.4	3.65
4) Skills sessions influence my choice.	0.6	1.8	17.6	50.3	29.7	4.07
5) Successful examination influences my choice.	0.6	3.3	13.9	44.2	37.9	4.15

The respondents were also asked about the factors related to university, its classes or laboratory facilities whether it has influences on in the career decision making. From the Table 5, high percentage is shown by 54.5% respondents agree and 11.2% are strongly agreed that student seminar or assignment has the influence on career decision making. However, 30.0% respondents stated neutral, 3.0% disagree and 1.2% are strongly disagreed for this statement. This is followed by interesting lectures or seminar with 54.2% respondents agreed and 20.0% are strongly agreed, 21.8% are neutral, 3.3% disagree and 0.6% strongly disagree. The respondents also felt that the skills sessions also can influence career choice as represented by 50.3% of them stated agree while 29.7% are strongly agreed, 17.6% are neutral, 1.8% disagree and 0.6% are strongly disagree. For the laboratory practice session, it shows the responses of 47.9% respondents stated agree, 12.4% strongly agree, 33.0% neutral, 5.5% disagree and 1.2% are strongly disagree. The question also takes into account whether the successful achievement in examination can influence the career decision making. The results show that, only 44.2% respondents are agreed, 37.9% are strongly agreed, 13.9% neutral, 3.3% disagree, while only 0.6% respondents are strongly disagree with this statement. From the Mean value, successful examination provides the highest value as represented by 4.15, followed by the skills session (4.07), interesting lectures or seminars (3.90), student seminar or assignment (3.72), and the laboratory practice (3.65).

4.3.4 Occupational Factors

Table 6. Occupational factors that influence graduates' career decision making

Items	Frequency Values in Percentage					Mean
	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	
1) Good salary influences my choice.	0.0	0.6	7.0	42.7	49.7	4.42
2) An attractive working condition will influence my choice.	0.0	0.0	4.9	46.2	48.9	4.44
3) Having stable and secure future influences my choice.	0.0	0.0	4.2	43.3	52.4	4.48
4) Having an improved social status influence my choice.	0.0	0.0	12.4	46.7	40.9	4.28
5) Working hours influences my choice.	0.0	0.6	13.3	46.7	39.4	4.25
6) An opportunity for further education/training influences my choice.	0.0	0.6	12.1	43.6	43.6	4.30
7) Job is gender appropriate.	0.9	2.7	17.9	53.0	25.5	3.99
8) Good contacts in the workforce.	0.0	0.3	13.6	55.8	30.3	4.16
9) The nature of the job.	0.0	0.0	10.9	51.4	37.7	4.27

The questionnaires asked to the respondents also include the occupational factors which is believed can influence the graduates' in their career decision making process. Hence, Table 6 shows the results upon this question. It illustrates the highest Mean value is 4.48 which is the respondents felt that having stable and secure future will influence more on their career decision making process rather than the other listed occupational factors in the question. This result is demonstrated by 52.4% respondents stated strongly agree, 43.3% respondents agree and only 4.2% are neutral to this statement. The respondents also influenced by an attractive working condition that shows the Mean value of 4.44 resulted from 48.9% respondents are strongly agree, 46.2% agree and 4.9% are neutral. Another significant Mean value is 4.42 where the respondents view good salary as the factor that influences their choice in career decision making. It represented by 49.7% are strongly agree, 42.7% are agree, 7.0% neutral and only 0.6% disagree with this statement.

The results also demonstrate the respondents' interest to seek opportunity for further education/training as the factors to influence them in the career decision making process. This is represented by 43.6% respondents are strongly agree, 43.6% agree, 12.1% neutral while 0.6% stated disagree with this statement. The factor of having an improved social status has the Mean value of 4.28 represented by the 40.9% respondents is strongly agreed, 46.7% agree while 12.4% are neutral. Meanwhile the nature of job recorded a Mean value of 4.27 where the respondents stated 37.7% strongly agreed, 51.4% agreed, and 10.9% respondents are neutral. There are 39.4% respondents chose strongly agree, 46.7% agree, 13.3% neutral and 0.6% are disagreed to the working hours as one of the factors that influences career decision making, thus

makes the Mean value 4.25. Subsequently, the good contacts in the workforce shows a Mean value of 4.16 with the percentage of 30.3% respondents are strongly agree, 55.8% agree, 13.6% neutral and 0.3% disagree. The result show that, the gender appropriateness of certain job since it shows the lowest Mean value that is 3.99. This result represented by 25.5% respondents stated strongly agree, 53.0% strongly agree, 17.9% neutral, 2.7 disagree and 0.9 are strongly disagree.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study investigates the factors that drive graduates to make decision for their future career. Four primary factors were chosen that includes the personal factors; family and relations factors; the university, classes or laboratory factors; and also the occupational factors. Several key findings were able to be drawn out from this study. First, in terms of personal factors, it can be observe that personal values and aspirations, personal career ambition, and the intellectual ability can influence the graduates in the selection of career. Meanwhile for the family and relations factors, the findings revealed that the lecturers in university are significantly impact their influences in the career choice, followed by the relatives or friends that is in the same field and parental wishes can influence the graduates for their career decision making. As for the role played by the university, classes or laboratory factors during their learning process, it shows that student seminar or assignment followed by interesting lectures able to influence graduates in their future career plan. While the occupational factor indicates that, the passion to have a stable and secure future influences their career decision making in the future. On top of that, it is found that, some students are expecting the high rates of salary which is above RM5000, despite the fact that the first salary of fresh degree graduates might not within this rates. This might indicate the lack of knowledge about career information or the students itself might expecting high salary because of the frantic demand of economic survival in the future. Perhaps this can be the future studies to discuss this issue. In addition, a suitable working condition also among the factors that becomes the focus for the graduates in their career decision making.

This study also revealed that, parents are the most important individual for the career advices and often become the reference to the graduates when making a career decision. This is consistent with the findings of Simmons (2008) who noted that parents plays important role in supporting the college education and are most helpful, not by mandating particular academic or career choices, but by helping to guide them in the decision-making process. Another key findings derived from this study is the action of graduates which have a tendency to find a good career opportunity as the most important factors that become the priority in looking for a job. As referring from the results, it can be seen that any effort that is necessary to assist graduates for their career decision making must by endorsed that could involve cooperation from several parties.

As for the recommendations, since the findings indicates parents as the major role that can influence the graduates' decision making, parents should possess sufficient information and other coaching skills that is able to help their child to develop their own potential characters to choose the suitable jobs and not merely required their child to fulfil their wishes. Other than that, the university's role as the place to provide education can ensure that they able to provide guidance and nurturing the required knowledge, skills and abilities to prepare high competent graduates which can match the demand in the job market. The lack of education and guidance about the process of career planning and development become the highlighted issues that contribute to the uncertainty and difficulties for graduates to find suitable jobs. Therefore, a formal guidance must be developed in order to give a clear objectives and ideas to the graduates that enable them to feel confidence to participate in the career planning activities. Despite the usefulness provided in the findings, some limitations also occurred particularly because the data used in this study were from a single case, thus cannot be thought of broadly generalizable. More efforts are needed to expand the data set to include various populations from different field of study to obtain deep understanding.

By integrating the career planning and development education in the academic curricular activities might able to become an effective initiative to ensure that graduates are given with enough tools and resources to help them in career decision making. Further research would also be required in the future that could include other factors such as technological development, economic perspectives and so forth which can be included as other aspects that can influence graduates' decision making.

6. References

- Agarwala, T. (2008). Factors influencing career choice of management students in India. *Career Development International*, Vol. 13 No. 4, pp. 362-376.
- Amani, J., (2013). Social Influence and Occupational Knowledge as Predictors of Career Choice Intentions among Undergraduate Students in Tanzania. *International Journal of Learning and Development*, Vol. 3, No. 3.
- Avugla, D. K. G. (2011). Factors Influencing Career Choice Among the Senior High School Students in the South Tongu District of Volta Region, Ghana. Unpublished thesis, University of Education.
- Baines, J. (2009). What Are The Factors That Shape The Career Decisions Of LSE Students? *MA Career Education Information and Guidance in Higher Education*.
- Borchert, M. (2002). Career Choice Factors of High School Students. Unpublished Research Paper, University of Wisconsin-Stout.
- Career Readiness Partner Council (n.d.). *Building Blocks for Change: What it Means to be Career Ready*.
- Demagalhaes, R., Wilde, H., & Fitzgerald, L. R. (2011). Factors Affecting Accounting Students' Employment Choices: A Comparison of Students' and Practitioners' Views. *Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice*, Vol. 11, No. 2.
- Durosaro, I., & Adebanke, M. N. (2012) Gender as a Factor in the Career Choice Readiness of Senior Secondary School Students in Ilorin Metropolis of Kwara State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol. 2 No. 14 [Special Issue - July 2012].
- Eovarovsson, I. G., & Oskarsson, G. K., (2011). The choice of Career after graduation: The case of business administration graduates from a small university.
- Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). *Belief, Attitude, Intention, and Behavior: An Introduction to Theory and Research*. Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA.
- Ghuangpeng, S. (2011). Factors Influencing Career Decision-Making: A Comparative Study of Thai and Australian Tourism and Hospitality Students, Unpublished doctoral thesis, The School of International Business Faculty of Business and Law Victoria University, Melbourne.
- Haase, H. (2011). Career Choice Motivations of University Students. *International Journal of Business Administration*, Vol. 2, No. 1.
- Hurley, D., & Thorp, J. (2002). Decisions Without Direction: Career Guidance and Decision-Making Among American Youth. *Ferris State University Career Institute for Education and Workforce Development*.
- Hooley, T., Marriott J., & Sampson, Jr J. P. (2011). Fostering college and career readiness: How career development activities in schools impact on graduation rates and students' life success. International Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby.
- Law, P. K. (2010). A theory of reasoned action model of accounting students' career choice in public accounting practices in the post-Enron. *Journal of Applied Accounting Research*, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 58-73.
- Islam, R., Abdul Hamid, M. S., & Abd. Manaf, N. H. (n.d.). Enhancing Graduates' Employability Skills: A Malaysian Case, Unpublished thesis.

- Miller, A., & Marvin R. C. (n.d.). The Importance of Career Planning. Montana Department of Labor and Industry Research and Analysis Bureau.
- Minor, F. J. (n.d.). *Planning your Future Career and Education*. FOCUS: Career and Education Planning Solutions.
- Mohd Zahari, M. S., Sharif, M. S., & Tuan Ismail, T. A. (2005). A Study of Factors Moderating Students Selection of Hospitality Programme and Subsequent Career Intentions, TEAM. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, Vol. 2, No. 1.
- Morin, E. M. (2004). The meaning of work in modern times, Conference. 10th World Congress on Human Resources Management, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, August, 20th.
- Nunnally, J. C. (1978). *Psychometric theory*. New York: McGraw-Hill Inc.
- Olamide, S. O., & Olawaiye S. O. (2013). The Factors Determining the Choice of Career Among Secondary School Students. *The International Journal Of Engineering And Science (IJES)*, Vol. 2, No. 6, pp. 33-44.
- Oxford English-English-Malay Dictionary Second Edition (2009). Oxford University Press.
- Ozlen, M. K., & Arnaut, D. (2013). Career Decisions of University Students. *Journal of Community Positive Practices*, Vol. XIII No. 2, pp. 92-107.
- Purcell, K., Atfield, G., Ball C., & Elias P. (2008). An Investigation of the Factors Affecting the Post-University Employment of Chemical Science Graduates in the UK. *Report to the Royal Society of Chemistry funded by Chemistry for our Future*.
- Singaravelu, H. D., White, L. J., & Bringaze, T. B. (2005). Factors Influencing International Students' Career Choice: A Comparative Study. *Journal of Career Development*, Vol. 32 No. 1, pp. 46-59.
- Simmons, A. N. (2008). A Reliable Sounding Board: Parent Involvement in Students' Academic and Career Decision Making. *NACADA journal* (0271-9517) Vol. 28, No.2, pp. 33.
- State of Arizona Career Center (n.d.). Personality Types and Career Choices.
- Taylor, J., Harris M. B., & Taylor S. (2004). Parents Have Their Say...About Their College-Age Children's Career Decisions. *National Association of Colleges and Employers, Winter 2004 Journal*.
- Tieger, P. D., & Tieger, B. B. (1992). Personality Typing: A First Step to a Satisfying Career. *Journal of Career Planning and Placement*. Retrieved from http://www.indiana.edu/~jobtalk/HRMWebsite/hrm/articles/develop/pers_typ.pdf.
- Tomlinson, M., (2007). Graduate Employability and Student Attitudes and Orientations to the Labour Market. *Journal of Education and Work*, Vol. 20, Issue 4.
- Witko, K., Bernes, K. B., Magnusson, K., & Bardick, A. D. (2005). Senior high school career planning: what students want. *Journal of Educational Enquiry*, Vol. 6, No. 1., pp. 34-49.