

## FACTORS INFLUENCING CAREER CHOICE OF FINAL YEAR BUSINESS STUDENTS IN POLYTECHNIC UNFKU OMAR

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### **Abstract**

*The transition into the working world is a major life change for many college or university students, during which they face the complex demands of economy, a challenging, highly competitive job market, as well as increasingly diverse population and work force. In light of the changing nature of work, it is important to understand the career choice and exploration and how they relate to the multidimensional conceptualization of careers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This paper analysed the influences of various factors on the career choice of final year business students in Polytechnic Ungku Omar (PUO), Ipoh, Perak. This paper also examined the importance of family/individual and non-family/external influence, career goal and success and role of values in making career choices among these students. From the data analysis, it appeared that family and non-family factors do have significant influence on the students' decisions of their choice of career. Another factor which was also an important determinant that influenced career "choice" of students was the cultural dimension of individualism-collectivism. However data analysis conducted revealed that students regarded both individualism and collectivism as equally important factors in determining their career choices.*

**Keyword:** *career, career choice, relationship, culture, individualism-collectivism, career exploration, career transition*

### **Introduction**

An increasing number of students have chosen to pursue their higher education in professional programs such as business, engineering and law. Students receiving their degree in these specializations are thought to have an advantage in obtaining jobs, and obtaining jobs that allow opportunities for career advancement and substantial levels of pay (Baruch et al., 2005; Kim et al., 2002). Considering the huge number of graduates entering the job market, searching for the right career may not be as easy as it used to be. As thousands of graduates are entering the Malaysian job market each year, it is not surprising that the unemployment rate is increasing each year.

Currently, there are 37 polytechnics nationwide and the total enrolment of full-time students as at January 2010 is about 89,000 with PUO alone has an annual enrolment of 7500 students. The number of enrolment is expected to reach 119,000 by the year 2012 with a total of 60 polytechnics in operation. This is not taking into account public, private IPTAs as well as graduates from foreign universities.

In addition, the Strategic Plan of PUO (2010-2015) outlined one of the objectives to be achieved in terms of employability of graduates is to ensure by 2015, 90% of graduates will be employed after 6 months of graduating from PUO. Hence, the ability to make the right decision and matching it with desired career choice is crucial.

With the volatile economic structure and stiff competition in the job market, it is imperative that graduates make the right career choice to be more marketable to the prospective employers.

The objective of this study is to explore the influence of a range of factors on the career choice of final year business students in Polytechnic of Ungku Omar, Ipoh (PUO). The research also aims to explore the importance of family/ individual and non-family/ external influences, career goals and success as well as role of values in making career choice among these students.

## Literature Review

“Career choice” involves choosing one occupation over another. Hence, in order for “career choice” to take place, two conditions are necessary:

- (1) Availability of alternative career option; and
- (2) An individual/ personal preference between these career option (Özbilgin *et al.*,2005).

The numbers of career options/alternatives available to an individual at any given point in time are influenced by external factors (labor market and state of the economy), as well as individual factors (education, family background, and attitudes). Career choice, therefore, is not uninhibited. Rather, career choices are often constrained by socio cultural factors (Swanson & Gore, 2000), individual factors, personal and cultural values, significant relationships, and structural factors such as barriers faced by women in certain career such as management. Most career choices research has focused on predicting career choice behaviors based on personality or demographic variables (Özbilgin *et al.*,2005). So far, studies attempting to identify career choice influencing factors have largely focused on individuals’ aptitudes, interests, and opportunities.

The word “career” carries different interpretations. Some individuals would not perceive themselves as having a career, but merely a job, whilst others talk regularly about their career and career aspirations. Taking definitions such as “a career is a succession of related jobs, arranged in a hierarchy of prestige, through which persons move in an ordered, predictable sequence” (Wlensky, 1960) would support those who believe that they do not have a career but merely a job, as such a definition implies that a career only includes work or employment that is linked to opportunities, progression and achievements. Such definitions reflect a traditional perspective on careers. Others however, are less traditional. Arthur *et al.* (1995) offer the definition that a career is “the evolving sequence of a person’s work experiences over time”. They acknowledge that two themes are embedded within this definition. First is the central theme of work and all that work can mean in relation to the way we see and experience other people, organizations and society? Second is the theme of time, along which a career moves.

Arnold (1997) takes this wider interpretation of the concept further by building in the personal aspect of the term and refers to a career as “the sequence of employment-related positions, roles, activities and experience encountered by a person”. He treats the concept as a

possession of a person and not simply an occupation and therefore considers it to possess a subjective element in that “it is partly the product of our own ways of viewing the world” (Arnold, 1997).

### Developmental models of careers

Miller and Form (1951) were among the first to formulate a developmental model of careers, viewing them as a series of social adjustments that culture imposes on the worker. According to Miller and Form these social adjustment fall into a lifework pattern of five periods, namely the preparatory work period, the initial period, the trial period, the stable work period, and finally the retirement period (Dalton, 1995, 90)

Schein (1978) examined the intersection between individual needs and organizational demands by studying the socialization process and the formation of the psychological contract. Based on a longitudinal study of 44 MBA graduates, Schein found significant consistency in the reasons individuals gave for making career related decision. He defined five career anchors illustrated in Figure 1, which Steward (1998) considers “are basically orientations towards work and occupations which influence the career choices and decisions of individuals. These orientations, or preferences are the result of three factors; attitudes and value systems, motives and needs, and talents and abilities”, Schein suggests that most people, within a few years of entering employment, soon establish a dominant career anchor, which will play a significant part in future career choices and decisions. It could be argued, therefore, that by encouraging undergraduates to consider and explore their personal career anchors during their studies and via their part-time employment experiences, universities could assist in the process of establishing a stable career pattern at an earlier stage of the students’ career development

Career Anchor	Career Anchor Description
1	<b>Managerial</b> – primarily concerned with managing others. Individuals holding this anchor wish to be generalists rather than specializing in a particular occupation or function.
2	<b>Technical</b> – in contrast to managerial, this anchor values expertise in specialist or functional skills.
3	<b>Security/Stability</b> – a person with this career anchor usually makes a reliable employee. The concern is with a predictable work environment, therefore such people respond positively to organization-define career paths.
4	<b>Autonomy/Independence</b> – the major feature here is having control over work activities and determining one’s own pace and schedules. Individuals with this anchor are less likely to have ambitions about rising to the top.
5	<b>Creativity/Entrepreneurial</b> – the final anchor is to do with creating a product or service, or indeed an organisation. Individuals place a high value on autonomy and on being managerially competent and on exercising their special talents.

Source: Steward (1998 p74)

### Factors Influencing Career Choice

Previous studies have identified a number of varied factors that influences students’ career choice (Ginzberg, 1951; Super, 1957; O’Connor & Kinnane, 1961; Paolillo & Estes, 1982; Felton et al., 1994). The most widely used classification in career choice studies is the three-dimensional framework by Carpenter and Foster (1977) and Beyon et al., (1998).

The three factors are:

- (1)intrinsic (interest in the job, personally satisfying work);
- (2)extrinsic (availability of jobs, well paying occupations); and
- (3)interpersonal (influence of parents and significant others).

Some research evidence exists to show that sociocultural, economic, and political changes affect the career choices of young people. Bai (1998) found that the market economy changed the values of university students who put self-interest before societal interests, and rated money and power as the primary motivators in finding a job. The relative influence of various factor on the career choice has been found to vary across cultures (Özbilgin *et al.*, 2005). Most research on career choices of students has been conducted on occupational groups such as accountants and healthcare professionals (Carpenter & Strawser, 1970; Morrison, 2004). Barring a few studies (Simmering & Wilcox, 1995; Moy & Lee, 2002; Sturges *et al.*, 2003; Özbilgin *et al.*, 2005; Pines & Baruch, 2007), the career “choices” of polytechnic business students and the factors influencing this choice has yet to be addressed.

### **The role of relationships on career choice**

Relationships is an important element of human functioning, yet the interest in understanding how relationships and careers are intertwined has increased only in recent years (Blustein *et al.*, 2004; Schultheiss, 2003; Phillips *et al.*, 2001; Schulthesis *et al.*, 2001). Most research efforts in the area have merely focused on how relationships and networks are conducive to career mobility and advancement. The role of relationships in making career to exploring the types of relationships that matter, and why they are significant in making career choices.

The present study specifically aims to explore the relative importance and influence of different relationships (mother, father, relatives, colleagues, etc.) in making career choices among PUO final year business students.

### **Culture**

According to Peng *et al.*, (2000), there is no single definition of culture. Rather, researchers “highlight various aspects of culture, adopting invariably imperfect but workable assumptions about what culture is” (Peng *et al.*, 2000). One of the dominant traditions categorizes cultures according to their value systems. The best known figure in this tradition is Hofstede.

Hofstede (1991) defined culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of the group or category of people from another” (Hofstede, 1991). Cultures can be distinguished according to many criteria. Hofstede (1991) suggested four:

- (1) Individualism versus collectivism (the interest of the individual prevails over the interest of the group versus the interest of the group prevails over the interest of the individual);
- (2) Power distance (the degree of inequality among people which people in a country consider normal);
- (3) Masculinity versus femininity (assertiveness and competitiveness versus warmth and collaboration); and

- (4) Uncertainty avoidance (the degree to which people in a country prefer structured over unstructured situations.).

For the purpose of this study, aspects of gender differences in the choice of career will not be explored due to the low number of male students' enrolment in PUO business courses and participation in this study; also due to the research being carried out within Malaysia. Rather, this study will be focusing on the aspects of individualism-collectivism, and factors as well as relationships that influence the students' career choices.

### **Individualism-collectivism, and factors and relationships influencing career choice**

Cultural values are likely to have an impact on the factors and relationships that influence career related choices of students. Student have focused on the cultural dimension of individualism-collectivism (I/C) as an important determinant that influences career "choice" of students from countries that vary along the I/C dimension.

These studies have examined cultural variations in factors influencing career choice (Auyeung & Sands, 1997; Özbilgin *et al.*, 2005). The I/C dimension, first measured empirically by Hofstede (1980), describe how individuals related to others and to society, and represents the extent to which they are emotionally and cognitively attached to a[articular network of individuals. According to Hofstede's empirical index for the dimension, Western countries (the USA, the UK, Australia) cluster toward the individualist and while Asian nations (such as Japan, Taiwan and India) cluster toward the collectivist end. "Individualism" refers to the tendency of people to consider their own interests only, to view themselves as "independent" of organizations and to place a higher value on self-reliance and individual action. "Collectivism" refers to the inclination of people to view themselves "interdependent" and as part of a larger group and to protect the interests of group members. Therefore, preferences for social influences in making career choices may also differ in individualistic versus collectivistic cultures. Research examining the differential role of peers, colleagues, mentors, managers, etc., in career decision-making is limited. Related research suggests that there is a positive relationship between collectivism and family relatedness and individualism and peer relatedness (Benet-Martinez & Karakitapoglu-Aygun, 2003; Kwan *et al.*, 1197).

### **Career Exploration**

Career exploration is "the process of generating and assimilating career information relating to self and the world of work" (Atkinson & Murrell, 1988), and is a pivotal element in any career-related decision-making process (Jepsen & Dilly, 1974; Thoreson & Ewart, 1976). Individuals typically obtain career information through self-exploration of values, interests, skill strengths and weakness and environment exploration (Noe, 1996). Thus, it is important for individuals to recognize how their own personal values, wants, needs and interests could influence future career choices.

In the process of career exploration, very often the notion of (cultural) self-construal is neglected. "Construal" is defined as "the relationship between the self and others" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), and the influence of these relationships may be more important than the self, depending on the context of one's culture. For example, although an individual's career choice is a function of the individual's self-concept (Super *et al.*, 1963), the career decision is often

considered a family matter in collectivist cultures (Ma & Yeh, 2005; Rehfuss & Borges, 2006; Shea et al., 2007)

Markus and Kitayama (1991) further constructed the idea of independent and interdependent self-construal to refer to the independent view of self, and the view of the self with others. The independent-self is comprised of a unique set of internal attributes (e.g. traits, abilities, motives, values) and the individual behaves primarily as a consequence of these attributes. On the other hand, the interdependent-self takes into consideration the relevant other in the social context, and both the experience and expression of motives and emotions may be significantly shaped and governed by a consideration of others. Markus and Kitayama (1991) contended that the American cultures as well as some Western European cultures exemplify the independent-self, while the Asian, African and Latino cultures exemplify the interdependent-self. For example, Pohlmann and Hannover (2006) reported that the role of family members was more strongly associated with the interdependent-self rather than the independent-self. This notion also parallels that of the cultural distinction between individualism and collectivism (Yang et al., 2006).

The American culture of attending to the self, the freedom of choice, and the importance of asserting one's self is deeply rooted in individualism (Hofstede, 1983; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In contrast, those from a more collectivist culture are more likely to attend to the others, emphasize the importance of harmony, and as a result receive influence from other sources, such as family members and relatives, in their career decisions. Furthermore Özbilgin et al, (2005) also found that chance, luck, and faith played a role in career choice among Turkish respondents, suggesting that collectivist cultures may also place more emphasis on external circumstances.

Therefore, it is only logical to find a difference in cross-national career choice and development considering the predominant role of cultures in regulating the cognition and motivation of individuals (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Consistent with this view, it is expected that students from more individualistic societies, such as Americans, will place a greater emphasis on self-concepts, such as relying on oneself and assigning personal responsibility for the direction of their careers (Bright et al., 2005). This usually involves taking charge and setting personal goals (self-determination process), and having expectations when selecting management as a career choice (Bright et al., 2005; Downie et al., 2006; Flum & Blustein, 2000).

As Asian, African and Latino cultures exemplify the interdependent-self, it should come as no surprise that PUO business students may be more inclined to make career choices based on family's expectations and influences.

### **The Role of Identity and Capital-Driven Social Construction Processes in Shaping One's Career**

Previous research shows that developing and maintaining professional careers is a multi-dimensional consideration contingent not just on self-related issues such as one's education and training, motivation and career aspirations at micro-individual level, but at a more fundamental level of relational factors such as creating professional identities, transforming cultural, social, and symbolic capitals into economic capital in organizational setting, which are all situated in broader macro-environments including national and global milieu of work (Özbilgin et al., 2005; Khapova & Korotov, 2007). The multidimensionality can be best captured by applying the concept of capital into careers. The concept of "capital" put forward by Bourdieu (1986) is adopted as it is broader than the notion of capital in economics. It is used in a more

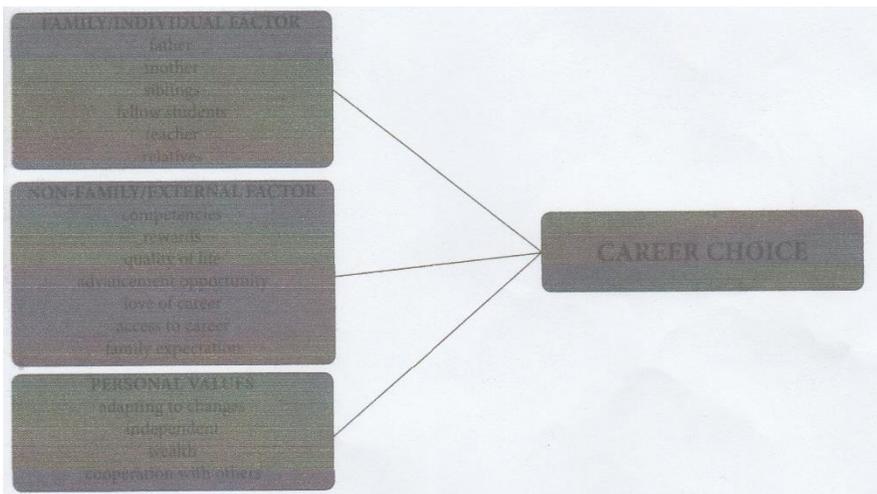
encompassing sense to represent "resource" that can assume monetary and non-monetary as well as tangible and intangible forms (Anheier et al.,1995). Bourdieu (1986) distinguishes between four types of capital, which individuals rely on in order to pursue their life projects:

- (1) economic capital;
- (2) cultural capital;
- (3) social capital and
- (4) symbolic capital

“Economic capital” refers to monetary income and other financial resources and assets. Existing in various forms, “cultural capital” includes long-standing dispositions and habitus acquired in the socialization process (Anheier et al., 1995). It involves formal educational qualifications and training. “Social capital” refers to the sum of the actual and potential resources that can be deployed through membership in social networks (Bourdieu, 1986). The last form of capital is the “symbolic capital”, which refers to the capacity to define and legitimize cultural, moral and ethical values, standards and styles (Bourdieu, 1986; Anheier et al., 1995). Bourdieu (1998) stresses symbolic capital as the amalgam (combination), and the situated value, of all other forms of capital that individuals draw on.

The three forms of capital (i.e. economic, cultural and social) become socially effective as resources, and their ownership is legitimized through the mediation of symbolic capital. Bourdieu's concept of social capital places the emphasis on conflicts and power function (i.e. social relations that increase the ability of an actor to advance her or his interests) (Siisiainen, 2000). Compared with Putnam’s (1993) conceptualization of social capital, which has three components including moral obligations and norms, social values, and social networks, the focus is on the social struggles of individuals in a field, from the Bourdieuan perspective. In other words, social capital becomes a resource in the social and economic struggles that are carried out in different social arenas or fields (Siisiainen, 2000). In developing their careers, human agents make choices and develop themselves in the pursuit of capital attainment in their fields. Webb et al., (2002) make the point that they “adjust their expectations with regard to the capital they are likely to attain in terms of the practical limitations imposed upon them by their place in the field their educational background, social connections, class position and so forth”.

**Conceptual Frame Work**



**Research Methodology**

In this research, participants consisted of 64 PUO Final Year Business students. Data were obtained from both secondary and primary data. The primary data were obtained through a survey instrument using self-administered questionnaires to gather data on the influence of a range of factors on the choice of career the importance of family and non-family influences and role of values in making career choices among these students. Secondary data were mainly derived from journal articles and any other related information.

## Results

The frequency tables 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 below shows the influence of family/individual, non-family/external and personal values factors on the choice of career of final year business students in PUO.

### 1. Descriptive Test

**Table 1.1 Tests for Descriptive Analysis (family/Individual Factors)**

Variables	Father	Mother	Siblings	Friends	Fellow Students	Teacher	Relatives
Mean	6.14	6.30	5.75	5.59	5.53	5.97	5.50
Median	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
Maximum	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Minimum	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Std. Deviation	.833	.830	1.098	.868	.796	.942	.854

Family/Individual factors have significant influence on the choice of career among final year business students in PUO; and among all the factors, mother has the greatest influenced with a mean of 6.30 compared to father at 6.14 while the lowest influence is relatives at 5.50, lower compared to friends at 5.59.

From the analysis, none of the individual can be said to be significantly not important from each other; each individual do has his/her role and importance on the student's decision in making their career choices.

**Table 1.2 Tests for Descriptive Analysis (Non-Family/External Factors)**

Var	Education/ skills/ competen	Financial benefits/ rewards	Quality of life	Promo/ advancement	Love of career	Success stories	Know of Job market	Easy Access to career	Lack of access	Family expectation
Mean	6.25	5.98	6.17	5.75	6.03	5.78	5.77	5.66	5.39	6.23
Median	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
Maximum	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Minimum	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Std. Deviation	.756	.807	.656	.891	.872	.971	.729	.895	.884	.771

Non-family/external factors also have significant influence on the choice of career among final year business students in PUO. The most significant influence is education, skills and competencies level at 6.25 and family expectation at 6.23; while the least significant influence is lack of access to other career options at 5.39.

**Table 1.3 Tests for Descriptive Analysis (Personal Value)**

Variables	Adapting To Changes	Independent	Wealth	Cooperation with others	Respect group decision
Mean	5.95	6.02	5.91	6.00	6.03
Median	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
Maximum	7	7	7	7	7
Minimum	4	4	4	4	4
Std. Deviation	.722	.826	.771	.797	.689

In personal values factor, respect for group decision has the most significant influence at 6.03 as well as being independent at 6.02 while wealth has the least significance at 5.91. In fact, being able to adapt to changes is considered more important with a mean of 5.95.

**2. Hypothesis and Regression Analysis**  
**2.1 Family/Individual Factors**

Table 2.1.1 ANOVA<sup>b</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	20.601	2	10.300	27.161	.000(a)
	Residual	23.133	61	.379		
	Total	43.734	63			

<sup>a</sup> Predictors: (Constant), siblings, mother

<sup>b</sup>Dependent Variable: father

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11.934	2	96	11.446	.000(a)
	Residual	31.800	61	.521		
	Total	43.734	63			

<sup>a</sup> Predictors: (Constant), relatives, teacher

<sup>b</sup>Dependent Variable: father

Table 2.1.1 show the regression model is statistically significant at a high level (F-ratio = 27.161; Probability level = 0.000). Table 2 show the regression model is statistically significant at a high level (F-ratio = 11.446; probability level = 0.000). Meaning, all four independent variables indicate strong relationship with the influence of father in the students’ choices of career.

Table 2.1.1 Coefficient Regression

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.547	.639		2.421	.018
	mother	.633	.098	..631	6.439	.000
	siblings	.105	.074	.139	1.419	.161

<sup>a</sup>Dependent Variable: father

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.011	.670		4.496	.000
	Teacher	.335	.114	.379	2.936	.005
	Relatives	.206	.126	.211	1.635	.107

<sup>a</sup>Dependent Variable: father

In Table 2.1.1, the column unstandardized coefficients reveals unstandardized coefficient for mother .633 and siblings .105. The t-value of constant is 2.421, mother 6.439 which is significant at, 0.000 level (<0.05). However t-value for siblings 1.419 is not that significant at the 0.151 level. In Table 2 the column unstandardized coefficients reveals unstandardized coefficient for teacher .379 and relatives .211. T-value for teacher is 2.936 which are significant at 0.005 level while relatives t-value is 1.535 is rejected as it is not significant at 0.107 level. Note that in both tables, the constant is highly significant.

Thus, it can be concluded that H1 is accepted that family factors do have significant influence on the students career choices as coefficient correlations are statistically high.

## 2.2 Non-Family/External Factors

Table 2.2.1 ANOVA<sup>b</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
1	Regression	13.957	2	6.979	19.312	.000(a)
	Residual	22.043	61	.361		
	Total	36.000	63			

<sup>a</sup> Predictors: (Constant), quality of life, financial benefit

<sup>b</sup>Dependent Variable: educational skill competence

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
1	Regression	10.229	2	3.410	12.120	.000(a)
	Residual	16.880	61	.281		
	Total	27.109	63			

<sup>a</sup> Predictors: (Constant), love of career, financial benefit, promotion opportunity

<sup>b</sup>Dependent Variable: quality of life

Table 22.1 show, the regression model is statistically significant at a high level (F-ratio = 19.312; probability level = 0.000). Table 2 show the regression model is statistically significant at a high level (F-ratio = LZJZA; probability level = 0.000). Meaning, love of career, financial benefit, promotion opportunity independent variables do predict the change in education, skill, competence and quality of life in influencing the students' choices of career.

Table 2.2.1 Coefficient Regression

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	1.759	.786		2.236
	Financial benefit	.459	.101	.490	4.550
	Quality of life	.283	1.24	.245	2.280

<sup>a</sup> Dependent Variable: edu\_skill\_competence

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	3.501	.643		5.447
	Financial benefit	.176	.088	.217	2.004
	Promotion opportunity	.411	.085	.559	4.841

<sup>a</sup>Dependent Variable: quality of life

In Table 1, the column unstandardized coefficients reveals unstandardized coefficient for financial benefit .459 and quality of life .283. The t-value of constant is 2.236, financial benefit 4.550 which is significant at 0.000 level (<0.05). T-value for quality of life 2.280 is also significant at 0.026 level. In Table 2 the column unstandardized coefficients reveals unstandardized coefficient for financial benefit .176, promotion opportunity .411 and love of career -.124. T-value for financial benefit is 2.004 which are significant at 0.05 level, promotion opportunity 4.841 significant at 0.000 level and love of career -1.483 which is not significant at 0.000 level. Note, however; in both tables, the constant is highly significant.

Thus, it can be concluded that H2 is accepted as coefficient correlations statistically are significant.

### 2.3 Personal Value

**Table 2.3.1 ANOVA<sup>b</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10.434	2	5.217	14.191	.000(a)
	Residual	22.425	61	.368		
	Total	32.859	63			

<sup>a</sup> Predictors: (Constant), respect group decisions, cooperate with others

<sup>b</sup>Dependent Variable: adaptable to change

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	15.201	2	7.600	20.849	.000(a)
	Residual	22.237	61	.365		
	Total	37.437	63			

<sup>a</sup> Predictors: (Constant), respect group decisions, cooperate with other

<sup>b</sup>Dependent Variable: wealthy

From Table 1 it appears that the regression model is statistically significant at a high level (F-ratio = 14.191; probability level = 0.000). Table 2 show the regression model is also statistically significant at a high level (F-ratio = 20.849; probability level = 0.000). Meaning the respect group decisions and cooperate with others independent variables do predict the change in adaptable to change and wealthy in influencing the students' choices of career.

**Table 2.3.1 Coefficient Regression**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.241	.709		3.176	.002
	Cooperate with others	2.66	.121	.293	2.202	.031
	Respect with decisions	.351	.139	.335	2.520	.014

<sup>a</sup> Dependent Variable: adaptable to change

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.525	.703		2.170	.034
	Cooperate with others	.405	.120	.419	3.375	.001
	Respect with decisions	.323	.139	.289	2.328	.023

<sup>a</sup>Dependent Variable: wealthy

In Table 1, the column unstandardized coefficients reveals unstandardized coefficient for cooperate with others .266 and respect group decisions .351. The t-value of constant is 2.170, cooperate with others 3.375 and respect group decisions 2.328 which are highly significant (<0.05). In Table 2 the column unstandardized coefficients reveals unstandardized coefficient for cooperate with others .405 and respect group decisions .323. T-value for cooperate with others is

3.375 which are significant at 0.03 level and respect group decisions 2.328 significant at 0.02 level. Note, however; in both tables, the constant is highly significant.

Using the beta coefficient for wealthy, for example, every time independent variable (cooperate with others and respect group decisions) increases by 1 unit, dependant variable (wealthy) will increase on average by 0.419 and 0.289 units for influence of personal values.

Thus, it can be concluded that H3 is rejected as coefficient correlations between the variables are strong and statistically significant. Meaning, collectivism is not necessarily a predominant value in influencing the students' career choices.

## Discussion

The main objectives of this study are to examine and analyze multiple factors influencing the choice of career of find year students pursuing business courses in PUO as well as how elements of values influence them in making career choices.

From the data analysis, it appears that family/individual and non-family/external factors do have significant influence on the students' decisions of their choice of career. This is consistent with the three-dimensional framework proposed by Carpenter and Foster (1977) and Beyon et al., (1998), the most widely used classification in career choice studies. Based on this framework, there are three factors influenced student's career choices namely:

- (1) Intrinsic (interest in the job, personally satisfying work);
- (2) Extrinsic (availability of jobs, well paying occupations); and
- (3) Interpersonal (influence of parents and significant others).

Another factor which is also an important determinant that influences career "choice" of students is the cultural dimension of individual-collectivism (I/C). As previously mentioned in the literature reviews, studies have discovered that cultural values do impact on the factors and relationships that influences career related choices of students.

According to Hofstede's empirical index for the dimension, Western countries (the USA, the UK, Australia) cluster toward the individualist end while Asian nations (such as Japan, Taiwan and India) cluster toward the collectivist end. In other words, Asians are more inclined towards collectivism values, they value personal relationships and values as well as putting group's interest over own interest. (Hofstede, 1980; Auyeung & Sands, 1997; Özbilgin et al., 2005).

Data analysis also revealed that the students appear to regard both individualism and collectivism as equally important factors in determining their career choices. As such, none of the factors can be considered to be insignificant as each factor do has its impact on the students decision making of career choices.

Nevertheless, the result may not be conclusive as from the total respondents, 60.9% of them are female students. Thus, the tendency to regard both individualism and collectivism as having equal importance in career choice decision-making and achieving career success. The result may be different if majority of the respondents were male students.

Finally, a more in-depth study is necessary to cover a wider population of student from diverse programs of study in order to determine whether the intrinsic, extrinsic as well as interpersonal factors mentioned do significantly influence the students' career choices or vice versa. In addition, the issue of gender differences and races in making career choices is worth exploring to determine, if any, significant similarities and differences male and female students as well as the various races actually correlated.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Our study shows that family, non-family and personal values have significant influence on the choice of career made by PUO business students. As such, the role-of counseling and career guidance in higher learning institutions is crucial to guide and assist students especially in their first years by conducting seminars, workshops, field trips, personality tests, career interviews as often as possible. Through these activities, students will be equipped with the knowledge, skill and abilities to make decisions and learn how to best utilize this information toward making the right decision on their future career choices.

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