

The Effect of Interest, Environment and Culture on Internship in Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM)

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Abstract: Internships program providing chances for students to apply the knowledge they have learned in classroom and executing it to the real world. This study found that interest, environment and culture are three factors that influenced students' option in choosing their preferred place to do their internship either in public sector, private or Non-Government Organization (NGO). The objective of this study is to identify the relationship between the interest, environment and culture that affecting Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) students in choosing their internship organization. Result of this study shows that there were relationship between the three factor and the UUM student internship choices.

Key words: Internship Choices • Interest • Environment • Culture

INTRODUCTION

Internship program provides real world experience for those who looking to explore or gain the relevant knowledge and skills required to choose their future career. Wafula and Korir [1] mentioned that the personal factor will influence the student career choice. The personal factors include their mental abilities, special abilities and also the interest. The result of their study showed that personal interest highly influenced the students to take a career in hospitality. Moreover, this study showed that the interest and lifestyle will influence student choose their hospitality career. The interest of students may be developed when they are still in the high school.

Environment is recognized as a factor that will influence UUM students to choose their internship. The environment factor is considering the influence of their parents, siblings, relatives, friends, senior students, advertisements, mass media and lectures. According to Wafula and Korir [1], study has showed the result that the environment will influence students in making their career choice. The result in their study shown that 50% of the respondents agreed that they were influenced by the people around them while 30% were disagree. In addition, the result also showed that there were higher percentage

of vote from respondents that agreed that advertisement influenced them in making their decision.

The culture differences of students will influence their way of thinking and perception towards their actions. This factor is contributing the student's decision in selecting their internship sector. According to Mimi [2], the culture will influence student make their career choice. The students may be influenced by their parent's own cultural heritage. In her study, she has compared the cultures influences between the Caucasian Americans and Asian American factoring the elements that is independence versus interdependence. The comparison between these two factors showed that culture have direct impact in influence students to break free from parental and independence or interdependence. The parents of Asian American do not want their children to be independent and not allowing them to make decisions on their own. However, Caucasian American parents are more open minded and allowed their children to make their own decision.

Problem Statements: The problem statement in this study is about the factor that influencing students in UUM in choosing whether the private sector, public sector or non-government organization as their internship place. Nowadays, many students confuse how to choose their

internship organization. They might just follow their family, relative or friends choices in performing their internship program. Moreover, students tend to be influenced by the people surrounding them, their personal interests and also their cultural heritage in choosing the sector [3-5] to join during their internship. The factors that will be discussed in this study are interest, environment and culture.

Everyone has their own interest that is definitely different from others [6-12]. This study is to find out the kind of conditions that student interested in that will influence them in choosing their internship organization. When assessing our interests, we need to think about what activities we will enjoy pursuing and ideas that we will enjoying discussing with others without tiring and the areas or thing we would like or want to learn more when we have available time [13-16].

Environment is the main factor that will directly affecting an individual actions except his genes. The environment becomes the stimulation factor of an individual that have direct impact form his conception to birth [17, 15, 19-22]. The environment can be defined as at home, school, maturation, personality and also their early experiences. The students' personality will definitely influenced by their parents' behavior and attitudes, expectations for their children, education level and how much attention that they have given to the children during their growing up processes. School also contributed an effect to the child's personality. Children are spending more time at school, so that their friends, senior and also teachers will influence their personality [23].

Everyone has their culture that inherit as legacy from their parents. Culture that they inherit from their parents will influence students in making their decision. Through this research we can see how the culture have influenced students in making their decision to choose the internship sector. The culture will influence a person decision making. Everybody has their very own culture. The culture differences can be seen in an individual expectations, norms and values that will have potential to influence their decision making as well as subsequently their own behavior [24-28].

Research Objectives: The objectives of this study are to identify the factor that influence UUM students choose their internship either at the private sector, public sector or non-government organization. Through the problem statement, there have some objectives for this research:

- To identify the relationship between the interest and UUM students choose their internship.
- To analyze the relationship between the environment and UUM students choose their internship.
- To determine the relationship between the culture and UUM students choose their internship.

Literature Review

Interest: According to Borchert [29], he mentioned that the personality is the major factor that will influence the students' career of choice. Individual personality characteristic involves ways of thinking, their feeling and also the way they behaves. The personality is a collection of impressions in the appearance of the student outlook, meanwhile the impressions is the believed to be determined by others, whether good or bad. Personality may embrace attitudes and opinion that affect the way a person deal and interact with people particular in this study that lead to the career that they will choose [15, 30-34].

Meanwhile, Charadine and Imey [35] report also discussed about the personal choice. Personal choice means that the individual will choose a career that interest them. Furthermore, interest is one of the factors that will influence a person in making decision in choosing their future career. Normally an individual will choose their career based on their interest without any external influences [36-39]. They may choose their career that will have good remuneration and benefits. Wages playing the biggest role in the option for selecting the career for almost everybody [28, 40-45]. This study shows that decision making is differs by gender. Rogers, Creed and Glendon [46] study stressed about the factors that influences the students in making decision on selecting their career. The study discussed about the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) that recognizes the important of the individual to have their own thinking that definitely different from others. This situation showed that the individual contextual has big impact in influencing their option in choosing their future career. Thus, this study mentioned that the personality traits, social support and the SCCT will have direct influence for student in making their career decision.

Environment: According to Charadine and Imey [35], there are few factors that will influence individual's career choices. The factors discussed in their study are parents and family, environment, friends and personal choices. The findings shows that parents and family have direct

influence for the student career choices. However, the conclusion of this study shows that gender also playing an important role for the student in selecting their future career. Findings shown that the environment factor will influence the male career choice, meanwhile the female career choice is influenced by their parent and family opinions. The environment aspect can be defined as market demand, parents, siblings and lecture influences. In this study, the findings shows that the most common elements in the environment for the male student in choosing their career is market demand. Parents, siblings, lectures and peers are other factors that influence choose their internship.

According to Edwards and Quinter [47], there are factors that will influence the student career choice. The study was using a descriptive survey design with a population of 332 students and the data collection using questionnaires and also interview schedules. Findings in this study shows that the individual will be influenced by various factors which includes where they are living, personal aptitudes, social contacts and educational accomplishment. Moreover, the findings also indicated that the intrinsic and extrinsic or both are also factors that will influence student in making their decision. The environment where they were brought up also be one of the factor that influencing their decision. Environment can be determined by the people surrounding them such as their parents, friends, seniors, lecturers and peers. These people will advise and give suggestion that will indirectly influencing their thinking and choices. In addition, this study which was done in Kisumu Municipality, Kenya, also examined the factors that influenced students in making decision on their career. The findings of this study showed that most of the students have agreed that environment is the factor that will have huge impact in influencing them when make choosing.

Culture: Referring to Simon Chak and Gloria Jing [48], they have discussed that the culture also is a factor that will influence the student in making their career decision. The family background mostly influenced by their normal culture. Each individual has their own culture that in-heritage by their parents. In this study, the researchers used American's and Asian's cultures as comparison. They found out that individual from Asia is easily influenced by their parents and tends to follow their opinions and suggestion in making career decision. However, the American's students will have more

opportunity in making decision to choose their career path based on their own interest.

Tongeren-Alers, *et al.* [49] study determined the impact of the gender and culture that influencing new medical students' choices in their work-life. They discussed of how demographics and the individual cultural became the factors that influence them in making their decision. This study comparing the demographics and cultures of two countries. This to identify how the different culture and population demographics will influence students in making their decision on selecting their future jobs and career. The findings of this study showed that gender have an impact in the difference of female and male students in making decision, although they are taking the same course.

This study also discussed about the culture that will influence student career choices. The comparison between the two countries showed that the culture will really have the effect for each individual career choice. The researchers found out and mentioned clearly that the female from Dutch are more responsible and also hardworking. Female from Dutch is influences by their mother and also teacher in making their decision. However, the female from Swedish is different compares with the Dutch ladies. Normally they will work on part time basis. This is because in Swedish culture, the mothers' or teachers' roles does not influence them in making a good decision.

Related Theories of the Study

Social Cognitive Career Theory: Social cognitive theory is about the bidirectional interactions between the three elements, there persons, environment and also behavior. The factor of personal also as the intrinsic include cognitive ability, affective and also physical attributes. However the environment and social circumstances are called extrinsic factors. The factor of behavior will influence by the intrinsic factor and also the extrinsic factors. Individuals will respond and regulate their own behavior and also will aware the environment that they face. Therefore, a person's action and assessment of the outcomes of those actions will influence a person's attitude and also the opinions and impact on the environment. According to Alexander [50] people will develop constantly and always changing in their context.

Moreover, Social Cognitive Career Theory also have discussed the interest that will influence career choice. The Social Cognitive Career Theory of interest which include three aspects of career development, three are

career-relevant interest, selection of career choice options and performance and persistence in pursuing the proposed career. According the Social Cognitive Career Theory, interest has been identified as an essential precursor making decision on the career [51-54]. In this study, interest, self-efficacy, outcome expectation and goals are the interrelated via various paths in the Social Cognitive Career Theory Model. Alexander [50]

Another, also discuss that the interest is one of the factors and also play an important role in the career choice. The interest will influence people in their goal setting and also their decision. On the other hand, self-efficacy also will influence the career choice because it not only contributes directly to goal formation but also to a greater extent contributes to the development of the interest [55]. Self-efficacy will affects the outcome of expectation and also contribute to the development of interest and to a limit extent directly to goal formation. Alexander [50].

Theory Development: According Stacy [56] study has discussed the Development Theory that focus on biology, psychology, sociology and also the cultural that influence career choice, adjustment, changes in career and withdrawal from careers. The development theories incorporate the supposition that the stages of personal and also the psychological development are the primary factor that influence people to make decision on their career.

In the Development Theory has discussed the two theories, there are Super's Life Span, Life Super and the Gottfredson's Theory of Circumscription and Compromise. The Life Span provides for a comprehensive view of the vocational development of an individual and the self-concept is an integral part of Super's Theory. Hence, individuals implement their self-concept into a career and it will provide more efficient and also means as self-expression. Moreover, the Gottfredson' Theory is focus that the career aspirations develop. This theory is describe same as the Super's Theory that describes how and why people attracted to areas of the vocational life. Stacy [56].

Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory: According Stacy [56] study also have discuss the Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory. This theory is about that focus on the learning process that leads to the beliefs such as self-efficacy beliefs and interests and how these impacts the career decision-making process. Moreover, this theory identified four factors that will influence people on their

career choices. The first factor is influence of genetic endowment and special abilities. These are ancestry characteristics such as gender, race, intelligence and coordination. These abilities may influence individual career decision.

The second factor is environmental conditions that lie outside the control of individual. The third factor is derived from individual learning experience and the last factor will influence individual decision making is task approach skills. Task approach skills are the skills that individual has developed as a result, there are learning experiences, genetic characteristics, special abilities and environmental influences.

Holland's Theory: Holland's Theory of Vocational Personalities in Work Environment is created by the John Holland. John Holland created this theory based on his work as a vocational counselor. In this theory, he more focus on the searching for compatibility between personality and also the environment. The theory has a three letter code that resemblance six vocational personality and interest types could be assessed. The first is distinct interest and values. The second is the premise that environment can be divided into six categories that are similar to describe people. The last is people seek out environment that complement the type [57].

Moreover, this theory also identifies into six types by Holland. There are realistic, investigate, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional. This six types describe the personality that they are in the environment for a vocation or career. Holland has also done a research find that satisfaction and stability occur for an individual when the personality matches the environment. Leung [57].

On the other hand, another concept in Holland's theory is the differentiation. It means that the high interest or low interest is clearly distinguishable in a person's interest profile. An interest will influence individual make their decision on their career. Another, Holland's theory also discusses that the increasing need for the vocational interest assessment in different type of culture. In addition, to studies on vocational interest structure, research from Holland's theory should examine other aspects propositions. For example, characteristics, work environment and the predictive validity of career interest [57].

Methodology: The data will be collected through distribution of the questionnaires to the respondents. The data then will be analyzed and interpreted through

Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), version 21.0 to determine the relationship between the factors. There are 400 students to be selected as respondents to answer the questionnaires given. This study is to identify the relationship between interest, environment and culture as the main factors versus the UUM students in choosing their internship by using the Pearson correlation. Furthermore, the result of the Multiple Regression shows that the interest is the most influence factor for UUM students in choosing their internship, the next factor is culture and lastly is the environment factor.

CONCLUSION

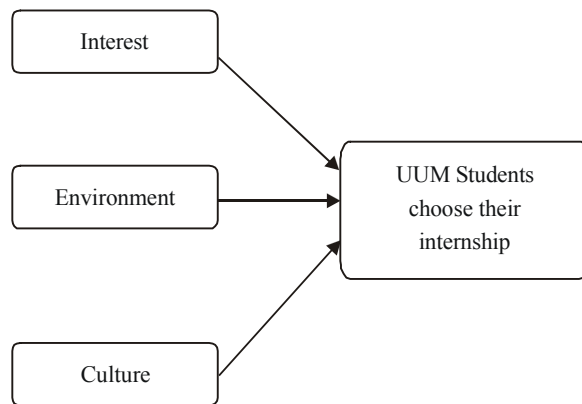


Diagram 1:

Diagram 1 shows that the relationship between the three factor and the UUM students choose their internship. The result shows that the three factor of interest, environment and culture have relationship with UUM students choose the internship. This means that the interest, environment and culture will influence the student internship choices. The interest, environment and culture are the independents variables and the UUM students choose their internship is the dependents variables.

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