A study on the relationship between motivation factors and career choice among undergraduate students in Malaysian Private Universities

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Abstract - Career choice is one of the most critical decisions for undergraduate students as their choices determine their future role in the society. This study examined motivation factors such as extrinsic, intrinsic, and interpersonal factors towards career choices of undergraduate students in Malaysian private universities. This study focused on undergraduate students because most of them will enter the workforce after graduation. A set of questionnaires was distributed to 206 undergraduate students. The collected data were analysed using Statistical Package Software for Social Sciences (SPSS, version 22.0). The findings indicated significant relationships among extrinsic and interpersonal factors that contributed to the respondents’ career choice. However, intrinsic motivation had no significant relationship with career choice. It was suggested that the management at the university should integrate programs for quality assurance to ensure graduates employability.

Keywords: Career Choice, Motivation, Intrinsic, Extrinsic, Interpersonal

1. Introduction

Career is defined as an individual’s occupation and progress through life. Career does not only increase the relationship with other people, but it can also increase the person’s socio-economic status. Thus, it is very important for an individual to choose his or her career carefully as it will impact the individual’s entire future and the role in the society (Olaosebikan & Ayoka, 2014). In addition, the right career choice will impact the individual’s professional life and achievement in the future (Ahmed et al., 2017). The main reason to select a career is not entirely due to monetary reward but also to fulfill the person’s satisfaction in life. Choosing a career is not an easy task because it needs careful planning. Career planning is a process where an individual chooses a career goal by looking at every single perspective. Career planning often begins with self-awareness and self-understanding of the selected career. The individual must be able to evaluate and recognise their interest, abilities, and skills. The individual will have job satisfaction when all these factors suit the person. In order to determine an individual’s suitable career, the
person has to conduct self-assessment. It is an ongoing process to ensure that the individuals are making the right decision.

One of the most important decision-making processes for adults is career selection (DeSimone et al., 2002). Career choices are usually constrained by sociocultural elements (Swanson & Gore, 2000), individual variables, personal and social qualities, connections centrality, and auxiliary components such as the challenges women face in certain professions like management. Career choice can suggest the selections of occupations and professional fields which best fit the individual needs of the students or recent graduates (Akosah et al., 2018; Gokuladas, V.K., 2010).

According to Carpenter and Foster (1977) and Beyon et al. (1998), a career choice depends on three factors which are extrinsic, intrinsic, and interpersonal factors. Extrinsic factors are not characterised by the nature of the tasks or of the occupational role (Caroline Willis, S., et al, 2009) and may include labour market conditions (Edvardsson Stiwne, E. 2005), employer brand, salaries and income, job security (Gokuladas, 2010, Aycan et Fikret-Pasa), job availability, good remuneration and/or prestige of the occupation/job (Carpenter et Foster, 1977; Beyon et al., 1998); whereas intrinsic factors focus on the job content and the opportunities for further training, career and professional development. Intrinsic factors include specific job-related factors such as authority and power that are related to the job (Bai, 1998; Aycan et Fikret-Pasa, 2003), working conditions, professional and career advancement opportunities (Aycan et Fikret-Pasa, 2003, Gokuladas 2010), creativity and professional challenges (Feton S et al, 1994), interest for a specific job, content of the work, satisfaction (Carpenter et Foster, 1977; Beyon et al., 1998), training and professional development opportunities (Gokuladas, V.K., 2010). Nevertheless, interpersonal factors may include the influence of parental, family, relatives and/or friends and/or professors (Carpenter et Foster, 1977; Beyon et al., 1998, Gokuladas, 2010), and early exposure to the profession (Caroline Willis, S., et al., 2009).

Today, the environment in higher education is more competitive to meet the challenges of workforce in the industry. Students face challenges during the transitions from university to the working life. Among the challenges are highly competitive job market, complex demand of economy, and the increase of unemployed workforce in the population. In addition, students invest much time, energy, and money to get a higher education degree. Students have to face a lot of obstacles while selecting a career (Ahmed, 2017; Olamide & Olawaiye, 2013). The students have very high expectation on their future career and employment status (Wood, 2004). Therefore, it is important for the students to plan so that their decisions in career choice can meet their expectations.

According to Feldman (2003) and Germenjis and DeBoeck (2003), students faced difficulties when selecting career and needed more time to select their first career path. When the students enter the labour market for the first time, they might not get the job that matches their goals and expectations. Several studies found that students usually faced the dilemma to make a career choice in their lives (Bandura, 2001). It is believed that the country has high unemployment and underemployment issues due to misfit graduates (Pascual, 2014). If the students made a wrong job selection, they would become disappointed and bored with the work; they could become unproductive at work. This situation could increase the number of unemployment in the country.
It is important to understand the factors that could influence career decision and investigate how they are related to careers in the twenty-first century. Despite the great effort given by families, government agencies, and non-governmental organisations, many young adults encounter difficulties in the transition from school to work life (Koech et al., 2016). Choosing a career is a major turning point in the students’ lives, and yet many students are unable to select their career (Gathigia, 2011). Some students insisted on studying courses that they lacked the basic foundation in academic and attitude preparation (Koech et al., 2016). They were also a situation where the students found out that they are not interested in the field of study after enrolling in the program. The wrong career selection could lead to fatigue in work and some negative emotion such as regret, discomfort, and complaints which equate to horrible life experience (Abdullah, 2009). Therefore, this study identified and examined the motivation factors for career choice among undergraduate students.

Graduates can prepare and plan for their future career by understanding their career choice. Development program or academic courses on skills could help the graduates in their career. Educators have to reach out to the students in order to understand the key role of certain influence factors such as personal, community, or social media. It might lead to the development of collaborative partnerships that could help change the perceptions of the students and provide alternatives to emerging and non-traditional career choices (Reed & Case, 2003). The access to career guidance is particularly important for students whose parents are unemployed or have limited formal education experience. These students tend to have low exposure to information on career. The challenge is to break this intergenerational trend (Makoni, 2010). Moreover, this study can help the government to enhance projects like 1Malaysia Training Scheme or Skim Latihan 1Malaysia (SL1M) for the fresh graduates to reduce the unemployment rate.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Concepts and Overview of the Literature in Career Choice Studies
Issues related to career choices are complex and widely studied by researchers in social sciences and humanistic as well as physiological counseling of either in sociological approaches or the context of social studies or clinical psychology (Safta, 2015). Career choices among teenagers can be influenced by the interaction between two systems of representation which are self-representation and representation of work environment. Koech et al. (2016) stated that career choice is a complex decision for undergraduate students since it could determine their future profession.

2.2. Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT)
Social cognitive career theory (SCCT) was derived from Bandura’s theory (self-efficacy theory) and introduced by Lent et al. (1994). Self-efficacy theory is the self-reflection of an individual on the abilities to perform a task while SCCT is the success of an individual in certain careers. SCCT proposed that individuals will choose their career based on the positive outcomes that they believed such as gainful employment, self-satisfaction, and admiration (Lent et al., 1994). SCCT has two levels of theoretical analyses which are cognitive variable and contextual variable. Cognitive variable such as goals and self-efficacy indicates that an individual has the power and authority for their career development, whereas contextual variable shows that barriers, ethnicity, and gender may influence the career interest that could influence the career decision (Chak & Liu, 2010). SCCT considered not only social factors, but also included cognitive elements and
contextual variables such as family environment and learning experiences. Thus, SCCT was included in this study due to the extensiveness and complexity of the theory.

2.3. Classification in Career Choice
The most widely used classification in career choice studies was the three-dimensional framework by Carpenter and Foster (1977) and Beyon et al. (1998). The three factors are as follows: (a) intrinsic (interest in the job, personally satisfying work); (b) extrinsic (availability of jobs, well-paying occupations); and (c) interpersonal (influence of parents and significant others). The career choice of an individual is influenced by several factors including family background, personal values, cultural values, and career expectation. According to Cavus (2015), people make their career decision to improve their standard of living. Several studies had determined the factors that could influence the career choice of students in different cultural contexts (Ozbilgin et al., 2005). Therefore, career choice is uncontrolled. Past studies found that most of the career choice behaviours were based on personality or demographic variables (Ozbilgin et al., 2005). In addition, career choice is often controlled by sociocultural factors (Swanson & Gore, 2000). It was found that the primary motivators for university students to find a job were self-interest before power, rated money, and societal interest (Bai, 1998). Another factor that could influence career choice among the students is relative (Ozbilgin et al. 2005).

The three-dimensional framework was widely used by past researchers to study career choice (Agarwala, 2008). The first motivation is intrinsic motivation that can be defined as doing an activity purely out of curiosity, the desire to contribute, and the desire for completing the task (Dev, 1997). The second motivation is extrinsic motivation which is defined as the desire that is influenced from the outside and separated from the behavior that it caused. Next, the third motivation is an interpersonal motivation that refers to an influence of parents and others (Galhena, 2001). It is important for students to choose their career before graduating. Therefore, this study aimed to identify the motivation factor that could influence the career choice of undergraduate students from the private universities in Malaysia. In addition, this study focused on three motivation factors which are intrinsic, extrinsic, and interpersonal motivation in influencing the career choice among the graduates.

2.4. Career Choice
Career can be defined as a set of experience and attitude which can be linked to work and it could affect the individual’s entire life (Humayon 2018; Abbasi & Sarwat, 2014), whereas choice is a process of selecting the most preferred one from the other options. It is important to explore the options in career before making the decision for future career success and satisfaction (Navin, 2009). Career choice can also be defined as the action taken throughout a lifetime and it is especially related to a person’s job. Business dictionary.com defined career as the profession or occupation that required someone to be trained and follow the other’s lifework. Besides that, career can be considered as life experiences including unpaid or paid work. Microsoft Encarta defined career as the progress of individuals in their selected profession during their life or the progress of general path. Besides that, career can be interpreted as succession of profession, occupations, positions, experiences, and roles of an individual’s practice throughout their professional life with their subjective interpretation that could result in different career paths (Sava, 2014).
According to Safta (2015), what rules the choice and how student’s behavior towards those choices, which it may boost or slow down the maturing process, the decision process depends on the number of factors. Furthermore, the youth are usually unsure and unable to decide on their career choice (Safta, 2015). According to Sue and Kirk (1972), Asian Americans had a high interest in physical sciences. Students’ career choice may vary depending on how the students were raised by their guardians and how vulnerable they are to societal changes (Franke, 2010).

Individuals play an important part in forming their first career choice and they are affected by environmental factors (Richardson, S., & Butler, G., 2012). The formation process is both continuous and discontinuous. The following are some of the important factors that may contribute to the career choice decision: efficient planning, attitude consistent selection, crystallization of the properties, the personality of the person, socioeconomic status (SES), defective trust, self-knowledge, self-efficacy, freedom of choice, career reputation, interests, gender, and personality type. Career process is considered a learned skill and problem-solving activity (Fayyadh, 2017; Afida Asma, 2015; Zunker, 2006).

Hewitt (2010) stated that the elements that could affect a career choice include extrinsic, intrinsic, or both. Hewitt further expressed that the decision on a career choice is affected by the family factor. However, there were students who opt for careers according to their desires or monetary values. Kaygin and Gulluce (2013) stated that a person’s career choice depended on many important situational and organisational factors. Some people made their career choice by looking at the income, job satisfaction, security, respect, and success. Price (2009) mentioned that recruitment components and retention strategies are important for understanding the career choices and career decisions.

2.5. Relationship between Intrinsic Motivation and Career Choice
According to Sue and Krik (1972), Asian Americans had a high interest in physical sciences and low interest in social sciences. Krik and Sue found that the domestic-oriented activity tends to be more interesting to Asian American women than the white counterpart. Furthermore, it is not surprising that most Asian Americans had a bigger ratio in engineering and physical field compared to the English Americans (Fouad, 2002). The students’ interest can affect their decision in career choice and make them feel satisfied in their work (CPP Inc., 2011). A survey found that 80% of the respondents believed that a career must offer enjoyment and fulfillment in life while 53% of them said that a career must play an important role to be determined as an individual. Furthermore, 78% of the respondents believed that the success in a career can be achieved when the students had passion on a daily basis. The following is the hypothesis in this study:

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between intrinsic motivation and career choice.

2.6. Relationship between Extrinsic Motivation and Career Choice
Nowadays, market economy has a strong influence on the career choice of the students. Over 300 students, high income, job appreciation by the community and skill and ability of individuals are three major factors of the decision to choose a career (Tang, Fouad, & Smith, 1999). Students tend to believe that external factors can influence their choice of career (Stebleton, 2007). The external factors include economic considerations. According to Koc (2008), the three best benchmarks for a job are job security, opportunity for advancement, and good insurance package. These benchmarks could be linked to the
economic crisis, political debating on health issues, and social security in the US election. Henderson, Hesketh, and Tuffin (1988) found that the choice of profession is affected by economic return such as high salary.

The reason that people could get a job is because of the economic benefits. The profession offered sufficient materials and financial rewards that can fulfil individuals’ social needs (Onijigin, 2009). According to Ogunsanwo (2000), economic consideration included financial package which can determine the social class, state of job happiness, future security, and good salary that can affect the individuals’ career choice. This study had hypothesised the following:

Hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between extrinsic motivation and career choice.

2.7. Relationship between Interpersonal Motivation on Career Choice
Tang, Fouad, and Smith (1999) found that family involvement was the key factor of career choice among Asian American students. In addition, the researcher found that most Asian Americans’ career choices were influenced by the family involvement rather than their interest. A study conducted by Koc (2008) found that 70% of graduating students in the United States had reviewed job offer with their parents. Bright, Pryor, Wilkenfield, and Earl (2005) conducted a study in the United Kingdom found that social context especially family had a bigger impact on the decisions related to career choice. Besides that, it was found that the support and sponsorship from parents were important factors that influence the career choice of the students. According to Taylor, Harris, and Taylor (2004), a child is inclined to follow the desire of the parents to help and please (who?). A study that was conducted in Kenya found that rural students tend to get help from parents compared to the city students. The parents played an important role in their career choice besides the influence from counsellor and peers. This study came up with the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: There is a significant relationship between interpersonal factors and career choice.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design
This study had chosen quantitative research design because it is believed that survey questionnaire could collect more data to fulfill the purpose of this study. The survey questionnaire can be used to study a group of people by collecting data from several people to represent the entire population. In other words, the findings will generalise the entire population by studying only a part of the population.

3.2 Population and Sampling
In this study, quantitative research approach was used to measure the relationship between intrinsic, extrinsic, and interpersonal factors with career choice. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed to the undergraduate students in a private institution of higher learning in Klang Valley. This study used non-probability sampling and purposive sampling randomly to select 300 respondents. However, only 206 questionnaires were returned and used for data analysis, indicating the response rate of 68.6%.
3.3. Instrumentation and Scale
The survey questionnaire was divided into five main sections. The first section A consists of the respondents’ demographic profiles. This section uses a nominal scale for age, gender, nationality, years of study, race, parent’s occupation, and household income. These information were needed to identify and measure to what extent did these variables had an impact on the career choice in Malaysian private universities. Section B, C, D, and E focused on the dependent and independent variables. Respondents were required to present their views using the five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 for “Strongly Disagree” to 5 for “Strongly Agree”. Section F consists of open-ended questions to determine the important factors that can influence students’ career choice. The questionnaire used English language as this study targeted local and international students.

3.4. Reliability Test
The internal consistency of the scale such as reliability and validity for each item was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha as it is considered the most commonly accepted measure of reliability. Table 1 presents the results of the reliability test. The variables for this study had excellent reliability with coefficient of more than 0.7. According to Julie Pallant (2005), the data are reliable if they have Cronbach’s alpha values of more than 0.7 and the items have to be deleted or changed if they are not reliable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>N of items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career Choice</td>
<td>.716</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic Motivation</td>
<td>.852</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrinsic Motivation</td>
<td>.860</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Motivation</td>
<td>.838</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5. Data Analysis Technique
This study used Statistical Package for the Social science (SPPS) version 22 to analyse the data. This research had conducted reliability test, frequency analysis, descriptive analysis, factor analysis, regression, and correlation analysis.

4. Findings

4.1. Descriptive Analysis
The demographic profile contained information such as gender, age, races, university attended, nationality, parent’s profession, and household income. The data were analysed and presented the frequency and percentage in a table. Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents in this study.

4.2. Correlation Analysis
Table 3 shows the results for the correlation analysis to determine the significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The variables are considered statistically significant when the significant value (2 tailed) is 0.05 or below (Greenland et al., 2016). Table 3 shows that there were significant relationships between extrinsic and interpersonal factors towards career choice.
Table 2. Distribution of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Parents Occupation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>Managerial Position</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-24</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-28</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 and above</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Races</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Household income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>Below RM3,000</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>RM3,000 – RM5,000</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>RM5,001 – RM7,000</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>RM7,001 – RM9,000</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nationality</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>96.6</td>
<td>RM9,001 and Above</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Correlation Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intrinsic</th>
<th>Extrinsic</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
<th>Career</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrinsic</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.628**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>-.102</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.144</td>
<td>.379</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.022</td>
<td>.143*</td>
<td>.188**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.757</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). N = 206.

4.3. Regression Analysis (Multiple)

The results of regression analysis could determine the variables that had an influence on the undergraduates’ career choice in Malaysian private universities. Table 4 shows the three independent variables that were entered into the regression model. R (0.355) was the correlation of the three independent variables with the dependent variable. After considering all the intercorrelations among the three independent variables, the R Square value was 0.126. Thus, the independent variables could explain 12.6% of the undergraduate students’ career choice. The result of the analysis in Table 4 shows that the dependent variable “Career Choice” was capable of explaining 12.6% of the model. Table 5 shows that the significant value of the model is 0.009. Thus, the model had reached the significance since it was less than 0.05.

Table 4 Model Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
<th>Durbin-Watson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.355a</td>
<td>.126</td>
<td>.077</td>
<td>.58105</td>
<td>2.591</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Inter, Extrinsic, Intrinsic
b. Dependent Variable: Career
Table 5 ANOVA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>3.862</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.287</td>
<td>3.971</td>
<td>.009b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>65.482</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>.324</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>69.345</td>
<td>205</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Career  
b. Predictors: (Constant), Interpersonal, Extrinsic, Intrinsic

Table 6 shows the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable. The extrinsic motivation had the largest beta coefficient with the value of 0.179. Thus, it can be said that extrinsic motivation was the strongest variable, which made the most contribution on the career choice in this study. It was followed by interpersonal motivation with the beta coefficient value of 0.169, and the least contribution towards the career choice was intrinsic motivation with the beta coefficient value of -0.073.

Table 6 Multiple Regression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unstandardised Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardised Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>3.168</td>
<td>.387</td>
<td>8.191</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
<td>-.081</td>
<td>.099</td>
<td>-.820</td>
<td>.413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrinsic</td>
<td>.188</td>
<td>.094</td>
<td>.179</td>
<td>.046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>.169</td>
<td>.016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Career Choice

4.4. Results of Hypotheses Testing

Multiple regression analysis was used to determine whether there was a positive relationship between intrinsic motivations and the career choice of undergraduate students. It is considered a positive relationship when the significant value is equivalent or less than 0.05 (Greenland et al., 2016). Table 6 shows the significant value for intrinsic motivation is 0.413. Therefore, there was no significant relationship between intrinsic motivation and the career choice of undergraduate students.

Besides that, multiple regression analysis was used to determine whether there was a positive relationship between extrinsic motivation and the career choice of undergraduate students. Table 6 shows the significant value for extrinsic motivation is 0.046 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, there was a significant relationship between extrinsic motivation and the career choice of undergraduate students.

The multiple regression analysis was also used to determine whether there was a positive relationship between interpersonal motivation and the career choice of undergraduate students. Table 6 shows the significant value for interpersonal motivation is 0.016 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, there was a significant relationship between interpersonal motivation and the career choice of undergraduate students.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, most of the respondents selected a career as a result of extrinsic and interpersonal motivation. For extrinsic motivation, the respondents believed that a career should provide a good standard of living and good salary. For interpersonal motivation, the influence of social environment such as parents played an important role to
influence the respondents’ career choice. Most of the respondents believed that their parents can influence them in making a career choice. Thus, motivation factors (extrinsic and interpersonal) could influence the career choice of undergraduate students. The findings will assist graduates to find a suitable job and reduce the unemployment rate among graduates upon graduation.

This study had described the positive relationship between motivation factors and the career choice of undergraduate students in Klang Valley. It is believed that this study could enhance the student’s career planning instead of providing opportunities for institutions and academicians to be more concern on the students’ future career. For private universities, it is beneficial for them to understand the factors that can influence the career choice of the students. As a result, private universities can develop policies to support the student’s career planning besides producing students with good quality. For example, they could include Career Planning in the curriculum to prepare the students before entering the workforce. It is recommended to be taken by the final year students. This study could help other institutions to understand the reasons that they need to collaborate with the industry. Institutions and industry could plan programs together to explain the trends and challenges in the industry. For example, they could organise a talk that invites an employer. Students could understand the benefits of participating in the industry and the requirements needed to enter the workforce. It will enhance the students’ career planning. Besides that, this study could help the government in reducing the unemployment rate among fresh graduate students. The government can introduce several projects for fresh graduates to assist them in their career. Furthermore, the decrease of unemployment rate can help Malaysia in achieving vision 2020 by improving the living standard of citizens.

However, this study had several limitations. The independent variables were not sufficient to explain the relationship between motivational factors and the career choice among the students. Other factors such as economic condition, cost of living, and the influx of immigrants can be considered in finding the relationship between motivation and career choice. Some research found that sociocultural, economic, and political changes could affect the career choices of the youth (Bai (1998). Besides that, this research focused on Klang Valley and it may not represent others in the rural areas. The students’ ranking on the factors that could influence their career choice may differ across cultures (Ng et al, 1998), the field of studies, and industry (Gokuladas, V.K., 2010). In addition, this study only focused on undergraduates from private universities and it did not include undergraduates from public institutions. This study used a small sample size due to time constraint. Thus, it was difficult to generalize the information.

The findings confirmed that extrinsic and interpersonal factors had a significant influence on the career choice of undergraduate students in the Malaysian private universities. Thus, university staff has to identify the perceptions and factors that could influence the students’ career choice to design and implement tools to support the students’ career development.

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