Factors Influencing Accounting Students in Choosing a Career as a Public Accountant

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the influence of motivation, financial rewards, and professional recognition on the career selection of accounting students in accounting students of the Indonesian Institute of Business and Computer Affairs. This research uses quantitative data types and data sources are primary data obtained from accounting students of the Indonesian Institute of Business and Computers. The sampling technique of this study is a census where the number of samples in this study is as many as 60 respondents. Data analysis used with the Partial Least Square (PLS) approach. Where PLS is a model of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) equations based on variance or components. The results of this study stated that Financial Motivation and Appreciation had a significant effect on the Career Selection of Accounting Students as Public Accountants, while Professional Recognition had no significant effect on the Career Selection of Accounting Students as Public Accountants with a trust level of 67.2%.

Keywords: Accounting Students, Career, Public Accountant

INTRODUCTION

Every human being is faced with several life choices that require him to make one choice that he thinks is the best. As is the case in pursuing a future career, a person will be given several choices that are needed to teach him to make the right decision, including in choosing the desired career (Gultom dkk., 2022; Mufid dkk., 2022). Being an individual who wants to progress and develop, students are required to do the best struggle in participating in learning at the lecture bench to be an effort to anticipate facing tough competition both in the business world and competition among fellow work energies that are getting tighter (Amrina dkk., 2021; Mudinillah, 2022).
The choice of a career for accounting students means the initial term. after successfully completing their studies, career choices for accounting graduates are not closed to the accounting profession alone, in determining the career they will undertake, accounting students have many kinds of considerations for choosing what career they will undertake.

The influencing factors consist of motivation, financial rewards, professional training, social values, work environment, labor market considerations and personality (Dewi S dkk., 2022; Gabriela dkk., 2022). A career is an accumulation and knowledge embedded in skills, expertise, and a wider network of work correlations (Demina dkk., 2022; Firman dkk., 2022; Najeed dkk., 2022). On the other hand, Najeed dkk. (2022) states that a career encompasses a sequence of work experiences over a period of time.

Students’ career choices are influenced by the understanding they form about various careers (Haidar dkk., 2017). So from that the researcher uses the variables of Motivation, Financial Awards, Professional Recognition as research variables.

This research is designed using the hope that by knowing the factors that influence career choice to become a public accountant, the number of accounting graduates who will determine a career as a public accountant will be able to increase and meet the needs of the market.

**Motivation**

Motivation is a psychological force from within a person that leads to a person's behavior, effort and perseverance in activities. Here are some definitions of motivation including:

1. According to Noorbasha & Sudha (2021), motivation is what causes, channels and supports human behavior so that they want to work hard and enthusiastically to achieve optimal results.
2. According to Adamopoulos (2018), motivation is a series of attitudes and values that influence individuals to achieve specific things in accordance with predetermined goals.
3. According to Sahli (2023), motivation is a condition that moves individuals to be able to achieve their goals and motives.

Based on the above understanding, it can be concluded that motivation is a desire, need, goal contained in a person that encourages him to behave in a certain way or take a certain action. High motivation from students will affect the choice in determining their career. Motivation that arises because of the influence from outside the person. This motivation has a trigger to make someone motivated.

**Financial Rewards**

Wheeler in Amrina dkk. (2022) suggests that people in business, psychology, and educational fields other than accounting find that accounting offers higher earnings than jobs in marketing, general management, finance and banking.

According to Rahmah dkk. (2022) The reward system is one of the important control tools used by the company to motivate its personnel to achieve company goals (not individual personnel goals) with behavior in accordance with what the company expects (not the behavior preferred by personnel personally).

From the above understanding, it can be concluded that the financial award given is a form of controlling employee behavior so that it is in accordance with what is expected to achieve the goals and objectives set by the organization.
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Professional Recognition

Students who choose the profession of public accountants and corporate accountants consider that the profession they choose will provide many opportunities for growth. Students who choose the corporate accountant profession consider that the recognition of achievement in their profession is higher than in other professions. The above can be interpreted that professional recognition in a career will be able to increase motivation which in turn will also increase work productivity.

According to Mudinillah & Handayani, (2021) professional recognition includes matters related to recognition of achievement. This professional recognition can also be categorized as intangible financial rewards. Professional recognition is considered by students who choose the public accounting profession. This means that choosing a profession, not only aims to seek financial rewards, but there is also a desire for recognition of achievement and self-development. Elements in professional recognition include: opportunities for development, recognition of achievement, opportunities for promotion, requiring certain skills to achieve success.

Career Selection

A career is all the work an individual has or does during their lifetime. A career is a pattern of work and is closely related to experiences (positions, authority, decisions, and subjective interpretations of work) (Mudinillah, 2021; Mudinillah & Rizaldi, 2021), and activities during an individual’s working life. This definition emphasizes that careers are not related to success or failure, but rather to the attitudes and behaviors, and continuity of individuals in their work-related activities. A career goal is a future position that an individual wants to achieve in his or her job (Aghar, 2023; Cadena dkk., 2021). Thus, career success is no longer defined as institutional rewards with increasing positions in a formal hierarchy. Moreover, at this time the career has experienced a shift towards a boundaryless career. The key to career success in the future is more reflected in a person’s life experience than the position he has. From the definition of career above, it can be concluded that a career is a work position that a person holds during a person's life span which is a life goal.

Public accountants are professional accountants who sell their services to the public, especially in the field of examining the financial statements prepared by their clients. The examination is primarily intended to meet the needs of creditors, investors, potential creditors, potential investors, and government agencies (Al-Adwan, 2020; Hamzah dkk., 2023).

Conceptual Framework
Hypothesis
H1: Motivation affects the career choice of accounting students as public accountants.
H2: Professional Training has an effect on the Career Selection of Accounting Students as Public Accountants.
H3: Professional recognition has an effect on the career selection of accounting students as public accountants.

METHOD
Research Location
Location Research will be conducted at the Indonesian Institute of Business and Computer, Jl. Kolam No.41, Kenangan Baru, Kec. Percut Sei Tuan, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra 20223.

Research Population and Sample
The population in this study were all D3 Accounting Students totaling 60 people. The sampling technique in this study was a census. So that the number of samples amounted to 60 people.

Research Design
This type of research is quantitative descriptive research. According to Sugiyono, (2013) the clausal method is a causal relationship, where the independent variable (variable that affects) and the dependent variable (influenced). In addition, the clausal method is useful for analyzing the relationship between one variable and another or how one variable affects another. The clausal method looks for causal relationships that aim to explain phenomena in the form of influences between variables.

Data Analysis
In this study, data analysis used the Partial Least Square (PLS) approach, PLS is a component or variant-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) equation model. PLS is a powerful analytical method and is often referred to as soft modeling because it negates the assumptions of OLS (Ordinary Least Square) regression, such as data must be multivariate normally distributed and there is no multicollinearity problem between exogenous variables. PLS uses an iteration algorithm consisting of OLS (Ordinary Least Square) series so that the problem of model identification is not a problem for recursive models (models that have one direction of causality) and presents problems for non-recursive models (models that are reciprocal or reciplocal between variables) that can be solved by Covariance-based SEM (Golla dkk., 2021; Issa dkk., 2022).

The multiple regression model is formulated in the following form

\[ Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + e \]

Description:
Y = Career Selection
a = Constant
X1 = Motivation
X2 = Financial Award
X3 = Professional Recognition
b12 = Coefficient
e = Error.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reliability and Validity Test

Reliability test is the extent to which the measurement results using the same object will produce the same data (Madinillah & Handayani, 2021). The questionnaire reliability test in the study used the split half method, the item was divided into two groups, namely the odd item group and the even item group. Then each group of scores for each item is summed up so as to produce a total score. If the correlation is 0.7, it is said that the item provides a sufficient level of reliability, otherwise if the correlation value is below 0.7, it is said that the item is less reliable.

![Figure 1. Path Diagram](source: Research results, processed with Smart PLS 3.0, 2022)

Based on the figure, it shows that all research variables have a validity value above 0.361. Therefore, the indicators used in this research variable are said to be reliable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tabel 3 Reliabilitas dan Validitas Konstruk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach's Alpha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivasi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pemilihan Karir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pengalaman Profesional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pengalaman Keuangan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research results, processed with Smart PLS 3.0, 2022

Based on the table, it shows that all research variables have a composite reliability value and Cronbach's alpha above 0.70. Therefore, the indicators used in this research variable are said to be reliable.

Structural Model Testing

Structural model testing is carried out to see the relationship between constructs, the significance value and R square of the research model. The R-square value can be
used to assess the effect of certain independent variables on the dependent variable. The estimated Rsquare value can be seen in Table 4.4 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Selection</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>R Square Adjusted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.672</td>
<td>0.654</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research results, processed with Smart PLS 3.0, 2022

Based on the table, it is known that the R-Square value for the variable career choice of accounting students as public accountants (Y) is 0.436 which can be interpreted that the influence of the variable career choice of accounting students as public accountants which is influenced by knowledge and financial rewards is 67.2% while the remaining 32.8% will be explained by other variables outside this study.

Direct Influence Analysis.

Whether or not a hypothesis is accepted, it is necessary to test the hypothesis using the Bootstrapping function in SmartPLS 3.0. The hypothesis is accepted when the significance level is smaller than 0.05 or the t-value exceeds the critical value (Hair et al, 2014). The t statistics value for a significance level of 5% is 2.00

![Path Diagram Coefficient](source)

Source: Research results, processed with Smart PLS 3.0, 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path Coefficients</th>
<th>Original Sample (μ)</th>
<th>Sample Mean (M)</th>
<th>Standard Deviation (STDDEV)</th>
<th>t Statistics (μ/STDDEV)</th>
<th>P Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivasi -&gt; Pemilihan Karir</td>
<td>0.426</td>
<td>0.427</td>
<td>0.156</td>
<td>2.728</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pengabuan Profesional -&gt; Pemilihan Karir</td>
<td>-0.124</td>
<td>-0.113</td>
<td>0.138</td>
<td>0.937</td>
<td>0.370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penghargaan Finansial -&gt; Pemilihan Karir</td>
<td>0.591</td>
<td>0.540</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>3.043</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research results, processed with Smart PLS 3.0, 2022
From the table above, it can be seen the original sample value, p value or t statistics which are used as a reference for making decisions on whether the hypothesis is accepted or the hypothesis is rejected. The hypothesis can be accepted if the t statistics value > t table or p value < 0.05.

The first hypothesis is that Motivation affects the career choice of accounting students as public accountants. It can be seen that the T statistic value of Motivation on the career choice of accounting students as public accountants is 2.728 > 2.00 or can be seen from the P value which is 0.007 < 0.05, indicating that the Motivation variable has a significant effect on the career choice of accounting students as public accountants. Thus the first hypothesis is accepted, it means that the Motivation variable has a significant influence on the career choice of accounting students as public accountants. The increase and decrease in the Motivation variable score will have a significant influence on the variable career choice of accounting students as public accountants.

The second hypothesis is that Financial Awards affect the career choice of accounting students as public accountants. It can be seen that the T statistic value of Financial Award Moderation on career choice of accounting students as public accountants (Y) 3.843 > 2.00 or can be seen from the P value which is 0.000 < 0.05, indicating that the Financial Award variable affects the career choice of accounting students as public accountants. Thus the second hypothesis is accepted, this means that the Financial Award variable has a significant influence on the career choice of accounting students as public accountants.

The third hypothesis, namely Professional Recognition, has no effect on the career choice of accounting students as public accountants. It can be seen that the T statistic value of Professional Recognition on the career choice of accounting students as public accountants (Y) 0.897 < 2.00 or can be seen from the P value which is 0.370 > 0.05, indicating that the Professional Recognition variable has no effect on the career choice of accounting students as public accountants. Thus the third hypothesis is rejected, this means that the Professional Recognition variable has no significant effect on the career choice of accounting students as public accountants.

Discussion
The effect of motivation on accounting students' career choices as public accountants
The first hypothesis proposed is to examine the effect of Motivation on career choices as public accountants by accounting students. The t statistic value of Motivation on career choice of accounting students as public accountants is 2.728 > 2.00 or can be seen from the P value which is 0.007 < 0.05. Thus, the results of this study successfully accepted the first hypothesis which states that motivation affects career choice as a public accountant. The results of this study are in line with the research of Rasmini (2007) which reveals that financial reward is one of the variables considered by accounting students in choosing a profession. Akbar dkk. (2023) states that a person in choosing a career also considers financial factors or salary. In contrast to research by Nurahma (2011) states that economic motivation has no significant effect on the interest of accounting students to choose a profession as a public accountant.

The effect of financial rewards on accounting students' career choices as public accountants
The second hypothesis of this study states that financial rewards have a significant effect on the career choices of accounting students as public accountants. Moderation T
statistic value of Financial Rewards on career choices of accounting students as public accountants (Y) 3.843 > 2.00 or can be seen from the P value which is 0.000 < 0.05, which means that financial rewards have a significant effect on career choices of accounting students as public accountants. Based on this, the second hypothesis is accepted.

The results of this study are in line with research conducted by Suharmon dkk., (2022) where financial rewards have no effect on accounting students' career choices as public accountants. However, it is not in line with (Meisuri dkk., 2023) where financial rewards affect the career choice of accounting students as public accountants.

The effect of professional recognition on accounting students' career choices as public accountants

The third hypothesis of this study states that professional recognition has a significant effect on students' career choices as public accountants. The T statistic value of Professional Recognition on career choices of accounting students as public accountants (Y) is 0.897 < 2.00 or can be seen from the P value which is 0.370 > 0.05, which means that professional training has no significant effect on career choices of accounting students as public accountants. Based on this, the third hypothesis is rejected.

The results of this study are in line with research conducted by Ansor dkk., (2023) where professional recognition has no effect on accounting students' career choices as public accountants. However, it is not in line with Astuti (2014) where professional recognition affects the career choice of accounting students as public accountants.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussions that have been carried out, there are several conclusions that can be drawn regarding the factors that influence the choice of a career as a public accountant. In this context, motivation is proven to be one of the main factors influencing individuals in choosing a career as a public accountant. Motivation plays a key role in shaping one's outlook and determination towards this profession. Individuals who have high intrinsic or extrinsic motivation are more likely to choose to pursue a career as a public accountant. Intrinsic motivation, for example, may stem from a desire to contribute to society through reliable accounting practices, while extrinsic motivation may arise from factors such as high earning potential or professional prestige.

Apart from motivation, the findings show that awards have a financial impact in influencing the decision to choose a career as a public accountant. Rewards in the form of compensation or other financial rewards can be a key factor influencing the attractiveness of a profession. If individuals see significant financial opportunities in a public accounting career, they may be more inclined to pursue that path. Therefore, corporate policies and practices that address financial rewards can play an important role in attracting individuals to choose a career as a public accountant.

However, there is an interesting finding that professional recognition does not have a significant influence on choosing a career as a public accountant. Although such recognition may be considered a motivational factor, research results show that its impact is not as strong as that of motivation and financial rewards. This could mean that other factors, such as job challenges or a supportive work environment, may have a greater influence in motivating individuals to pursue a career as a public accountant.
Thus, further understanding the role of motivation, financial rewards, and professional recognition may provide a more comprehensive view of the factors influencing the choice of a career in accounting. The implications of these findings can provide a basis for the development of more effective human resource policies in the accounting industry, as well as direction for individuals who plan to pursue a career as a public accountant.

REFERENCES:


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