

ANALYSIS OF FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE CAREER CHOICE AS A PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT WITH MOTIVATION AS A MODERATING VARIABLE

(Study on Undergraduate Accounting Study Program Students of
Udayana University)

Ni Made Dhea Vemiyani^{1*}, I Wayan Suartana²

^{1,2} Undergraduate Accounting Study Program, Universitas Udayana

E-mail: ¹⁾ madedhea1@gmail.com, ²⁾ suark15@unud.ac.id

Abstract

Indonesia faces a critical shortage of public accountants despite a growing demand for their services. While many individuals graduate with accounting degrees, few pursue careers in public accounting. This research aimed to understand the factors influencing this career choice, specifically examining the roles of financial rewards, professional recognition, and work environment, as well as the moderating effect of motivation. Based on expectation and planned behavior theories, the study analyzed data from 74 participants at Udayana University. Results indicate that motivation significantly impacts the relationship between financial rewards and the decision to become a public accountant, but it does not influence the relationships between professional recognition, work environment, and career choice in this field.

Keywords: Financial Reward, Professional Recognition, Work Environment, Motivation, Career Selection

1. INTRODUCTION

Widiartha & Utama (2023) state that the process of determining the professional path for students begins at the undergraduate level. Indonesia still has few certified public accountants. The annual growth rate of public accountants is still relatively low. For separate students, the job of a public accountant is a relatively complicated job and cannot be resolved quickly (Wen et al., 2018). Many students choose their careers outside of public accounting or outside the accounting path (Siskayani & Saitri, 2017). This is what explains the gradual growth of the public accounting profession in Indonesia (Hapsoro & Hendrik, 2018).

Several factors contribute to the decline in interest in public accounting careers. One primary factor is financial compensation. Many believe that high salaries are universally appealing in the job market, making financial rewards a top priority for most job seekers (Hutami et al., 2022). Professional recognition is an award that results from the results of one's hard work by getting recognition from people and superiors (Darmayanti & Dientri, 2020). Professional recognition will affect the individual or person in doing his job, where in addition to professional recognition, because the comfort level of a student while working also plays a role in job selection, which will also be related to the work environment (Febriyanti, 2019).

Factors such as professional rewards, recognition, and work environment significantly influence an individual's decision to pursue a career in public accounting (Made & Ratnadi, 2022). Conversely, financial compensation does not appear to be a determining factor

(Rahayu et al., 2023). Several factors contribute to conflicting or inconsistent findings from previous research regarding the selection of a job as a public accountant (Rosalina et al., 2020). There are additional considerations that play a role in shaping an individual's view of public accounting as a career path. What drives a person to take action is the expectation that the action will bring the desired results, commonly called motivation (Bailey & Phillips, 2016).

Financial rewards will be a condition where a job will be more attractive if it has better financial rewards than other jobs (Fitriana & Yanti, 2023). Financial rewards can influence individuals to choose the public accounting profession (Anam, 2018). Professional recognition, as stated by Stole in Setiyani (2005), is an intangible reward. Risawati (2021) found that the motivation for students to decide to become public accountants is professional recognition. Ambari & Ramantha (2017) reached similar results, supporting the findings of this study.

Job dissatisfaction due to discomfort at work can also be caused by an inadequate work environment or a workplace that has a negative impact (Talamaosandi & Wirakusuma, 2017). An unsupportive work environment leads to dissatisfied workers, who in turn produce substandard work, Chatman (1989) argues. A favorable work environment encourages people to choose a career in public accounting (Amalia et al., 2021). This study aims to determine the analysis of financial rewards, professional recognition, and work environment on career choice as a public accountant with motivation as a moderating variable.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Expectancy Theory

Expectancy theory posits that an individual's motivation to engage in a particular behavior is determined by two key factors:

1. **Expectancy:** This refers to the individual's belief or confidence that their effort and actions will lead to the desired performance level. In other words, it's their assessment of their ability to achieve the goal.
2. **Instrumentality:** This represents the individual's perception of the likelihood that successful performance will result in specific outcomes or rewards. It's about connecting performance with outcomes.
3. **Valence:** This reflects the value or desirability of the expected outcomes or rewards to the individual. It's about how much the individual wants the potential rewards (Putra, 2021).

In essence, individuals are more likely to be motivated to act when they believe they can perform well (expectancy), that successful performance will lead to desired outcomes (instrumentality), and those outcomes are considered valuable (valence).

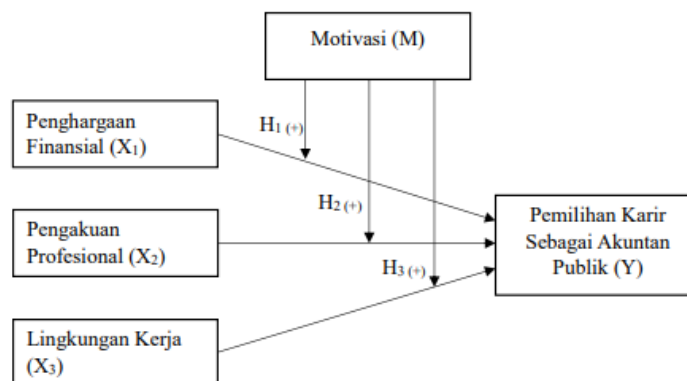
2.2. Theory of Planned Behavior

Theory of Planned Behavior is a social psychology theory to predict human behavior (Robbins & Judge, 2012). The theory of planned behavior examines how individuals exhibit behaviors that are based on intentions or intentions to act. This approach focuses on how

individuals decide to act and how they manage those intentions in exhibiting behavior. This theory states that how a person perceives or captures their own behavior affects their motivation towards interest or desire to perform the behavior (Muhamad et al., 2020).

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This quantitative study, conducted at Udayana University's Faculty of Economics and Business, aimed to identify factors influencing accounting graduates' decisions to become public accountants (Daldi, 2018). The research examined the relationship between the decision to pursue a public accounting career (dependent variable) and financial rewards, professional recognition, and work environment (independent variables). Motivation was considered as a potential factor that could strengthen or weaken the relationship between these variables.



Source: Research Data, 2024

Figure 1. Research Model

The sample for this study consisted of 280 students who will be pursuing an accounting degree in 2024 (Joshi, 2022). The Slovin formula was used in this study to determine a representative sample size, to allow the findings to be generalized. Data for this study was collected using a questionnaire distributed to accounting students at Udayana University's Faculty of Economics and Business via Google Forms. To measure respondents' opinions, a 4-point Likert scale was employed.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Research Results

A review of validity test shows that all the correlation coefficient values tested for financial rewards, professional recognition, work environment, career selection, and motivation are higher than the r-table value of 0.30. All claims made in this study have been validated by these results.

The reliability test results for variables such as financial reward (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.927), professional recognition (0.897), work environment (0.882), career selection (0.949), and motivation (0.945). All variables exhibited Cronbach's Alpha values above the

acceptable threshold of 0.7, indicating high reliability and consistent measurement. However, without additional research context or sample size information, a comprehensive interpretation is limited.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistical Analysis

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Financial Rewards	74	18,00	24,00	21,5000	2,10837
Professional Recognition	74	9,00	20,00	17,0946	2,10784
Work Environment	74	22,00	32,00	28,1081	2,37318
Career Selection	74	16,00	32,00	26,7703	3,72164
Motivation	74	12,00	24,00	20,6216	2,86071

Based on Table 1, an average of 3.07 was generated by dividing the total of 21.5 by six statements. The entire professional recognition score of 17.09 into its component parts with five statements resulted in an average score of 3.41. The average work environment had a value of 28.1. After breaking it down into eight separate statements, it had an average of 3.51. Career selection had an average value of 26.77.

The average value when divided into eight statements is 3.34. After dividing the total motivation value by six statements, an average of 3.43 was obtained. This shows that becoming a public accountant is a good choice for someone looking for financial rewards, professional recognition, a supportive work environment, goals, and motivation. The standard deviation value shows a smaller number than the average, indicating that the distribution of financial rewards, professional recognition, work environment, career selection, and motivation variables is evenly distributed.

To ensure that the regression coefficients are consistent, unbiased, and accurately estimate the dependent variable, a classical assumption test is used, using the SPSS data processing program. Heteroscedasticity, multicollinearity, and normality tests are among the conventional assumption tests conducted by the researchers in this study.

Table 2. Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	
	Unstandardized Residual
N	74
Test Statistic	0,083
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0,2

Table 2 indicates a non-significant asymptotic significance value (0.200) for the two-tailed test, exceeding the conventional alpha level of 0.05. Consequently, the regression model employed in this study can be assumed to adhere to a normal distribution.

Table 3. Multicollinearity Test

Variable	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
Financial Reward (X1)	0,616	1,623
Professional Recognition (X2)	0,809	1,236
Work Environment (X3)	0,688	1,453
Motivation (M)	0,561	1,784

Table 3 demonstrates that all independent variables exhibit VIF values below the critical threshold of 10 and corresponding tolerance values exceeding 0.10. These findings suggest an absence of significant intercorrelations among the independent variables within the regression model, thereby indicating no multicollinearity issue.

Table 4. Heteroscedasticity Test

Variable	Sig.
Financial Reward (X1)	0,390
Professional Recognition (X2)	0,759
Work Environment (X3)	0,206
Motivation (M)	0,496
X1.M	0,567
X2.M	0,567
X3.M	0,215

As indicated in Table 4, all variables exhibit significance levels exceeding the 0.05 threshold. This suggests no substantial variance in the residuals across observations within the regression model, thereby confirming the absence of heteroscedasticity. The primary objective of this study is to examine the influence of work environment, professional recognition, and professional rewards on the decision to pursue a career in public accounting, mediated by motivation. To achieve this, moderated regression analysis (MRA) is employed (Ghozali, 2016).

Table 5. Test Coefficient of Determination (Adjusted R2) Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA)

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	0,743 ^a	0,552	0,504	2,621	

Table 5 reveals an adjusted R-squared value of 0.504. This indicates that the combined influence of financial rewards, professional recognition, work environment, and their interactions on the decision to choose a career in public accounting accounts for 50.4% of the total variance in the dependent variable. The remaining 49.6% of the variance is attributable to factors beyond the scope of this regression model.

Table 6. Model Feasibility Test (F Test) Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA)

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	557,637	7	79,662	11,595	0,000 ^b
	Residual	453,458	66	6,871		
	Total	1011,095	73			
a. Dependent Variable: Career Selection						
b. Predictors: (Constant), X3.M, Professional Recognition, Financial Rewards, Work Environment, X2.M, Motivation, X1.M						

Table 6 reveals a significant F-value of 11.595 ($p < 0.001$) which surpasses the critical F-value of 2.50 (with numerator degrees of freedom = 4, denominator degrees of freedom = 69, and $\alpha = 0.05$). This finding provides strong evidence that the model incorporating financial rewards, professional recognition, work environment, and their interactions significantly influences the decision to choose a career in public accounting.

Table 7. Partial Regression Test (t test)

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-71,309	26,115		-2,731	0,008
	Financial Rewards	4,953	1,419	2,806	3,49	0,001
	Professional Recognition	-0,007	0,896	-0,004	-0,007	0,994
	Work Environment	-0,474	1,218	-0,302	-0,389	0,698
	Motivation	4,178	1,269	3,211	3,292	0,002
	X1.M	-0,227	0,068	-5,478	-3,335	0,001
	X2.M	0,018	0,045	0,363	0,399	0,691
	X3.M	0,024	0,057	0,708	0,418	0,677
a. Dependent Variable: Career Selection						

Table 7 presents the following moderated regression analysis equation:

$$Y = -71,309 + 4,953X_1 - 0,007X_2 - 0,474X_3 + 4,178M - 0,227X_1M + 0,018X_2M + 0,024X_3M + \varepsilon$$

The t-test results indicate the following:

1. Financial rewards and motivation: The interaction between financial rewards and motivation significantly influences career selection as a public accountant ($p < 0.001$, $t = -3.335$). Motivation moderates the impact of financial rewards on career choice, with a regression coefficient of -0.227.

2. Professional recognition and motivation: There is no significant interaction between professional recognition and motivation on career selection as a public accountant ($p = 0.691$, $t = 0.399$). Motivation does not influence how professional recognition affects career choice, with a regression coefficient of 0.018.
3. Work environment and motivation: There is no significant interaction between work environment and motivation on career selection as a public accountant ($p = 0.677$, $t = 0.418$). Motivation does not influence how work environment affects career choice, with a regression coefficient of 0.024.

4.2. Discussion

4.2.1. Motivation Moderates the Effect of Financial Rewards on Career Selection as a Public Accountant

The interplay of financial rewards and motivational factors on public accounting career selection was investigated. Results indicated that motivation tempered the influence of financial rewards, with a negative impact on the likelihood of choosing public accounting. This finding validates the hypothesis that motivation moderates the financial rewards-career choice relationship in this domain. Essentially, motivation attenuated the pull of financial compensation on aspiring public accountants.

These findings resonate with prior research (Amalia et al., 2021; Cahyadi et al., 2019) highlighting the significance of financial rewards in public accounting career decisions. In alignment with expectation theory (Sharif et al., 2009), individuals are guided by perceived outcomes. However, while monetary gains are anticipated, the pursuit of intrinsic satisfaction, skill enhancement, and practical experience frequently eclipses the sole allure of financial recompense among students.

4.2.2. Motivation Does Not Moderate Professional Recognition on Career Selection as a Public Accountant

Analysis of the interaction between professional recognition and motivation revealed no significant moderating effect of motivation on the relationship between professional recognition and career choice as a public accountant (Ulfah et al., 2019). This outcome contradicts the second hypothesis, leading to its rejection. The findings diverge from previous research (Ambari & Ramantha, 2017) positing a positive correlation between professional recognition and the decision to pursue a public accounting career. These results challenge the tenets of expectation and planned behavior theories, which suggest that individuals are motivated by desired outcomes.

4.2.3. Motivation Does Not Moderate the Effect of Work Environment on Career Selection as a Public Accountant

The data did not support a moderating role for motivation on the relationship between work environment and public accounting career choice, as indicated by regression analyses (Iswahyuni, 2018; Astika, 2017). Consequently, the third hypothesis was rejected. Motivation was found to neither amplify nor diminish the impact of work environment on career selection (Budiandru, 2021).

These findings contradict previous research affirming a positive association between work environment and public accounting career choice (Amalia et al., 2021; Juliansah &

Suryaputri, 2016). Moreover, the results challenge the expectation and planned behavior theories, which posit that individuals are influenced by perceived outcomes.

5. CONCLUSION

The study found that motivation significantly moderates the influence of financial rewards on public accounting career choice. Specifically, motivation weakens the positive relationship between financial incentives and selecting a public accounting career. Conversely, neither professional recognition nor work environment was moderated by motivation in relation to career choice.

To expand upon these findings, future research should consider a broader range of independent variables beyond financial rewards, professional recognition, and work environment. Additionally, incorporating moderating variables that more accurately reflect individual career interests could provide deeper insights. These refinements are expected to yield more comprehensive and robust research outcomes.

REFERENCES

- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179–211. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978\(91\)90020-T](https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-T)
- Amalia, Z., Fauzi, A., & Mardi, M. (2021). Pengaruh Penghargaan Finansial, Pertimbangan Pasar Kerja, dan Lingkungan Kerja Terhadap Pemilihan Karir Sebagai Akuntan Pada Mahasiswa Akuntansi Di Jakarta. *Jurnal Ilmiah Edunomika*, 5(02), 731–745.
- Ambari, I. P., & Ramantha, I. W. (2017). Pertimbangan Pasar Kerja, Pengakuan Profesional, Nilai-Nilai Sosial, Lingkungan Kerja, Personalitas Pemilihan Karir Sebagai Akuntan Publik. *E-Jurnal Akuntansi*, 18(1), 705–734.
- Anam, C. (2018). Analisis Rasio Likuiditas, Rasio Solvabilitas, Dan Biaya Operasional Terhadap Pajak Penghasilan Badan Terutang (Sektor Pertambangan Di BEI Tahun 2011-2016). *Margin Eco*, 2(1), 43–68.
- Astika, I. B. P. (2017). *Pengaruh Motivasi, Persepsi, Penghargaan Finansial, Pasar Kerja dan Pengakuan Profesional Pada Pemilihan Karir Akuntan Publik Ida Ayu Try Surya Warsitasari*.
- Bailey, T. H., & Phillips, L. J. (2016). The influence of motivation and adaptation on students' subjective well-being, meaning in life and academic performance. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 35(2), 201–216.
- Budiandru, B. (2021). Factors affecting motivation for career selection of public accountants. *AKRUAL: Jurnal Akuntansi*, 12(2), 204–216.
- Cahyadi, D. D., Andayani, S., & Suryaningrum, D. H. (2019). Accounting students perceptions on factors affecting career choices. *Journal of Accounting and Strategic Finance (JASF)*, 2(2), 170–182.
- Chatman, J. A. (1989). Improving interactional organizational research: A model of person-organization fit. *Academy of Management Review*, 14(3), 333–349.
- Dalci, İ. (2018). Cultural values and students' intentions of choosing accounting career.

- Journal of Financial Reporting and Accounting*, 16(1), 179–196.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JFRA-09-2016-0072>
- Darmayanti, N., & Dientri, A. M. (2020). Analysis of factors that influence accounting students choose career as a public accountant. *Journal of Auditing, Finance, and Forensic Accounting*, 8(1), 19–26.
- Febriyanti, F. (2019). Faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi minat mahasiswa akuntansi dalam pemilihan karir sebagai akuntan publik. *JAK (Jurnal Akuntansi) Kajian Ilmiah Akuntansi*, 6(1), 88–98.
- Ghozali, I. (2016). Aplikasi Analisis multivariete dengan program IBM SPSS 23 (Edisi 8). *Cetakan Ke VIII. Semarang: Badan Penerbit Universitas Diponegoro*, 96.
- Hapsoro, D., & Hendrik, D. T. (2018). Analisis faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi minat mahasiswa akuntansi berkarir sebagai akuntan publik (Studi kasus terhadap mahasiswa akuntansi STIE YKPN Yogyakarta). *Akuntansi Dewantara*, 2(2), 142–156.
- Hutami, D. M., Kholid, M. N., & Salsabilla, S. (2022). Choosing A Career As A Public Accountant: Does Calling Matter? *JRAK*, 14(2), 157–166.
- Iswahyuni, Y. (2018). Analisis faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi pemilihan karir menjadi akuntan publik oleh mahasiswa program studi akuntansi STIE AKA Semarang. *JAK (Jurnal Akuntansi) Kajian Ilmiah Akuntansi*, 5(1), 33–44.
- Joshi, P. L. (2022). *A conceptual framework for the factors influencing the accounting students' career choice as public accountants*.
- Juliansah, A., & Suryaputri, R. V. (2016). Faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi pemilihan karir sebagai profesi akuntan publik bagi Mahasiswa Akuntansi. *Jurnal Akuntansi Trisakti*, 3(2), 113–134.
- Made, I. N. H. A. N., & Ratnadi, D. (2022). *Faktor-Faktor yang Mempengaruhi Minat Mahasiswa Program Studi Akuntansi Dalam Pemilihan Karir Menjadi Akuntan Publik*.
- Muhamad, H., San, O. T., Katan, M. B. H., & Ni, S. W. (2020). Factors influencing the personal interest, and behavioural intention to become an accountant in Malaysia. *Int. J. Aca. Res. Bus. Soc. Sci*, 10, 773–785.
- Putra, A. (2021). Analysis of factors affecting accounting students in career selection as public and non-public accountants. *Jurnal Ekonomi*, 12(1), 56–67.
- Rahayu, R. A., Novitasari, V., & Maryanti, E. (2023). Faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi pemilihan karir sebagai akuntan publik. *Jurnal Riset Mahasiswa Akuntansi*, 11(1), 114–128.
- Risawati, R. (2021). Faktor-Faktor Yang Mempengaruhi Pemilihan Karir Menjadi Akuntan Publik. *Equilibrium: Jurnal Ekonomi-Manajemen-Akuntansi*, 17(2), 147–154.
- Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2012). *Organizational behavior 15th edition*. Prentice Hall.
- Rosalina, D., Yuliari, K., Purnamasari, W., & Zati, M. R. (2020). Factors affecting intention in accounting study program students choosing the public accountant profession. *Jurnal Akuntansi Dan Bisnis: Jurnal Program Studi Akuntansi*, 6(1), 86–95.
- Setiyani, R. (2005). *Faktor-Faktor Yang Membedakan Mahasiswa Akuntansi dalam Memilih Profesi Sebagai Akuntan Publik dan Non Akuntan Publik (Studi Empiris pada Mahasiswa Akuntansi Perguruan Tinggi Negeri di Pulau Jawa)*. Program Pascasarjana Universitas Diponegoro.
- Sharif, N., Ahmed, N., & Sarwar, S. (2009). Factors Influencing Career Choices. *IBT Journal of Business Studies (JBS)*, 5(2), 5–9.

- Siskayani, N. M., & Saitri, P. W. (2017). Analisis faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi mahasiswa akuntansi dalam pemilihan karir menjadi akuntan publik. *Jurnal Riset Akuntansi (JUARA)*, 7(2), 189–197.
- Sugiyono. (2019). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kuakitatif, dan R&D*. Alfabet.
- Talamaosandi, N., & Wirakusuma, M. G. (2017). Pengaruh lingkungan kerja, nilai-nilai sosial, pertimbangan pasar kerja, dan personalitas pada pemilihan karir akuntan publik. *E-Jurnal Akuntansi Universitas Udayana*, 19(1), 1–26.
- Ulfah, R., Jaharadak, A., & Khatibi, A. (2019). Motivational factors influencing MSU accounting students to become a certified public accountant (CPA). *Management Science Letters*, 9(10), 1675–1684.
- Wen, L., Yang, H. C., Bu, D., Diers, L., & Wang, H. (2018). Public accounting vs private accounting, career choice of accounting students in China. *Journal of Accounting in Emerging Economies*, 8(1), 124–140.
- Widiartha, I. K., & Utama Karya, I. M. (2023). Pengaruh Pertimbangan Pasar Kerja, Gaji Dan Personalitas Terhadap Minat Dalam Pemilihan Karir Sebagai Akuntan Pemerintah. *E-Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Bisnis Universitas Udayana*, 12(1), hal. 132-139.

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).