

## The Image of Retailing as a Graduate Career: Evidence from Malaysia

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**Abstract:** To successfully compete in the 21st century, retailing must be able to attract, recruit and retain a competent workforce. Due to unprecedented growth in organized retailing, more management careers are available to young people than ever before yet retailers face obstacles in recruiting talented graduates due to perceptions that retailing offers a low quality of work-life. This study explored Malaysian undergraduates views of retailing as a career choice. A quantitative methodology, using responses given by 271 marketing students was employed in the analysis. The descriptive analysis revealed that students do not have a noticeably enthusiastic view of retailing. The factors associated with retailing as a career were mixed and include a variety of negative connotations. A comparison was made between the views expressed by three groups of students: Those who were intended to pursue retailing as a career, those who were definitely not doing so and those who were undecided. The results indicate that there was substantially more congruence between pro-retailing students perceptions of a preferred career and their perception of retailing than there were for the undecided and anti-retailing students. The results of this research suggest several implications for marketing educators and graduate recruiters.

**Key words:** Perceptions, undergraduates, retailing, career, Malaysia

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### INTRODUCTION

As one of the fastest-growing sectors of Malaysia's economy, the retailing industry is perceived as a catalyst for economic development and social growth. The industry is making a significant contribution to the economy, primarily through direct job creation, foreign direct investment and the creation of linkages with other sectors of the economy. In 2012, the Malaysian retail industry generated US \$1124.5 billion in sales per capita (Euromonitor International, 2014). The industry is now regarded as being among the major providers of jobs and careers for school leavers and graduates, employing about 2.1 million people or 16.6% of total employment in 2012 (DSM, 2013). The development of this industry has now been incorporated into economic transformation program to help the country to achieve high-income developed nation status by 2020. These have been included new physical facilities, such as increasing the number of large format stores like hypermarkets and superstores, the construction of large-sized community market as well as modernizing small retailers. Through these high impact initiatives, it is estimated that the retail sector will create >400,000 new jobs by 2020 (PEMANDU, 2013).

Given the importance of retailing as a major economic activity in Malaysia and subsequent growth in retail

employment, careers in retailing are a significant option available to graduates seeking jobs within the Malaysian labor market. Unfortunately, recruiting graduates has not been an easy task for retail firms. A major problem in recruiting graduates is their negative attitudes towards entering the retailing industry, particularly with regard to career prospects and working conditions (Rahim, 2012). Because of misperceptions, many graduates who possess the ability to become successful in retail profession may select other careers. This situation is not unique to Malaysia, other countries such as the USA and the UK are also losing bright business graduates to other professions (Swinyard, 1981; Swinyard *et al.*, 1991; Gush, 1996).

Although, some studies (Commins and Preston, 1997) have found a slight improvement in student perceptions toward retailing, surveys of students generally portray consistently negative evaluations of retailing careers. Previous studies have shown that students do not really understand what a retail management job entails (Swinyard, 1981; Swinyard *et al.*, 1991). Students appear to associate a career in retailing as a predominantly store-based and this is attributed with negative descriptors such as dull, poor salary, routine (Swinyard, 1981; Swinyard *et al.*, 1991), hard work and long, unsociable hours (Broadbridge, 2003a, b). Perhaps not surprisingly, then the industry has been perceived as a

least choice industry after graduation (Swinyard, 1981; Swinyard *et al.*, 1991; Leng, 2013). This can pose difficulties to retail recruiters attempting to attract high caliber candidates from the graduate pool.

To add to the issues facing the industry in attracting and retaining employees, over the past decade a new generation of employee has entered the workforce. As more generation X employees begin to retire from the workforce, it is imperative to understand the needs of the new generation of employees who will fill the highest number of positions in the industry over the next 10-20 years. The majority of university students are now part of generation Y born in or after 1980 and they will soon be the most dominant group in the workforce. As profiled by Broadbridge *et al.* (2009), today's young generation has dramatically different expectations of the research environment and industry compared to their predecessors. Particularly distinct of generation Y over previous generations is their high expectations for pay, working conditions, promotion and advancement (Oliver, 2006). Studies have found that generation Y want a balance of personal and work goals, social connections and social environment at work, as well as good training and development in an organization (De Hauw and De Vos, 2010). To cope with these expectations, retail firms are being forced to rethink their human resource policies and strategies in a variety of areas including recruiting, compensation and employee development initiatives (Hurst and Good, 2009).

In order to recruit and retain desirable personnel in today's competitive labor market, it is essential for employers in the retailing industry to know what the potential graduates see as important and want from a career. It has been argued that the match between what a person perceives as important aspects of a career and the extent to which they believe a particular career offers these factors will play an essential role in that person's decision making process (Kyriacou and Coulthard, 2000). These views are important, as if the retailing industry is to attract well-qualified graduates, it needs to understand those factors that are important to them in choosing a career and then be able to persuade them that retailing offers what they are looking for.

The critical need to secure and retain a professional and skilled workforce to meet existing and emergent needs of the retailing industry underscores the importance of exploring the perceptions of undergraduate students who are likely to enter the workforce. Reports of a poor image in the eyes of generation Y students (Broadbridge *et al.*, 2007a, b) coupled with the difficulty in attracting good quality managers (Commins and Preston, 1997) and

relatively high levels of labor turnover (Rhoads *et al.*, 2002; Peterson, 2007; Leng, 2013) suggest that the retailing industry may face greater challenges than other sectors in attracting, recruiting and retaining high caliber staff.

Against the background of previous research in the area, the purpose of current investigation was to gather baseline information on undergraduate marketing students in Malaysia with respect to their perceptions of retailing as a career choice. The research was, therefore exploratory in nature. The initial findings of this research which rates students' perceptions of retailing as a career choice relative to other careers were discussed in Mokhlis (2014). The specific objectives of this study were to determine the factors associated with a career in retailing compared with those associated with students' preferred career option and to compare the views held by students who wish to research in the retailing industry upon graduation with those who do not. It is expected that the findings would provide insights into how the future retail workforce views employment in the retailing industry, as well as how well higher education has prepared students for their future careers.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Similar to previous studies which sought to identify the factors students consider important in a future career (Swinyard, 1981; Swinyard *et al.*, 1991; Broadbridge, 2003a), this study employed a quantitative approach through the use of self-administered, anonymous questionnaire survey. A quantitative approach and questionnaires were considered the most appropriate method for data collection as it allowed for a systematic collection of quantifiable data on a set of pre-determined variables. At the same time, it enabled the maximization of responses (Gravetter and Forzano, 2009). Questionnaire items were developed from a detailed review of variables used in previous studies (Swinyard, 1981; Swinyard *et al.*, 1991; Broadbridge, 2003a, b).

The questionnaire was distributed to all Bachelor of Management (Marketing) students within the School of Maritime Business and Management, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu. Lecturers were asked to administer the questionnaire during class time which was completed by students present that day. Participation was entirely voluntary with no coercion or pressure of any kind to participate. It took approximately 15 min to complete the questionnaire. This collection method resulted in 330 completed surveys, 271 of which were usable. The effective usable response rate of usable surveys,

therefore was 82%. This relatively high response rate was attributed to the self-administered approach undertaken in distributing questionnaires.

Completed questionnaires were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 15.0). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (i.e., frequency distribution, percentage, means, standard deviation) and paired samples t-test.

## RESULTS

Demographic information was collected to ascertain the profile of the respondents. Of 271 respondents, 19.9% were males and 80.1% were female. The students were aged between 20 and 38 years (with the average age being 22.3 years). With regard to racial background, 69.7% of the sample identified themselves as Malay, 4.1% as Chinese, 24% as Indian and 2.2% as other. The majority of students were in second year (40.2%), 35% were in third year and 24.7% in first year. About 32.1% students had taken retail management course. The details of the respondents profile can be seen from Table 1.

Students were asked to rate the importance of a number of specified factors when looking for a career. For simplicity, perceptions are summarized in group percentages as agree, neutral and disagree. The percentage of students ratings of the importance of factors in choosing a career is shown in Table 2. It can be seen that 93% of the students rated interesting and opportunities for advancement as the 2 most important factors, followed by challenging (87%), a good salary (86%) and rewarding (83%). Table 2 also displays the percentage of students ratings of the extent to which the students think a career in retailing will offer these factors. When examining the total sample by percentage for each item, the top 3 qualities identified as hallmarks of retailing career were ordered as follows:

- Consumer oriented (84%)
- Management responsibility (75%)
- Opportunities for advancement (74%)

On the negative side, however over half of the students rated a career in retailing as hard work (67%) and physically demanding (62%) while nearly half of them regard a career in retailing as routine (48%) and hectic (47%). About one-third of the students tended to agree that a career in retailing was mundane (32%), offering limited advancement (31%) and having unsociable hours (29%).

**Table 1: Respondents profile (N = 271)**

| Characteristics        | Count | Percent |
|------------------------|-------|---------|
| <b>Gender</b>          |       |         |
| Male                   | 54    | 19.9    |
| Female                 | 217   | 80.1    |
| <b>Race</b>            |       |         |
| Malay                  | 189   | 69.7    |
| Chinese                | 11    | 4.1     |
| Indian                 | 65    | 24.0    |
| Other                  | 6     | 2.2     |
| <b>Year of study</b>   |       |         |
| First year             | 67    | 24.7    |
| Second year            | 109   | 40.2    |
| Third year             | 95    | 35.0    |
| <b>Cumulative GPA</b>  |       |         |
| 2.00-2.49              | 15    | 5.5     |
| 2.50-2.99              | 102   | 37.6    |
| 3.00-3.49              | 78    | 28.8    |
| 3.50 and above         | 14    | 5.2     |
| <b>Retail course</b>   |       |         |
| Taken a retail course  | 87    | 32.1    |
| No retail course taken | 183   | 67.5    |

Adjusted (valid) percentages excluding missing observations

However, what is of critical importance is the extent to which students feel that the factors they regard as important in choosing a career are in fact offered by a career in retailing. This matching can be obtained by looking at each factor with a high percentage in Table 2 and seeing whether the students think retailing offers this factor. For instance, while 86% of students claim good salary as an important factor in choosing a future career, only 54% believe a career in retailing would definitely offer this.

Different groups of students may well have different views on the relative importance of these factors in choosing a career and the extent to which they thought retailing offers these factors. The most important division into groups here is that between students

- Who are seriously considering retailing as a career
- Those who are definitely not doing so
- Those who are undecided

In the questionnaire, the students were asked whether they intend to research in the retailing industry after graduation. The current research found marketing students in general were neutral about pursuing a career in retailing. About one third of the students (35.8%) intended to pursue retailing as a career (labeled as the pro-retailing group), 10% were not planning to research in the retailing industry upon graduation (labeled as the anti-retailing group) and the remaining 54.2 % claimed to be undecided.

To test for significant differences between the mean of preferred career and the mean of retailing career, a

Table 2: Collapsed percentage of students ratings of important factors in choosing a preferred career and a career in retailing (N = 271)

| Career factors                             | Preferred career (%) |         |          | Retailing career (%) |         |          |
|--|----------------------|---------|----------|----------------------|---------|----------|
|  | Agree                | Neutral | Disagree | Agree                | Neutral | Disagree |
| Interesting                                | 93                   | 6       | 2        | 65                   | 27      | 8        |
| Opportunities for advancement              | 93                   | 6       | 2        | 74                   | 19      | 7        |
| Challenging                                | 87                   | 12      | 1        | 70                   | 23      | 7        |
| A good salary                              | 86                   | 12      | 3        | 54                   | 39      | 7        |
| Rewarding                                  | 83                   | 15      | 2        | 58                   | 31      | 11       |
| Creative                                   | 75                   | 21      | 5        | 61                   | 28      | 11       |
| Management responsibility                  | 73                   | 23      | 4        | 75                   | 17      | 9        |
| Opportunities for training and development | 72                   | 22      | 6        | 61                   | 28      | 11       |
| Satisfying                                 | 70                   | 26      | 4        | 49                   | 41      | 11       |
| Independent                                | 69                   | 25      | 6        | 56                   | 34      | 10       |
| Consumer oriented                          | 69                   | 24      | 7        | 84                   | 13      | 3        |
| Require me to be mobile                    | 69                   | 25      | 6        | 69                   | 23      | 8        |
| Hard work                                  | 67                   | 20      | 13       | 67                   | 17      | 16       |
| Degree related                             | 67                   | 20      | 13       | 56                   | 30      | 14       |
| Diversified work                           | 66                   | 29      | 6        | 60                   | 32      | 9        |
| Exciting                                   | 63                   | 34      | 4        | 56                   | 35      | 9        |
| Prestigious                                | 63                   | 30      | 7        | 40                   | 47      | 13       |
| Opportunity to use initiative              | 59                   | 29      | 12       | 56                   | 32      | 12       |
| Changing, dynamic                          | 56                   | 35      | 9        | 53                   | 36      | 12       |
| People oriented                            | 55                   | 34      | 12       | 65                   | 27      | 8        |
| Competitive                                | 51                   | 38      | 12       | 51                   | 37      | 12       |
| Physically demanding                       | 40                   | 36      | 24       | 62                   | 21      | 17       |
| Prestige/status oriented                   | 33                   | 39      | 28       | 27                   | 48      | 26       |
| Hectic                                     | 33                   | 38      | 30       | 47                   | 27      | 27       |
| Routine                                    | 31                   | 37      | 32       | 48                   | 33      | 19       |
| Unsociable hours                           | 19                   | 33      | 48       | 29                   | 31      | 41       |
| Mundane                                    | 16                   | 37      | 47       | 32                   | 44      | 24       |
| Limited advancement                        | 11                   | 17      | 72       | 31                   | 22      | 48       |
| Poor working hours                         | 8                    | 15      | 77       | 19                   | 34      | 47       |
| Poor salary                                | 2                    | 12      | 86       | 13                   | 34      | 54       |

All the figures in this table have been rounded to the nearest whole number

paired samples t-test was conducted for each of these 3 groups. This test is applicable in this study as researchers are trying to better understand the domains of discrepancies between the preferred career and retailing. An alpha level 0.05 was used for these tests where a significance level  $p < 0.05$  shows that there is a significant difference at 95% confidence level. Table 3 shows the output for a series of paired t-tests performed on each of the 30 corresponding preferred career and retail career factors for all grouping. Means and standard deviations are found in Appendix A.

The results of the paired samples t-test for the pro-retailing group showed that there were 14 pairs of career factors with significant mean differences. About 8 of them, interesting, opportunities for advancement, a good salary, rewarding, independent, prestigious, satisfying and degree related, showed that the preferred career has a higher rating than the retailing career (as indicated by the negative t-values). For the undecided group, a paired sample t-test illustrates that 21 pair of career factors are seen to be significantly different. Of these, 11 preferred career factors had received a higher rating than the retailing career. These factors are interesting, challenging, opportunities for advancement,

a good salary, exciting, rewarding, creative, independent, prestigious, satisfying and degree related. As for the anti-retailing students, there were 18 significant differences between perceptions of a preferred career and retailing. Of these, 11 preferred career factors had received a higher rating than retailing, namely interesting, challenging, opportunities for advancement, a good salary, exciting, rewarding, creative, independent, prestigious, satisfying and opportunities for training and development.

When comparing the results of the 3 groups, it can be seen that there was substantially more congruence between pro-retailing students perceptions of a preferred career and their perception of retailing than there were for the undecided and anti-retailing students with pro-retailing students having congruence on 16 items, the undecided students on only nine and anti-retailing students on 12. It can be seen that all 3 groups perceived retailing as a career offers poor salary, mundane having poor working hours and limited advancement. This finding implies that the majority of students still hold a negative view of retailing as a graduate career, even among those who indicated they would pursue a career in the retailing industry after graduation.

Table 3: Paired samples t-tests

| Career factors                | Pro-retailing |         | Undecided |         | Anti-retailing |         |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------|-----------|---------|----------------|---------|
|                               | t             | p-value | t         | p-value | t              | p-value |
| Interesting                   | -5.033        | <0.01   | -10.392   | <0.01   | -8.117         | <0.01   |
| Opportunities for advancement | -3.768        | <0.01   | -7.874    | <0.01   | -5.499         | <0.01   |
| Challenging                   | -1.026        | NS      | -6.017    | <0.01   | -5.209         | <0.01   |
| A good salary                 | -4.570        | <0.01   | -8.081    | <0.01   | -5.427         | <0.01   |
| Rewarding                     | -3.078        | <0.01   | -7.476    | <0.01   | -5.326         | <0.01   |
| Creative                      | -0.411        | NS      | -3.138    | <0.01   | -3.252         | <0.01   |
| Management responsibility     | 1.824         | NS      | -0.513    | NS      | -1.442         | NS      |
| Training and development      | -1.402        | NS      | -1.961    | NS      | -2.954         | <0.01   |
| Satisfying                    | -3.946        | <0.01   | -4.669    | <0.01   | -4.770         | <0.01   |
| Independent                   | -2.341        | <0.05   | -2.229    | <0.05   | -2.068         | <0.05   |
| Consumer oriented             | 3.893         | <0.01   | 4.368     | <0.01   | 1.664          | NS      |
| Require me to be mobile       | -1.551        | NS      | 0.548     | NS      | -0.625         | NS      |
| Hard work                     | -1.770        | NS      | 0.254     | NS      | 0.122          | NS      |
| Degree related                | -2.293        | <0.05   | -3.230    | <0.01   | -1.564         | NS      |
| Diversified work              | -0.716        | NS      | -1.726    | NS      | -1.000         | NS      |
| Exciting                      | 1.598         | NS      | -1.993    | <0.05   | -2.753         | <0.01   |
| Prestigious                   | -2.076        | <0.05   | -6.346    | <0.01   | -2.302         | <0.05   |
| Opportunity to use initiative | 0.453         | NS      | -0.246    | NS      | -0.979         | NS      |
| Changing, dynamic             | 0.095         | NS      | -1.334    | NS      | -1.433         | NS      |
| People oriented               | 2.247         | <0.05   | 2.637     | <0.01   | 0.473          | NS      |
| Competitive                   | -0.205        | NS      | 1.648     | NS      | -1.022         | NS      |
| Physically demanding          | 1.747         | NS      | 5.078     | <0.01   | 3.376          | <0.01   |
| Prestige/status oriented      | 0.912         | NS      | -0.926    | NS      | -1.388         | NS      |
| Hectic                        | 1.584         | NS      | 4.163     | <0.01   | 0.284          | NS      |
| Routine                       | 1.222         | NS      | 4.930     | <0.01   | 2.167          | <0.05   |
| Unsociable hours              | 0.411         | NS      | 3.158     | <0.01   | 2.551          | <0.05   |
| Mundane                       | 3.224         | <0.01   | 5.569     | <0.01   | 3.893          | <0.01   |
| Limited advancement           | 3.547         | <0.01   | 7.174     | <0.01   | 3.337          | <0.01   |
| Poor working hours            | 2.641         | <0.01   | 8.071     | <0.01   | 5.896          | <0.01   |
| Poor salary                   | 4.719         | <0.01   | 8.492     | <0.01   | 4.197          | <0.01   |

Mean scores are based on a 5 point scale where 1 = Strongly agree; 5 = Strongly disagree; NS = Non-significant

## DISCUSSION

The current study investigated marketing students perceptions of the image of retailing as a graduate career. A number of interesting results have been noted in this study. The main findings concur with those of Swinyard (1981), Swinyard *et al.* (1991) and Broadbridge (2003a, b) who all found that students in general do not have a noticeably enthusiastic view of retailing. Although, some positive factors were ascribed to a career in retailing (e.g. interesting, challenging, having opportunities for advancement, good salary and rewarding), in general, preferred careers were rated as having a far superior image than a career in retailing. In fact, there remain many negative connotations associated with retailing as a career including hard work, physically demanding, routine and hectic. A career in retailing was also regarded by some respondents as mundane having unsociable hours and provide limited advancement. Possibly the most alarming finding is that among 35.8% of respondents who indicated they would pursue a career in the retailing industry after graduation, they tended to view a career in retailing as offering poor salary, having poor working hours and limited advancement.

Marketing educators can play a pivotal role in eradicating some of the misperceptions about the image of retailing that occupy students minds. Studies indicate that many students has no real understanding of the types of research in the retailing industry and with little idea of the employment conditions in the industry (Commins and Preston, 1997; Broadbridge, 2003a, b). Educators can help overcome this problem by giving all students an extensive overview of the types of careers available in the retailing industry and the research conditions on offer, including pay levels, promotion opportunities and career paths. Educators need to emphasize the intrinsic rewards aspects of retailing as a profession (challenging and complex/non-routine, satisfying, provide sense of accomplishment and provide opportunity to use ones creativity). Educators can also invite corporate visitors to the class to provide presentations on the job actually entails. The use of real life examples of different cases will help to emphasize the idea that opportunity for advancement exists in the retail profession. More outside of classroom or informal one-to-one small group meetings with students and bringing these students to meet with the industry partners and some role models in the industry are necessary

tonurture and mentor students to develop more positive attitudes toward theretail sector and to help them to choose their career path in the future.

An effort should be made to establish a closer working relationship between the industry and the university community. Retail recruiters should attempt to become involved in speaking to student organizations (such as marketing clubs and student’ societies). Efforts could be directed toward demonstrating that retailing is a viable career opportunity. Making presentation to classes or student groups, providing internships to students, arranging for students to spend a day in the field with retail managers and soliciting the assistance of career consultants are all ways to attempt altering student perceptions. Broadbridge (2003a, b) endorse the important role that retail employees can play in this process.

The results of this study are useful, however some limitations of this study must be acknowledged. Perhaps, the most striking limitation of the study is that the results represent the perceptions of marketing students at a single university. These respondents are probably not representative of all university students, thus reducing generalizability of the results. The present study could be expanded to include students from a variety of universities and colleges. About 1 study may use a

broader-based sample than was utilized in this study with the comparison between marketing and non-marketing majors. A comparison study between the perceptions of undergraduate and graduate business students toward retailing as a career may also be useful. In addition, researchers should continue examining the perceptions of employees currently employed in the retail sector and compare it with business and non-business students as potential retail employees.

### CONCLUSION

Students are the potential supply of labor in the market and having positive attitudes will more likely lead to greater attraction and retention of these graduates in the industry. However, the findings of this study indicate that the negative image of retailing as a career is still very much alive and well in the minds of students. It is not surprising then that many students are ambivalence to seriously consider a career in retailing. Though, past studies have recommended strategies to educate students, it appears that very little has changed in terms of students perceptions of retailing. It is imperative that educators and the industry take an even more active role in altering the misperceptions students have about retailing as a career.

### APPENDIX

Mean and standard deviation of factors in choosing a preferred career and a career in retailing

| Career factors                | Preferred career |             |             | Retail career |             |             |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|
|                               | Pro              | Un          | Anti        | Pro           | Un          | Anti        |
| Interesting                   | 1.42 (0.64)      | 1.47 (0.71) | 1.37 (0.56) | 1.79 (0.69)   | 2.31 (0.95) | 3.00 (1.11) |
| Opportunities for advancement | 1.44 (0.78)      | 1.43 (0.63) | 1.56 (0.64) | 1.75 (0.92)   | 2.05 (0.87) | 2.59 (1.01) |
| Challenging                   | 1.64 (0.79)      | 1.66 (0.70) | 1.56 (0.70) | 1.73 (0.80)   | 2.18 (0.92) | 2.63 (1.08) |
| A good salary                 | 1.64 (0.81)      | 1.64 (0.82) | 1.69 (0.88) | 2.06 (0.92)   | 2.33 (0.93) | 2.85 (1.05) |
| Rewarding                     | 1.72 (0.83)      | 1.77 (0.80) | 1.59 (0.80) | 2.01 (0.85)   | 2.44 (1.03) | 2.93 (0.96) |
| Creative                      | 1.92 (0.93)      | 1.99 (0.90) | 1.96 (0.81) | 1.96 (0.98)   | 2.32 (1.04) | 2.78 (0.97) |
| Management responsibility     | 1.90 (0.92)      | 1.98 (0.90) | 2.07 (0.96) | 1.72 (0.79)   | 2.03 (1.02) | 2.44 (1.12) |
| Training and development      | 1.93 (0.82)      | 2.10 (0.98) | 2.12 (0.88) | 2.05 (0.81)   | 2.30 (1.01) | 2.92 (1.00) |
| Satisfying                    | 1.94 (0.73)      | 2.13 (0.93) | 2.26 (0.81) | 2.26 (0.86)   | 2.55 (0.86) | 3.04 (0.90) |
| Independent                   | 1.88 (0.87)      | 2.10 (1.01) | 2.04 (1.02) | 2.12 (0.84)   | 2.34 (1.02) | 2.59 (1.22) |
| Consumer oriented             | 1.98 (0.79)      | 2.11 (1.04) | 2.48 (1.19) | 1.61 (0.81)   | 1.69 (0.77) | 2.00 (1.07) |
| Require me to be mobile       | 1.85 (0.87)      | 2.12 (0.92) | 2.15 (1.06) | 2.01 (0.91)   | 2.06 (0.99) | 2.30 (0.82) |
| Hard work                     | 1.89 (0.99)      | 2.19 (1.09) | 2.37 (1.39) | 2.11 (1.14)   | 2.16 (1.20) | 2.33 (1.21) |
| Degree related                | 1.93 (1.13)      | 2.04 (1.18) | 2.59 (1.28) | 2.16 (1.17)   | 2.40 (1.12) | 3.04 (1.06) |
| Diversified work              | 1.99 (0.86)      | 2.12 (0.93) | 2.44 (0.97) | 2.06 (0.84)   | 2.30 (0.96) | 2.70 (0.99) |
| Exciting                      | 2.16 (0.82)      | 2.25 (0.84) | 2.11 (0.80) | 2.01 (0.91)   | 2.41 (0.93) | 2.70 (0.95) |
| Prestigious                   | 2.17 (0.89)      | 2.10 (0.89) | 2.59 (0.89) | 2.38 (0.98)   | 2.67 (0.92) | 3.19 (0.88) |
| Opportunity to use initiative | 2.32 (0.93)      | 2.38 (0.96) | 2.35 (1.26) | 2.27 (1.08)   | 2.40 (1.05) | 2.62 (0.90) |
| Changing, dynamic             | 2.24 (0.99)      | 2.31 (0.89) | 2.48 (0.80) | 2.23 (0.87)   | 2.45 (0.99) | 2.81 (0.92) |
| People oriented               | 2.28 (0.95)      | 2.36 (0.98) | 2.52 (1.16) | 2.06 (1.00)   | 2.12 (1.00) | 2.41 (1.12) |
| Competitive                   | 2.41 (0.89)      | 2.49 (0.96) | 2.38 (1.16) | 2.43 (1.02)   | 2.33 (0.98) | 2.65 (1.22) |
| Physically demanding          | 2.60 (1.12)      | 2.81 (1.19) | 3.00 (0.88) | 2.37 (1.23)   | 2.27 (1.10) | 2.11 (1.15) |
| Prestige/status oriented      | 2.95 (1.03)      | 2.95 (1.07) | 2.89 (1.25) | 2.85 (0.93)   | 3.03 (0.99) | 3.30 (0.78) |
| Hectic                        | 2.96 (1.10)      | 2.94 (1.08) | 2.96 (1.22) | 2.75 (1.20)   | 2.49 (1.23) | 2.89 (1.31) |
| Routine                       | 2.89 (1.14)      | 3.05 (1.15) | 3.11 (1.15) | 2.74 (1.17)   | 2.48 (1.17) | 2.52 (1.16) |
| Unsocial hours                | 3.46 (1.07)      | 3.37 (1.11) | 3.67 (1.04) | 3.41 (1.12)   | 3.01 (1.23) | 2.93 (1.49) |
| Mundane                       | 3.33 (1.06)      | 3.39 (1.08) | 3.56 (0.97) | 2.98 (1.00)   | 2.82 (1.23) | 2.59 (1.19) |
| Limited advancement           | 3.94 (1.10)      | 3.95 (1.03) | 3.88 (1.11) | 3.45 (1.24)   | 3.18 (1.20) | 2.85 (1.16) |
| Poor working hours            | 3.97 (0.99)      | 4.05 (1.03) | 4.35 (0.98) | 3.69 (1.01)   | 3.33 (1.15) | 3.00 (1.20) |
| Poor salary                   | 4.27 (0.78)      | 4.29 (0.77) | 4.26 (0.86) | 3.81 (0.99)   | 3.55 (1.06) | 3.30 (1.20) |

Mean scores are based on a five point scale where 1 = Strongly agree; 5 = Strongly disagree. Figures in parentheses are standard deviations

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