

Determining Factors for Educating Students for Choosing to Work for Foreign Units: Absence of Self-Efficacy

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ABSTRACT

Educating our students in developing countries such as Vietnam is becoming necessary. So first of all, this study aims to identify factors that impact on students' decision to work for a foreign company for those who are studying in the field of social sciences and humanities. Based on 508 responses, the results from linear regression analysis shows that Self-Interests, Self-Outcome Expectations (internal factors), University's Gains, and References (external factors) were factors that affect student workplace choice. Meanwhile, the factor of capacity ("Self-efficacy") to perform the task ("Working environment") has no statistical relationship. This result suggests for educational managers, business managers in general and foreign enterprises in particular to coordinate vocational education for students.

Keywords: Workplace choice, Graduates' career choice, work for foreign enterprises, FDI.

INTRODUCTION

Jobs –are always a concern for many people, especially students.

From the perspective of society, most graduates face difficulties in finding suitable and stable jobs. One of the reasons is that they lack specific career orientation in choosing a specialty that suits their abilities. Some students choose disciplines that do not match their capacity or respond to labour market development trends. Businesses are very interested in recruiting graduates for their knowledge, ability to collaborate, working skills, communication skills, knowledge about the corporate cultural environment and cooperation, industrial working style and foreign language skills. This shows that students need to be prepared with the knowledge and skills to respond to the needs of the market.

From the perspective of students, the choice of workplace is not a simple matter. Many questions are raised, such as whether to work in an urban centre or their hometown; work for a small company or a large corporation; work for government agencies or private companies; work for domestic or foreign businesses; start a business; or go abroad to work. Their intention to choose a workplace is influenced not only by their professional knowledge (field of study), soft skills, and requirements from employers but also by the working environment, conditions for a career path, and their family's expectations as well.

Today, the presence of foreign enterprises and international organizations (referred to as foreign units) in the domestic labour market provides a diversity of workplaces choices. This study aims to identify factors that influence the choice of working for foreign organizations by students who study in the field of humanities and social sciences. This field provides students with a set of skills for a broad range of professional paths, including business, communication, politics, languages, literature, history, education, psychology, anthropology and international relations. Graduates gain a solid liberal arts foundation and detailed exploration of the theoretical aspects of the field. This study helps educators develop training programs that can help students immediately access the labour market after graduation. In addition, students also understand themselves better in order to prepare for gaining new knowledge, experience and skills.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theories of career choice and development have been developed by many researchers from the 1960s to the present. Some theories are widely accepted and applied such as Self-Concept Theory (Super 1963, 1964, 1980, 1990); Theory of Vocational Choice (Holland, 1973, 1985, 1992, 1997); Theory of Circumscription and Compromise (Gottfredson, 1981, 1996, 2002, 2005); Theory of Work Adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984, 1991, 2002, 2005); and Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent, Brown and Hackett, 2002; Lent, 2005).

Super's Self-Concept Theory focused on explaining individual's career development which depended on each life-role corresponding to each life-stage of a person. At each stage, there are four to five tasks to be performed. Career choices usually begin in the second stage of ages 14 to 24, called Exploration. At this stage, individuals choose a career based on their own personal interests and capacities, which are obtained via classes, working

experiences, and hobbies. From Holland’s perspective, the occupational choice of individuals depends on their type of personality. Each personality type will correspond to a certain number of occupations. He identified six RIASEC personality types, including Realistic (R), Investigative (I), Artistic (A), Social (S), Enterprising (E), or Conventional (C). Thus, in order to choose a career, the person first discovers his / her personality. Gottfredson analyzed an individual’s career choice during the first 20 years of life through four developmental processes: cognitive development; self-creation; circumscription; and compromise. In general, individuals choose a job that is compatible with their perceptions of themselves. These perceptions are related to their self-directed development, their limitations such as their academic ability, personal experience, costs, efforts, interests, and talents; as well as external impacts that they cannot control such as labour market conditions and available training programs. Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA) developed by Dawis and Lofquist reflected the correspondence between a person’s needs and competencies with the working environment. A proper match will create job satisfaction. To get satisfaction, the working environment must satisfy the needs of workers. In turn, employees must have the ability to complete tasks. In addition, workers have to make adjustments to create a fit between the individual’s work personality and the work environment. In other words, people will choose the occupation that they have enough skills and capacity to perform and in which their needs will be met. Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) has been developed with an integrated model of three continuous stages which range from career interests to career choice (Choice Goals and Choice Actions) and career development (Performance Domains and Attainments). The three key factors in this model are Self-Efficacy Expectations, Outcomes Expectation and Personal Goals. Self-Efficacy Expectations derived from Bandura’s Self-Efficacy (1977) were beliefs about one’s ability to perform a specific behaviour. Outcomes Expectations were the expectations of achievement while performing a behavior. Personal Goals are objectives that the individual sets out in proportion to their competencies and expected results. In the SCCI model, Self-Efficacy and Outcomes Expectation were two factors that affect the whole process from Interests (Interest Model) → Choice Goals, Choice Actions (Choice Model) → Performance Domains and Attainments (Performance Model). In addition, both Choice Goals and Choice Action are influenced by external factors (Proximal Environmental Influences). Thus, the choice of career will be influenced by four factors: Self-Efficacy Expectations, Outcomes Expectation, Interests and Proximal Environmental Influences.

In summary, career choice was a process based on many dimensions. According to the five major theories, the individual was central in relation to career choice. The decisions of individuals were based on self-awareness, including internal competencies in knowledge, skills, work experience; personality; psychological needs; interests; and expectations for career development, work environment and income opportunities. In addition, external factors also contribute to individual decisions. This study inherits from previous studies on the decisive role of job seekers in career choice. A student’s workplace choice model is proposed in the Figure 1:

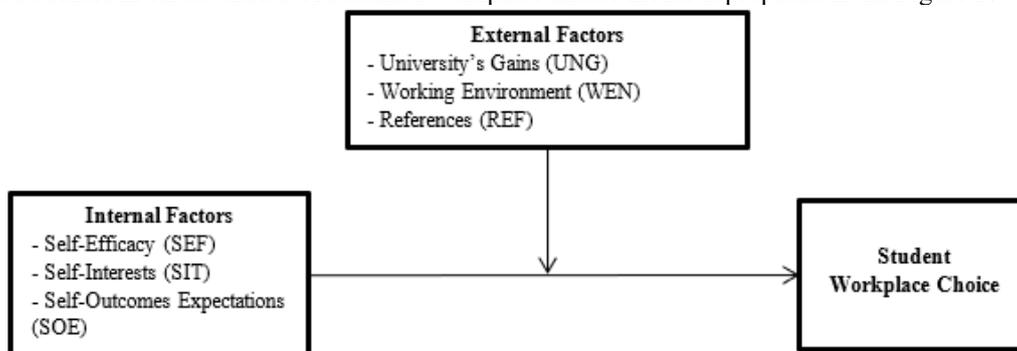


Fig.1: Student’s Workplace Choice Model

To choose to work for foreign units, students will first consider their ability to conduct the job requirements and tasks (**Self-Efficacy**). This ability can include intelligent ability, professional qualifications, soft skills and work experience. Students choose to work for a foreign unit because of personal concerns (**Self-Interests**). They like to work in an international environment, a path to career development, professional development, managerial skills development and overcoming challenges. Working for a foreign unit, students certainly have high **outcome expectations** that may have the opportunity to live abroad to discover new things. These expectations are set in comparison with working at a local private company or government agency. Students believe that by working in a foreign unit they will receive a higher salary, higher income, more benefits on bonuses and insurance. Besides, the opportunity to apply experience into practical work is a factor that students care about. And Dinh Tran Ngoc Huy, Pham Ngoc Van, & Nguyen Thi Thu Ha (2021) also stated that Vietnam labor market need to be trained more to increase higher competitiveness compared to other Asian countries. Their skills such as group work, individual and computer capabilities need to be improved during and to prepare for jobs in EVFTA.

Because job seekers play a decisive role, external actors are only moderators rather than direct agents as Lent, Brown, and Hackett (2002) proposed. In this study, the **university's gains** are one of external affects. Choosing to work for a foreign unit will be easier once students are equipped with knowledge and skills in educated knowledge and specialized knowledge, from relevant subjects in particular. Students tend to choose jobs based on their favorite subject or extensive knowledge. Besides, by studying in a school that is highly accredited for that specialty, students are more confident in choosing a workplace, especially foreign units. The **working environment** is a key factor influencing students' choice to work for a foreign unit. They assume that the working environment of foreign units is very professionally managed; any opportunities are equal for everyone; employees are assigned suitable placements matched with expertise and capacity; most employees are quality employees, and colleagues are supportive and friendly. Furthermore, the reputation of the foreign unit is one of the dominant factors in the student's choice. At the same time, **references** such as word of mouth, guidance from parents, friends, counselors and idols may influence the student's choice. Family financial condition is also a contributing factor in the decision-making process.

Last but not least, Vu Thi Thuy Dung, Le Ngoc Nuong and Dinh Tran Ngoc Huy et al (2021) stated that Employment after graduation is always an issue that is of concern not only for students but also for families, schools and society. Having a job in the right career training is always a dream of most not only for graduate students but also for those who are still sitting on university lecture chairs.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study applied a quantitative approach. The survey was conducted through a questionnaire posted on Google Docs. Links were posted on media such as the faculties' fan page, closed groups on Facebook and personal emails. Subjects were students of the University of Social Sciences and Humanities (USSH), Vietnam National University of Ho Chi Minh City, and University of Finance and Marketing (UFM) in Ho Chi Minh City.

The questionnaire consisted of 2 parts. Part 1 was the respondent's identification information, including school year, faculty, working experience, and intention to work for foreign units. Part 2 was questions measured by the 5-level Likert scale. Dependent variable – "Student's Workplace Choice" (SWC) had three indicators. The three independent variables were 1) Self-Efficacy (SEF) (4 indicators), 2) Self-Interests (SIT) (7 indicators), 3) Self-Outcome Expectations (SOE) (5 indicators). The three moderating variables were 1) University's Gains (UNG) (4 indicators); 2) Working Environment (WEN) (6 indicators), and 3) References (REF) (5 indicators).

The survey was conducted from February to April 2019. In total 611 responses were received, of which 554 were valid responses, except 57 answers of non-USSH and non-UFM students. Among 554 responses, 508 students had an intention to work for foreign units (91.87%). According to Tabachnick and Fidell (1996), the minimum sample size must be 298 ($n = 50+8*m = 50+8*31$). In this study, the actual sample size was 508, two thirds more than the required sample size.

For data analysis, the study followed step-by-step: Descriptive analysis, Reliability test, Validity test, and Regression test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Within the total of 508 respondents, 246 students were at USSH, 48.4%. They mainly came from the International Language Faculty (such as Russian, English, German, Italian, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese), International Relations Faculty and Social Work Faculty. For UFM, 262 students (51.6%) were majoring in the faculties of international business, business administration, accounting, banking and finance, and tourism. Students in the first year (freshman) was 15.9%, sophomore: 21.9%; junior: 34.8%; senior: 26.0%; and graduates: 1.4%. Most students in years 3 and 4 had spent time doing internships or part-time jobs. However, only 114 students (34.8%) had been work experience. Among the USSH students, those who had not done part-time jobs or internships were 3 times higher than the number of those with work experience (180 vs. 66). Meanwhile, nearly 41.2% of UFM students had work experience (See Table A1. Data Description of Respondents).

The data was tested reliability via the value of Cronbach's Alpha. According to Nunally and Burnstein (1994), the Cronbach's Alpha value must be greater than 0.6 and the observed variables with the variable-total correlation coefficient must be greater than 0.3. Two deleted items were Academic Achievement (SEF2) and Experience Application (SOE3). Table A2. Summary of Reliability Test represented the result of the reliability test.

The validity test was reflected by the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). EFA is used to restructure variables based on strong correlation between constructs. According to Hoang Trong & Chu Nguyen Mong Ngoc (2008), $0.5 \leq KMO \leq 1$ is accepted and Bartlett test has Sig. < 0.05. In addition, Cumulative % of Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings is greater than 50% (Gerbing & Anderson, 1998). The 26 items of six independent variables were categorized into six similar groups. Table A3. Summary of Validity Test represented the result of the validity test.

In order to choose the best model for determining the factors affecting students' choice to work for foreign units, we experimented with many specifications.

The first specifications used pooled data:

The basic specification (1.1) was to test the influence of internal factors: X1-Self-Efficacy (SEF), X2-Self-Interests (SIN), X3-Self-Outcome Expectations (SOE) on Y1-Student Workplace Choice (SWC).

$$Y1 = \beta_0 + \beta_1X1 + \beta_2X2 + \beta_3X3 + \alpha \quad (1.1)$$

The extended specifications (1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3) added the external factor: X4-Working Environment (WEN), X5-University's Gains (UNG), and X6-References (REF) in turn to the basic specification.

$$Y1 = \beta_0 + \beta_1X1 + \beta_2X2 + \beta_3X3 + \beta_3X4 + \alpha \quad (1.1.1)$$

$$Y1 = \beta_0 + \beta_1X1 + \beta_2X2 + \beta_3X3 + \beta_3X4 + \beta_3X5 + \alpha \quad (1.1.2)$$

$$Y1 = \beta_0 + \beta_1X1 + \beta_2X2 + \beta_3X3 + \beta_3X4 + \beta_3X5 + \beta_3X6 + \alpha \quad (1.1.3)$$

The second specifications were a split variable ID (proxy for identification) to specify students from USSH and UFM. Thus, we had specifications of 2a (2a.1, 2a.2.1, 2a.2.2, 2a.2.3) for USSH and 2b for UFM (2b.1 (2b.2.1, 2b.2.2, 2b.2.3).

According to Mooi and Sarstedt (2011), R², adjusted R² and F-value are used to assess the model fit. The R² value indicates the association between the dependent variable and the independent variables. The higher the value, the more the variation of the dependent variable is explained by the variation in the independent variable. Although a higher R² means a better model fit there is no rule for a minimum accepted value. It differs and depends on the research area. The adjusted R² is useful for comparing regression models which are similar dependent variables. The model which has the highest adjusted R² should be collected. The F-test determines the significance of the overall model fit. Table A4 gave a summary of the specifications. The specification (1.1.3) had the highest adjusted R²; therefore, its result was counted.

Table 1 showed the regression result. The value of R², adjusted R² and F-value were 0.372, 0.365 and 49.393 respectively. This model is significant. In addition, the VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) < 10, there is no multicollinearity.

Table 1: The regression results

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.602 ^a	.362	.355	1.50537		
a. Predictors: (Constant), F_REF, F_SEF, F_SIT, F_UNG, F_SOE, F_WEN						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	644.931	6	107.488	47.433	.000 ^b
	Residual	1135.329	501	2.266		
	Total	1780.260	507			
a. Dependent Variable: F_SWC						
b. Predictors: (Constant), F_REF, F_SEF, F_SIT, F_UNG, F_SOE, F_WEN						

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3.231	.601		5.380	.000		
	F_SOE	.076	.033	.107	2.320	.021	.601	1.664
	F_SEF	.048	.033	.060	1.489	.137	.788	1.270
	F_SIT	.144	.040	.158	3.592	.000	.655	1.527
	F_WEN	.041	.026	.079	1.580	.115	.515	1.943
	F_UNG	.198	.029	.299	6.717	.000	.641	1.560
	F_REF	.067	.020	.129	3.320	.001	.847	1.181
a. Dependent Variable: F_SWC								

In this model, Self-Interests (SIT), Self-Outcome Expectations (SOE), University's Gains (UNG), and References (REF) had a positive relationship to Student Workplace Choice (SWC); while Self-Efficacy (SEF) and Working Environment (WEN) had no statistical significance. The value of B shows the influence of a 1-unit change in the independent variable on the dependent variable; while the value of beta reflects the extent of influence of the independent variable. The highest absolute value, the strongest variable effects the dependent variable. In this model, if the students strongly recognize their interests and expectations, the possibility of choosing to work for a foreign unit increases by 0.144 and 0.076-unit respectively. Besides, the increase in University's Gains and References' convincing, the choice to work for a foreign unit increases by 0.198 and 0.067-unit respectively. Based on the value of beta, the University's Gains (0.299) had the strongest effect on student workplace choice. The order of influence was as following:

$$SWC = 3.231 + .299UNC + .158SIT + .129REF + .107SOE + .601$$

Among the three core factors that represented personal abilities (SEF), interests (SIT) and expectations (SOE), the interests and expectations had a stronger impact on student's choices. At this age (around 17-22 years old), students had just escaped 12 years of being bound by the curriculum in high school. In an open environment of university, students made their own decisions based on their own interests (e.g., professional development, skills development, hobbies, and overcoming challenges) and expectations (e.g., high income, bonus, insurance). Among the three external factors that influence students' choices (gains from universities (UNG), work environment (WEN) and orientation from those around them (REF)), gains from universities and references had the stronger impact. In particular, gains from universities such as professional knowledge, specialized knowledge, favourite subjects and reputation of the school had the most powerful impact, stronger than the internal factors mentioned above. This showed that students recognized the full worth of an appropriate training program that gave them the ability, capacity, skills and experience for their career choice. Even at an adult age, everyone will need to listen to advice for things they have not yet experienced. Therefore, the impact of the students' choice was inevitably influenced by family, friends, teachers, idols and family economic situation.

The non-significance of self-efficacy might explain that the students might not aware the importance of their own capacity. They were not entirely confident in their own abilities and had not yet fully discovered their abilities. They still need time to improve academic abilities, skills, experience and knowledge. For the working environment, students thought highly of fairness and transparency in management as well as promotion opportunities. They appreciated a work environment where they had chances to learn from competent and friendly colleagues. However, this issue might not strongly influence on their thinking.

CONCLUSION

It is conceivable that students choose to work for foreign units because they interest and expect good prospects in the future. This choice is strongly influenced by their belief in the knowledge they receive from the university as well as the advice from those around them.

An important piece of the puzzle is missing: the capacity to accomplish tasks. Students are either too confident in their own abilities to be able to complete any task; or students themselves do not really understand what they have and what they do not have yet. The research result supports the connection between universities and enterprises in labor training.

Finding a job is not just for a job or for an income; it is a process of discovering oneself and finding meaning in life. Therefore, as job seekers students must recognize the goal of life to nurture interests, to enrich outcome expectations and to build up capacity to catch opportunities. The education institutes should revise, modify, and improve their curriculums to provide students enough competencies to meet the market's requirements and trends. At the same time, employers in general and foreign units in particular should improve the working environment to attract high quality employees.

The issue of career choice is developed along with time and changes in society. Therefore, the topic is forever ripe for studying.

Limitation of research: We need to expand further analysis on solutions for students in post-graduation to enter into FDI firms effectively.

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APPENDIX

Table A1: Data Description of Respondents

		Frequency		Percent		Mean		Std Dev	
		USSH	UFM	USSH	UFM	USSH	UFM	USSH	UFM
Year in	Freshman	53	28	21.5	10.7	2.38	3.10	.964	1.016
	Sophomore	79	32	32.1	12.2				
	Junior	82	95	33.3	36.3				
	Senior	32	100	13.0	38.2				
	Bachelor	0	7	0.0	2.7				
	Total	246	262	100.0	100.0				
Internship	Yes	66	111	26.8	42.4	1.73	1.58	.444	.495
	No	180	151	73.2	57.6				
	Total	246	262	100.0	100.0				

Table A2: Summary of Reliability Test

	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted		Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
SWC	0.713		SOE4		0.782
SWC 1		0.653	SOE5		0.758
SWC2		0.572	UNG	0.833	
SWC3		0.65	UNG1		0.799
SEF	0.682		UNG2		0.785
SEF1		.570	UNG3		0.802
SEF2		.688*	UNG4		0.766
SEF3		0.579	WEN	0.851	
SEF4		0.625	WEN1		0.826
SIT	0.746		WEN2		0.817
SIT1		0.739	WEN3		0.839
SIT2		0.743	WEN4		0.818
SIT3		0.679	WEN5		0.827
SIT4		0.721	WEN6		0.828
SIT5		0.693	REF	0.719	
SIT6		0.698	REF1		0.695
SIT7		0.73	REF2		0.675

SOE	0.822	
SOE1		0.778
SOE2		0.763
SOE3		.843*

REF3		0.645
REF4		0.658
REF5		0.686

* Items was removed

Table A3. Summary of Reliability Test

Dependent variable: Student Career Choice

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.672
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	301.890
	df	3
	Sig.	.000

Independent Variables

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.891
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	5254.067
	df	325
	Sig.	0.000

Rotated Component Matrix^a						
	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
suitable position assignment	.771					
managerial quality	.728					
friendly colleagues	.715					
quality employees	.641					
reputation of the company	.598					
fair and advanced opportunities	.580					
high income		.784				
bonus		.771				
insurance		.733				
well-paid		.721				
accepted accreditation			.794			
relevant subjects			.765			
favourite subjects			.745			
educated knowledge			.655			
friends				.739		
idols				.705		
family				.644		
family financial condition				.626		
counsellors				.603		
soft skills					.781	
personal experience					.710	
academic ability					.692	
career path orientation					.580	
working in global						.799
living abroad						.742
professional development						.605

Table A4: Summary of Specifications

	POOLED DATA					USSH					UFM				
	R ²	Adjusted R ²	B	Beta	Sig	R ²	Adjusted R ²	B	Beta	Sig	R ²	Adjusted R ²	B	Beta	Sig
Constant	.257	.252	4.545		.000	.353	.345	3.003		.000	.121	.111	7.111		.000
F_SOE			.158	.222	.000			.221	.282	.000			.096	.153	.025
F_SEF			.109	.134	.001			.094	.109	.055			.096	.129	.035
F_SIT			.268	.294	.000			.328	.346	.000			.167	.193	.003

	POOLED DATA					USSH					UFM				
	R ²	Adjusted R ²	B	Beta	Sig	R ²	Adjusted R ²	B	Beta	Sig	R ²	Adjusted R ²	B	Beta	Sig
	.276	.270	4.056		.000	.365	.354	2.696		.002	.153	.139	6.327		.000
F_SOE			.109	.154	.002			.174	.222	.001			.050	.080	.258
F_SEF			.072	.089	.036			.049	.057	.351			.073	.099	.103
F_SIT			.223	.245	.000			.296	.312	.000			.112	.130	.057
F_WEN			.098	.187	.000			.089	.156	.037			.104	.218	.002
	POOLED DATA					USSH					UFM				
	R ²	Adjusted R ²	B	Beta	Sig	R ²	Adjusted R ²	B	Beta	Sig	R ²	Adjusted R ²	B	Beta	Sig
	.348	.342	3.655		.000	.416	.403	2.496		.003	.257	.242	5.328		.000
F_SOE			.084	.119	.011			.161	.205	.002			.007	.011	.872
F_SEF			.044	.055	.178			.011	.013	.833			.063	.086	.134
F_SIT			.160	.175	.000			.211	.222	.000			.098	.113	.077
F_WEN			.045	.086	.088			.055	.096	.188			.031	.066	.353
F_UNG			.218	.329	.000			.192	.281	.000			.246	.385	.000
	POOLED DATA					USSH					UFM				
	R ²	Adjusted R ²	B	Beta	Sig	R ²	Adjusted R ²	B	Beta	Sig	R ²	Adjusted R ²	B	Beta	Sig
	.362	.355	3.231		.000	.421	.406	2.153		.012	.297	.280	4.780		.000
F_SOE			.076	.107	.021			.160	.205	.002			-.015	-.023	.724
F_SEF			.048	.060	.137			.011	.013	.823			.074	.100	.073
F_SIT			.144	.158	.000			.200	.211	.001			.074	.086	.171
F_WEN			.041	.079	.115			.051	.089	.224			.030	.062	.370
F_UNG			.198	.299	.000			.178	.261	.000			.218	.341	.000
F_REF			.067	.129	.001			.049	.080	.137			.093	.216	.000