

Business Sophomore Students' Perceptions of the Accounting Profession: Evidence for Any Changes in Two Decades

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This study examines and tests whether if the business college students' thoughts and perceptions of the accounting profession have changed within the current environment of a knowledge-based society. Early studies argued that the accounting profession had a negative image and reputations around the world prior to the innovation of smartphone technologies. Many of those concluded that the accounting profession is stereotyped as being conformist, cold, submissive, and lacking in social skills. This study first scans and summarizes certain previous studies on the matters that were realized before smartphone technologies first appeared, and then, through the use of a survey, explored business college students' thoughts and perceptions in order to achieve the goal of the study. As such, this study looks to provide updated information about the business college students' thoughts and perceptions of the accounting profession, and states any changes occurred.

Keywords: careers, accounting, accounting profession, perceptions, business sophomores

INTRODUCTION

Five decades have passed since DeCoster (1971) stated the accountants were viewed as “*impersonal, quantitative, inflexible, orderly, and introverted.*” Some other studies followed and asserted that accountants, accounting professionals, and the accounting profession have held negative images in the perceptions of different groups of people (Albrecht, & Sack, 2000; Davidson, & Etherington, 1995; Hunt, Falgiani, & Intrieri, 2004; Parker, 2000; Pekdemir, & Pekdemir, 2010; Reckers, & Bates, 1978; Siegel, 2000; Taylor, & Dixon, 1979). Therefore, the accounting profession has not generally attracted the best students (Elliott, 1991; William, 1991). Since these studies were first conducted, many things have changed and continue to change as the world has become increasingly globalized leading to greater global

connectivity (Abbott, & Coenen, 2008). The last two decades, in particular, have witnessed major developments that impacted the world in many areas particularly in regards to technological developments and the evolution of information and communication areas, that have changed daily life of not only individuals, but also the whole of society (Kinsbruner, & Reock, 2020). There is no doubt that the development of the smartphone and other mobile devices is one of the major milestones for human beings in that it has changed everything in the world and revolutionized society (Sarwar, & Soomro, 2013; Ray, 2015). They have become extensions of people, defining and extending the way people communicate, replacing people's need for physical memory, helping people navigate, to share their experiences, as well as sustaining their survival in the modern world. A survey conducted by the Pew Research Center (2012) states that up to 65% of the society use their smartphones to read the news, post status updates, read and reply to messages, post photos and recorded videos. Mobile devices also provide tremendous opportunities to improve the quality of education adding new dimensions of education at all levels (Ifeanyi, & Chukwuere, 2018; Impact of Smartphones over Society, 2017).

In today's environment, the internet and mobile devices have become essentials for everyone and it could be argued, if not observed, that internet usage through smartphones or mobile devices for every student and educator has become a major part of daily life. There is no doubt that it could be difficult to survive without internet access in the education processes since many components or elements of the education process have highly become internet dependent.

Furthermore, it could be argued that technological innovations, evolutions, and developments have made the society more well-informed and knowledgeable as there is a greater ability to access key information. Thus, people are able to make more effective decisions for their life and future since they could have more options or alternatives to select from. Consequently, this study assumes that families and high school graduates seeking and evaluating college level education options have been part of knowledge-based society and they have enough information available to them to make a right choice regarding the subjects they choose to study at higher education institutions.

As such, this study aims to examine if business college students' thoughts and perceptions of the accounting profession have changed in the current environment where people are part of the knowledge-based society where information is more accessible. Early studies argued that the accounting profession has had a negative image and reputations around the world before smartphone technologies were innovated. Many of those concluded that the accounting profession is stereotyped as being conformist, cold, submissive, and lacking social skills. Thus, this study first scans and summarizes certain previous studies on the matter that were realized before smartphone technologies began to appear. Secondly, data gathered through the use of a survey provides updated information about business college students' thoughts and perceptions of the accounting profession and states any changes that have occurred.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies on the Perceptions of Accounting and the Accounting Profession

Reckers, & Bates (1978) found that the usual characterization of professional accountants was boring and methodical. Taylor & Dixon (1979) found that non-accounting business students, in particular, had a more negative image of the accounting profession which was viewed as more diligent, pessimistic, evasive, dull, methodical, authoritarian, aloof, and rigid. What's more, many students had a poor image of public accounting as it entails dull work, heavy demands, and low starting salaries. Some other studies added more negative attributes to the accounting profession as a "routine and numbers-crunching one" (Davidson, & Etherington, 1995). In his most cited study, Parker (2000) dealt with the issue of stereotypical views of accounting professionals and noted that "common stereotype of the accountant – usually portrayed as male – introverted, cautious, methodical, systematic, anti-social, and above all, boring." Siegel (2000) reported that first-line operating and management personnel often view the accountant as a bean counter and corporate policeman. Hunt et al. (2004) concluded that many students stereotypically perceived accountants as number crunchers and that non-accounting majors held more negative perceptions of accountants than did accounting majors, and stated that, even though accountants were widely seen as being skilled in math

and tax work and attentive to detail, accountants were not considered particularly admirable, exciting, or strong in leadership capabilities. As seen, there were no major changes in the different stakeholders' thoughts or perceptions of accountants and the accounting profession in the last three decades of the Twentieth century and the first decade of the Millennium. However, corporate scandals of accounting and auditing at the beginning of the 21st century appear not to have deterred interest in accountancy and may have elevated students' perception of its importance (Hartwell, Lightle, & Maxwell, 2005).

Some researchers have extended their studies to mass media, such as films and tv series, in order to seek evidence for possible causes of the negative perceptions of accountants and the accounting and the accounting profession with some studies reporting the stereotypical views and negative representation of accountants in movies and fiction (Hunt et al. 2004). Indeed, after analyzing several works of fiction, plays, tv shows, and films, Cory (1992) stated that the image of accountants and the accounting profession was overwhelmingly negative. Holt (1994) stated that in those movies and fiction, accountants are portrayed as flexible that they can use this skill for illegal or unethical purposes. Smith & Briggs (1999) stated that in movies and fiction, accountants are portrayed as lacking in communication skills, and they are portrayed as devious, timid, and incompetent. Beard (1994) stated that accountants in movies and fiction are portrayed as socially inept but expert in their fields and that some are shown using their expertise for criminal purposes. Hartwell et al. (2005) pointed out that the movie industry has been blamed for creating this image and environment of a boring, detail-oriented person doing tedious tasks. This environment could, undoubtedly, contribute to a more negative image in the ethical behavior and communication skills of accountants and the accounting profession

Studies on the Career Choice

An individuals' feelings, beliefs, attitudes, and intentions have the potential to greatly affect the foundations of their perceptions, and impact on how people interpret things in a range of ways (Ajzen, 1991; Bekoe, Owusu, Ofori, Andersen, & Welbeck, 2018). As such, perceptions of a particular occupation or profession can be impactful on high-school and college students as they make an important career choice for their future life and students' perceptions undoubtedly play a critical role in their career decisions and it can be argued that misperceptions could certainly mislead or misdirect individuals. (Byrne, & Willis, 2005; Ferreira, & Santoso, 2008; Hammami, & Hossain, 2010; Pekdemir, Pekdemir, & Sen, 2013; Ramadhan, & Hudiwinarsih, 2015; Sugahara, Boland, & Cilloni, 2008; Ticoi, & Albu, 2018; Worthington, & Higgs, 2003). Individuals' perceptions on any occupation or profession may stem from different sources or factors such as local, regional, national, or global scandals in which that profession is involved, as well as family environment, education environment, critical experiences with practitioners, peer influence, misunderstanding the nature and extent of the profession, and others. In a single question survey conducted by a medium-sized, public university in the Midwest Region of the U.S. with an AACSB International accredited program in business, accounting junior students were asked which factors had impacted their taking the Intermediate Accounting III course. As seen in Table 1, families were widely reported as having impacted on their children's choice of major.

TABLE 1
FACTORS IMPACTING STUDENTS' MAJOR CHOICE

Please mark the most appropriate option (only one) that fits your case: <i>For the decision on the major choice of my, I think I have been affected by</i>		
Factor	# of responses	% of responses
My family	12	42.86%
My high school teachers or counselors	6	21.43%
Friends of my family	1	3.57%
Accounting practitioners I have known	6	21.43%
Others or not willing to disclose	3	10.71%
Total	28	100.00%

Source: Conducted a single question survey – Fall 2021

In this study, we assume that college level business students are influenced by the significant people around them. Therefore, we first aim to empirically understand business sophomores' thoughts on who most likely influenced their major choice.

Students' Perceptions of Accounting and the Accounting Profession

As previously mentioned, the thoughts and perceptions of different level students on accountants, accounting professionals, and the accounting profession have been examined by scholars for over five decades in a range of contexts from high-school students graduate level students around the world from both developed and under-developed countries where accountants and the accounting profession exist. Studies on high-school students' perceptions of accountants and the accounting profession were conducted in different specific countries such as; Australia (McDowall, Jackling, & Natoli, 2012) Ireland (Byrne, & Willis, 2005), Malaysia (Khalid, Raus, Fuad, Saaibon, Asri, & Sharom, 2018), New Zealand (Malthus, & Fowler, 2009; Wells, 2015), and the United States (Hartwell et al., 2005). While there are also some other studies on the high-school students' general perceptions of accounting and accountants (Dodson, & Price, 1991; Jackman, & Hollingworth, 2005; Jeffrey, 2002) as well as studies on college level students' thoughts and perceptions of accounting and the accounting profession (Allen, 2004; Chacko, 1991; Coleman, Kreuze, & Langsam, 2004; Cory, 1992; Dodson, & Price, 1991; Felton, Buhr, & Northey, 1994; Fisher, & Murphy, 1995; Holt, 1994; Hunt et al., 2004; Imada, Fletcher, & Dalessio, 1980; Inman, Wenzler, & Wickert, 1989; Jeffrey, 2002; Mladenovic, 2000; Mbawuni, 2015; Pekdemir et al., 2013; Ramadhan, & Hudiwinarsih, 2015; Sugahara, & Boland, 2006; Tan, & Laswad, 2006; Taylor, & Dixon, 1979; Warnock, 1997).

Conceptual Framework for Business Sophomores' Perceptions

The current study focuses on four themes of areas of thoughts and perceptions of business sophomores on the accounting profession. The themes examined in this study are inspired and adapted from Sugahara & Boland (2006). They are (1) perceived intrinsic values in the accounting profession, (2) foreseen career prospects, (3) perceived job market factors, and (4) opportunity costs of becoming an accounting professional. As such, the study follows the themes and factors that were drawn by Sugahara, & Boland from previous studies where the factors composing these four themes are outlined. For intrinsic values, they composed the factors (Ahmed, Alam, & Alam, 1997; Bundy, & Norris, 1992; Felton et al., 1994; Hermanson, Hermanson, & Ivancevich, 1995; Nelson, Vandrzyk, Quirin, & Allen, 2002; Tan, & Laswad, 2006) consisting of areas of interest, glamor, intellectually challenging, contribution to society, satisfaction, attitudes, and beliefs. For career prospects, they composed the factors (Ahmadi, Helms, & Nodoushani, 1995; Cohen, & Hanno, 1993; Horowitz, and Riley, 1990; Inman et al., 1989; Tan, & Laswad, 2006) consisting of excellent prospects, powerful authority, good advancement opportunities, higher social prestige, higher salary even initially. For job market factors, they composed the factors (Ahmed et al., 1997;

Buckley, & McKenna, 1973; Fogarty, 1996; Kochanek, & Norgaard, 1985; Manhardt, 1972; Paolillo, & Estes, 1982) consisting of job availability, job security, quality of life, long working hours, male dominancy, opportunities for women. For opportunity costs, they composed the factors (Albrecht, & Sack, 2000; Bierstaker, Howe, & Seol, 2004; Coleman, Kreuze, & Langsam, 2004; Felton et al., 1994) consisting of workload for first years, preparation time for CPA exam, cost of CPA exam, difficulties for entry qualification, and personal liabilities for any malpractices. The study also looks to examine any existing differences between male and female sophomores' thoughts and perceptions on the accounting profession as well as between accounting and non-accounting majors.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research Questions

This study looks to investigate business sophomores' thoughts and perceptions of the accounting profession that such subjects had been studied around the world. The study particularly aims to see if there have been any changes in the students' perceptions of the accounting profession in the current increasingly knowledge based society. In order to explore this the study attempts to address the questions below:

- What is the current position of the people's influence on the business students' major choice as a career decision? For this study, 'influential people' are defined as *parents; high school classmates; friends of family; high school teachers or counselors; and accounting practitioners* as derived from previous studies.
- Is there any significant difference in the perception of intrinsic values related to the accounting profession between accounting/finance and non-accounting/finance sophomores? This study examines *interest; glamor; challenges; satisfaction; intellectual challenges; independence /autonomy, and contribution to society* in accordance with prior research.
- Are there any significant differences in the perceptions of career prospects related to the accounting profession between accounting/finance and non-accounting/finance students? The factors are examined in the study as *excellent job prospects; powerful authority; advancement opportunities; social prestige; high initial salary; high continuing salary; and female equality* as used in previous studies.
- Are there any significant differences in the perceptions of job market factors related to the accounting profession between accounting/finance and non-accounting/finance sophomores? Factors investigated in this category include *job availability; job security; quality of family life; length of working day; male domination; and female opportunities* that existed in previous studies.
- Are there any significant differences in the perceptions of the opportunity costs in becoming a certified public accountant (CPA) between accounting/finance and non-accounting/finance students? These factors considered were *whether there would be any time to relax; time taken to become a CPA; and total costs to become a CPA. The difficulty in gaining qualifications and the personal liability for any malpractice* were examined in this category.

Data Collection

The data set used in this study were collected via questionnaire completed by business sophomores who were taking the course of Accounting Principles I which is first course to be taken for the enrollment to the College of Business Administration (CBA) at the University of Wisconsin La Crosse, a medium-sized and public university in the Midwest Region of the U.S., with an AACSB International accredited program in business. The survey was conducted in the Fall of 2021 which was the third semester of the respondents included in the study. The course of Accounting Principles I is taken by sophomores of all majors of the CBA and a few majors of the other colleges of the university. The survey was purposefully conducted during the first week of the Fall 2021 semester assuming the business sophomores do not have sufficient and technical accounting knowledge. Ten sections of the course of Accounting Principles I were offered to about 300 business sophomores from the university in the Fall of 2021. However, only five sections of

those were included in this study as a sample. The total sample collected was 151, of which 95 were male (63% of all) and 56 were female (37%) (*Table 2*), and all of those were effective responses for the distribution information regarding demographics. The data collection method was anonymous so that the respondents were not required to disclose their names or personal IDs. The survey was administered through the CANVAS LMS platform during an approximate one-week duration at the beginning of the Fall 2021 semester.

Research Instrument

A self-administered and structured questionnaire was developed and used for the study. The question items of the questionnaire were based on the Sugahara & Boland (2006) study and modified to suit the research context. The questionnaire first collected business sophomores' gender information and their major goals and intentions for their future careers. It then collected information of possible factors impacted on their major choice. Finally, it asked business sophomores to rate possible influential factors on their thoughts and perceptions of the accounting profession. The responses to the influential factors provided as statements of five categories were a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, coded 1 to 5, respectively. In addition, the "no opinion" option was provided as well, coded 0.

Data Analysis Methods

Mean scores of each response were computed to realize and compare business sophomores' thoughts and perceptions among the various factors and attributes. Provided statements are grouped into four major categories as *intrinsic values*, *career prospects*, *job market factors*, and *opportunity costs*. In the first group, seven statements related to intrinsic values perceived about the accounting profession are provided; five of those have positive attributes and two have non-positive ones. In the second group, five statements related to career prospects about the accounting profession were provided and all are attributed as positive. In the third group, six statements related to job market factors of the accounting profession are provided; perceptions about this group are analyzed into three sub-groups as three of those are attributed as positive, two are negative, and only one statement is attributed for opportunities for women. In the last group, five statements related to opportunity costs are provided and perceptions of the accounting profession on opportunity costs are analyzed as a single group. Through statements provided, two dimensions gender-based and major based ones are considered to analyze business sophomores' perceptions on the accounting profession.

Due to the number of respondents, accounting and finance major students are considered in the base group, and the differential analyses are realized through this classification. A one-tail *t-test* analysis is conducted to test any significant differences in business sophomores' thoughts and perceptions of the factors and attributes provided relating to the accounting profession between accounting/finance and non-accounting/finance sophomores. The same method is applied to test any significant differences in business sophomores' thoughts and perceptions of some specific factors and attributes provided by the accounting profession between accounting/finance and management as well as accounting/finance and marketing sophomores.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Respondents' Profile

The CBA has eight undergraduate major programs for students to choose from: accountancy, economics, finance, health information management and technology, information systems, international business, management, and marketing. Provided with an extra option of "not decided" (ND), the respondents were asked to provide their decided/intended major for their careers. *Table 2* displays gender and major based descriptive information of the respondents. Despite respondents being in their third semester of college education, 12% of students (18/151) participating in the survey had not decided which major they would go on to study. Our study indicates that marketing (MRKT) is nowadays the most preferred major [26% of the respondents (39/151)], management (MNGT) is the second preferred one [23%

of those (34/151)], finance (FIN) is third place in of the preference of the respondents [21% of those (32/151)]. Only 9% of the respondents (14/151) mentioned interests in an accounting (ACCY) major. Our study also shows that only marketing has a gender based, heavily female, discrepancy in major preference with almost 57% of marketing majors being female. The other disciplines tend to be more male dominated, in finance for instance, 87.5% of those that responded are male (28/32), in management 64.7% are male (22/34), which is closely matched by accounting at 64.2% (9/14).

TABLE 2
GENDER AND MAJOR BASED DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

	ACCY	ECON	FIN	HIM&T	IS	IB	MNGT	MRKT	ND	TOTAL
FEMALE	5	0	4	1	1	3	12	22	8	56
MALE	9	3	28	0	4	2	22	17	10	95
TOTAL	14	3	32	1	5	5	34	39	18	151

People's Influence on Business Students' Career Choices

Table 3/A-B displays factors impacting on the career/major choices of the students who participated in our survey. Parents and high school teachers or counselors still appear to have a significant impact on the students' career choices with the majority of students indicating that parents had the biggest impact at 29.1% (44/151). Next the high school environment was reported as significant with 20.5% (31/151) of respondents stating it had impacted their choice. Friends of family were also significant in their impact with 15.8% (24/151) indicating they had been greatly influenced by them. Whilst this indicates some important factors in student decisions, our study also shows that factors outside of these options ("others" in our survey) have also played a significant role in students' decisions at 29.1% (44/151), equaling the impact that parents were recorded as having on the students' career choice. This could be an indicator that new generations have been impacted by the many factors accessible to them through information platforms in the well-informed, knowledge based society. Our study also finds that while "parents and friends of family" affect almost equally on both female and male students' career choice, "high school environment and accountants around" affect more on male students' preferences (Table 3/B).

TABLE 3/A
PEOPLE'S INFLUENCE ON THE BUSINESS STUDENTS' CAREER CHOICE

	ACCY	ECON	FIN	HIM&T	IS	IB	MNGT	MRKT	ND	TOTAL
<i>Parents</i>	1	1	9	1	1	2	15	11	3	44
<i>High School Environment</i>	5	2	7	0	2	0	3	10	2	31
<i>Friends of Family</i>	2	0	5	0	0	1	6	9	1	24
<i>Accountants</i>	3	0	2	0	0	0	1	2	0	8
<i>Others</i>	3	0	9	0	2	2	9	7	12	44
TOTAL	14	3	32	1	5	5	34	39	18	151

TABLE 3/B
PEOPLE’S INFLUENCE ON THE BUSINESS STUDENTS’ CAREER CHOICE
(GENDER BASED DISTRIBUTION)

	Female	Male	TOTAL
<i>Parents</i>	22	22	44
<i>High School Environment</i>	9	22	31
<i>Friends of Family</i>	11	13	24
<i>Accountants</i>	1	7	8
<i>Others</i>	13	31	44
TOTAL	56	95	151

Respondents’ Perceptions of the Accounting Profession: Intrinsic Values

The statements provided on intrinsic values related to the accounting profession are laid out in the following.

Positive attributed ones:

- *The accounting profession is interesting – IV1*
- *The accounting profession is glamorous - IV2*
- *The accounting profession gives great satisfaction – IV4*
- *The accounting profession allows for independence/autonomy- IV6*
- *The accounting profession is a job positively contributes to society – IV7*

Negative attributed ones:

- *The accounting profession has many challenges – IV3*
- *The accounting profession challenges intellectually – IV5*

Gender Based Analysis

As can be seen in Table 4/A, for intrinsic values of the accounting profession, the overall mean of the respondents is 3.69; 3.70 for female respondents and 3.68 for male respondents. For the positive attributed statements, the overall mean of the respondents is 3.44; 3.45 for female respondents and 3.44 for male respondents. For the negative attributed statements, the overall mean of the respondents is 4.27; the value for female respondents is 4.32 and for male respondents: 4.25. For both female and male respondents, the mean score of positive attributed statements about the intrinsic values of the accounting profession is lower than the negative attributed ones. We could argue that the accounting profession is not perceived at its deserved level at all.

Major Based Analyses

Due to the number of respondents, major based perception analyses are realized in four groups: *accounting and finance management, marketing, and others*. Mean scores of *accounting/finance sophomores’* thoughts and perceptions on the intrinsic values of the accounting profession are greater than the overall (3.87 vs. 3.69) and positive attributed items (3.71 vs. 3.44). In the negative attributed intrinsic values, mean scores of groups of sophomores are almost the same as average (4.27) and (4.26) (Table 4/A).

For the differential analyses of **accounting/finance major versus non-accounting/finance major** students, a one tail *t*-test was applied at the significant level of 0.05. Significant differences between accounting/finance major and non-accounting/finance major students were found in the statements below the intrinsic values of the accounting profession. A significant difference is also observed on the statements all positive items. (*p* value 0.000) and on all items of intrinsic values (*p* value 0.001) (Table 4/B).

- *The accounting profession is interesting – IV1 (p value 0.000)*
- *The accounting profession gives great satisfaction – IV4 (p value 0.005)*
- *The accounting profession allows for independence/autonomy- IV6 (p value 0.002)*

For differential analyses of **accounting/finance major versus management major** students, a one tail *t*-test was applied at the significance level of 0.05. Significant differences between accounting/finance major and management major students were found on the statements below intrinsic values of the accounting profession. Also, a significant difference was observed in the statements all positive items (*p* value 0.000) and on all items of intrinsic values (*p* value 0.000) (Table 4/C).

- *The accounting profession is interesting – IV1 (p value 0.001)*
- *The accounting profession gives great satisfaction – IV4 (p value 0.000)*
- *The accounting profession allows for independence/autonomy- IV6 (p value 0.003)*

For the differential analyses of **accounting/finance major versus marketing major** students, a one tail *t*-test was applied at the significant level of 0.05. Significant differences between accounting/finance major and management major students were found on the statements below of intrinsic values of the accounting profession. Also, a significant difference was observed on the statements positive at all (*p* value 0.020) and on all items of intrinsic values (*p* value 0.005) (Table 4/D).

- *The accounting profession is interesting – IV1 (p value 0.000)*
- *The accounting profession allows for independence/autonomy- IV6 (p value 0.040)*

TABLE 4/A
BUSINESS SOPHOMORES’ THOUGHTS AND PERCEPTIONS ON THE INTRINSIC VALUES OF THE ACCOUNTING PROFESSION

	Mean scores of intrinsic value items	Mean scores of positive attributed ones	Mean scores of negative attributed ones
<i>Gender</i>			
<i>Female</i>	3.70	3.45	4.32
<i>Male</i>	3.68	3.44	4.25
<i>Overall mean</i>	3.69	3.44	4.27
<i>Majors</i>			
Accounting - Finance	3.87	3.71	4.26
Management	3.50	3.17	4.31
Marketing	3.64	3.39	4.26
Others	3.63	3.37	4.29
Overall mean	3.69	3.44	4.27

TABLE 4/B
THE T-TEST RESULTS OFOR INTRINSIC VALUES OF THE ACCOUNTING PROFESSION - ACCOUNTING/FINANCE VS. NON-ACCOUNTING/FINANCE

Feature	Statements	Mean of Accounting / Finance	Mean of Non- A/F	t-stats	P(T<=t) one-tail
Positive	<i>The accounting profession is interesting</i>	3.848	3.207	4.118	0.000*
Positive	<i>The accounting profession is glamorous</i>	2.674	2.529	0.856	0.197
Negative	<i>The accounting profession has many challenges</i>	4.261	4.207	0.481	0.316
Positive	<i>The accounting profession gives great satisfaction</i>	3.696	3.230	2.612	0.005*
Negative	<i>The accounting g profession challenges intellectually</i>	4.261	4.356	-0.730	0.234

Positive	<i>The accounting profession allows for independence/autonomy</i>	4.022	3.437	3.029	0.002*
Positive	<i>The accounting profession is a job positively contributes to society</i>	4.304	4.115	1.289	0.101
	<i>All Items</i>	3.866	3.583	3.377	0.001*
	<i>All positive items</i>	3.709	3.303	4.027	0.000*
	<i>All negative items</i>	4.261	4.282	-0.211	0.416

*Significant at the level of less than 0.05; applied one tail *t*-tests.

TABLE 4/C
THE T-TEST RESULTS FOR INTRINSIC VALUES OF THE ACCOUNTING PROFESSION - ACCOUNTING/FINANCE VS. MANAGEMENT

Feature	Statements	Mean of Accounting / Finance	Mean of Management	t-stats	P(T<=t) one-tail
Positive	<i>The accounting profession is interesting</i>	3.848	3.206	3.371	0.001*
Positive	<i>The accounting profession is glamorous</i>	2.674	2.529	0.727	0.235
Negative	<i>The accounting profession has many challenges</i>	4.261	4.265	-0.030	0.488
Positive	<i>The accounting profession gives great satisfaction</i>	3.696	2.912	3.691	0.000*
Negative	<i>The accounting profession challenges intellectually</i>	4.261	4.353	-0.640	0.262
Positive	<i>The accounting profession allows for independence/autonomy</i>	4.022	3.059	2.945	0.003*
Positive	<i>The accounting profession is a job positively contributes to society</i>	4.304	4.147	1.005	0.159
	<i>All Items</i>	3.866	3.496	3.687	0.000*
	<i>All positive items</i>	3.709	3.171	4.071	0.000*
	<i>All negative items</i>	4.261	4.309	-0.434	0.333

* Significant at the level of less than 0.05; applied one tail *t*-tests.

TABLE 4/D
THE T-TEST RESULTS FOR INTRINSIC VALUES OF THE ACCOUNTING PROFESSION - ACCOUNTING/FINANCE VS. MARKETING

Feature	Statements	Mean of Accounting / Finance	Mean of Marketing	t-stats	P(T<=t) one-tail
Positive	<i>The accounting profession is interesting</i>	3.848	3.154	3.600	0.000*
Positive	<i>The accounting profession is glamorous</i>	2.674	2.615	0.299	0.383
Negative	<i>The accounting profession has many challenges</i>	4.261	4.154	0.709	0.240
Positive	<i>The accounting profession gives great satisfaction</i>	3.696	3.410	1.400	0.083
Negative	<i>The accounting profession challenges intellectually</i>	4.261	4.359	-0.606	0.273

Positive	<i>The accounting profession allows for independence/autonomy</i>	4.022	3.667	1.777	0.040*
Positive	<i>The accounting profession is a job positively contributes to society</i>	4.304	4.128	0.914	0.182
	<i>All Items</i>	3.866	3.641	2.088	0.020*
	<i>All positive items</i>	3.709	3.395	2.641	0.005*
	<i>All negative items</i>	4.261	4.256	0.033	0.487

*Significant at the level of less than 0.05; applied one tail *t*-tests.

Respondents' Perceptions of the Accounting Profession: Prospects

Provided statements on career prospects related to the accounting profession are following:

- *The accounting profession provides excellent prospects – CP1*
- *The accounting g profession gives you powerful authority – CP2*
- *The accounting profession gives good advancement opportunities – CP3*
- *The accounting profession has a high social prestige – CP4*
- *The accounting profession gives you a high initial salary – CP5*

Gender Based Analysis

For the statements related to the career prospects of the accounting profession, the overall mean is 3.49. A mean of 3.57 for female respondents which was higher than their male counterparts with a mean of 3.45 (Table 5/A).

Major Based Analyses

The mean scores of *accounting/finance sophomores'* thoughts and perceptions on career prospects of the accounting profession are greater than the overall (3.64 vs. 3.49) (Table 5/A). A one tail *t*-test at the significant level of 0.05 reveals that significant differences between **accounting/finance major and non-accounting/finance major** students exist on the statements below regarding career prospects profession. A significant difference is observed on all items of career prospects (*p* value 0.009) (Table 5/B).

- *The accounting profession provides excellent prospects – CP1 (p value 0.013)*
- *The accounting profession gives you a high initial salary – CP5 (p value 0.036)*

The one tail *t*-test at the significance level of 0.05 reveals that significant differences between **accounting/finance major and management major** students exist on the statements below regarding career prospects of the accounting profession. A significant difference is observed on all items as well (*p* value 0.003) (Table 5/C).

- *The accounting profession provides excellent prospects – CP1 (p value 0.018)*
- *The accounting profession gives you a high initial salary – CP5 (p value 0.003)*

A one tail *t*-test at the significance level of 0.05 reveals that there is no significant difference between **accounting/finance major and marketing major** students on perceived career prospects of the accounting profession (Table 5/D).

TABLE 5/A
BUSINESS SOPHOMORES' PERCEPTIONS ON CAREER PROSPECTS OF THE ACCOUNTING PROFESSION

	Mean scores of items on career prospects
<i>Gender</i>	
<i>Female</i>	3.57
<i>Male</i>	3.45
<i>Overall mean</i>	3.49

Majors	
Accounting - Finance	3.64
Management	3.28
Marketing	3.53
Others	3.46
Overall mean	3.49

TABLE 5/B
THE T-TEST RESULTS FOR CAREER PROSPECTS OF THE ACCOUNTING PROFESSION -
ACCOUNTING/FINANCE VS. NON-ACCOUNTING/FINANCE

Statements	Mean of Accounting / Finance	Mean of Non-A/F	t-stats	P(T<=t) one-tail
<i>The accounting profession provides excellent prospects</i>	4.065	3.724	2.246	0.013*
<i>The accounting profession gives you powerful authority</i>	3.261	3.023	1.504	0.068
<i>The accounting profession gives good advancement opportunities</i>	3.978	3.782	1.635	0.052
<i>The accounting profession has a high social prestige</i>	3.217	3.184	0.170	0.433
<i>The accounting profession gives you a high initial salary</i>	3.674	3.379	1.816	0.036*
<i>All items</i>	3.639	3.418	2.412	0.009*

*Significant at the level of less than 0.05; applied one tail *t*-tests.

TABLE 5/C
THE T-TEST RESULTS FOR CAREER PROSPECTS OF THE ACCOUNTING PROFESSION -
ACCOUNTING/FINANCE VS. MANAGEMENT

Statements	Mean of Accounting / Finance	Mean of Management	t-stats	P(T<=t) one-tail
<i>The accounting profession provides excellent prospects</i>	4.065	3.559	2.160	0.018*
<i>The accounting profession gives you powerful authority</i>	3.261	3.029	1.060	0.147
<i>The accounting profession gives good advancement opportunities</i>	3.978	3.735	1.668	0.050
<i>The accounting profession has a high social prestige</i>	3.217	3.147	0.313	0.378
<i>The accounting profession gives you a high initial salary</i>	3.674	2.912	2.911	0.003*
<i>All items</i>	3.639	3.276	2.815	0.003*

*Significant at the level of less than 0.05; applied one tail *t*-tests.

TABLE 5/D
THE T-TEST RESULTS FOR CAREER PROSPECTS OF THE ACCOUNTING PROFESSION -
ACCOUNTING/FINANCE VS. MARKETING

Statements	Mean of Accounting / Finance	Mean of Marketing	t-stats	P(T<=t) one-tail
<i>The accounting profession provides excellent prospects</i>	4.065	3.769	1.553	0.063
<i>The accounting profession gives you powerful authority</i>	3.261	3.077	0.914	0.182
<i>The accounting profession gives good advancement opportunities</i>	3.978	3.795	1.138	0.130
<i>The accounting profession has a high social prestige</i>	3.217	3.256	-0.177	0.430
<i>The accounting profession gives you a high initial salary</i>	3.674	3.744	-0.423	0.337
<i>All items</i>	3.639	3.528	1.006	0.159

*Significant at the level of less than 0.05; applied one tail *t*-tests.

Respondents' Perceptions of the Accounting Profession: Job Market Factors

The provided statements related to job market factors within the accounting profession are listed in the following groups:

Positive attributed ones:

- *The accounting profession offers a good level of job availability – JM1*
- *The accounting profession has job security - JM2*
- *The accounting profession allows you to enjoy quality family life – JM3*

Negative attributed ones:

- *The accounting profession requires you to work long hours – JM4*
- *The accounting profession is male dominated – IV5*

Women attributed ones:

- *The accounting profession provides women good opportunities – JM6*

Gender Based Analysis

For job-market factors of the accounting profession, the overall mean of the respondents on the statements is 3.53; for female respondents; 3.65 and, for male respondents; 3.46 and it is again noticeable that female mean scores are higher than male ones. For positive attributed statements, the overall mean of the respondents is 3.68; for female respondents; 3.81 and 3.62 for male respondents. For the negative attributed statements, the overall mean of the respondents is 3.31; for female respondents it stands at 3.50 and for male respondents at 3.20. For women attributed statements, the overall mean of the respondents is 3.50; for female respondents it is 3.46 and for male respondents it is 3.53. The mean scores of both positive and negative attributed statements regarding job-market factors of the accounting profession are greater for female respondents than for male respondents (Table 6/A).

Major Based Analyses

The mean scores of *accounting/finance sophomores'* thoughts and perceptions on job-market factors of the accounting profession are greater than the overall (3.67 vs. 3.53), the positive attributed items (3.93 vs. 3.68), the negative attributed items (3.34 vs. 3.31), and in the women attributed item (3.57 vs. 3.50) (Table 6/A).

A one tail *t*-test at the significance level of 0.05 reveals significant differences between **accounting/finance major and non-accounting/finance major** students are found on the statements

below of job-market factors of the accounting profession. A significant difference is also observed on the statements all positive items (p value 0.000) and on all items of job-market factors (p value 0.007) (Table 6/B).

- *The accounting profession offers a good level of job availability – JM1 (p value 0.002)*
- *The accounting profession allows you to enjoy quality family life – JM3 (p value 0.001)*

A one tail t -test at the significant level of 0.05 reveals that significant differences between **accounting/finance major and management major** students are found on the statements below of job-market factors of the accounting profession. Also, a significant difference is observed on the all positive items (p value 0.002), all negative items (p value 0.046) and on all items of job-market factors (p value 0.003) (Table 6/C).

- *The accounting profession offers a good level of job availability – JM1 (p value 0.041)*
- *The accounting profession has job security - JM2 (p value 0.036)*
- *The accounting profession allows you to enjoy quality family life – JM3 (p value 0.007)*
- *The accounting profession requires you to work long hours – JM4 (p value 0.035)*

On the other hand, a one tail t -test with a significance level of 0.05 reveals significant differences between the **accounting/finance major and marketing major** students regarding the statements below of job-market factors of accounting profession. A significant difference is also observed on the statements positive at all (p value 0.005) (Table 6/D).

- *The accounting profession offers good level of job availability – JM1 (p value 0.001)*
- *The accounting profession allows you to enjoy quality family life – JM3 (p value 0.024)*

TABLE 6/A
BUSINESS SOPHOMORES' PERCEPTIONS ON JOB MARKET FACTORS OF THE ACCOUNTING PROFESSION

	Mean scores of Job Market Factors	Mean scores of positive attributed ones	Mean scores of negative attributed ones	Mean scores of female attributed ones
<u>Gender</u>				
<u>Female</u>	3.65	3.81	3.50	3.46
<u>Male</u>	3.46	3.62	3.20	3.53
<u>Overall mean</u>	3.53	3.68	3.31	3.50
<u>Majors</u>				
<u>Accounting - Finance</u>	3.67	3.93	3.34	3.57
<u>Management</u>	3.32	3.48	3.03	3.44
<u>Marketing</u>	3.52	3.56	3.49	3.44
<u>Others</u>	3.58	3.69	3.39	3.64
<u>Overall mean</u>	3.53	3.68	3.31	3.50

TABLE 6/B
THE T-TEST RESULTS OF FOR JOB-MARKET FACTORS OF THE ACCOUNTING
PROFESSION - ACCOUNTING/FINANCE VS. NON-ACCOUNTING/FINANCE

Feature	Statements	Mean of Accounting / Finance	Mean of Non-A/F	t-stats	P(T<=t) one-tail
Positive	The accounting profession offers good level of job availability	4.196	3.793	2.911	0.002*
Positive	The accounting profession has job security	3.957	3.747	1.333	0.093
Positive	The accounting profession allows you to enjoy quality family life	3.652	3.115	3.107	0.001*
Negative	The accounting profession requires you to work long hours	3.565	3.402	1.029	0.153
Negative	The accounting profession is male dominated	3.109	3.184	-0.333	0.370
Women	The accounting profession provides women good opportunities	3.565	3.471	0.508	0.306
	All Items	3.674	3.452	2.478	0.007*
	All positive items	3.935	3.552	3.404	0.000*
	All negative items	3.337	3.293	0.315	0.377

*Significant at the level of less than 0.05; applied one tail *t*-tests.

TABLE 6/C
THE T-TEST RESULTS FOR JOB-MARKET FACTORS OF THE ACCOUNTING
PROFESSION - ACCOUNTING/FINANCE VS. MANAGEMENT

Feature	Statements	Mean of Accounting / Finance	Mean of Management	t-stats	P(T<=t) one-tail
Positive	The accounting profession offers good level of job availability	4.196	3.882	1.773	0.041*
Positive	The accounting profession has job security	3.957	3.529	1.837	0.036*
Positive	The accounting profession allows you to enjoy quality family life	3.652	3.029	2.560	0.007*
Negative	The accounting profession requires you to work long hours	3.565	3.176	1.846	0.035*
Negative	The accounting profession is male dominated	3.109	2.882	0.792	0.216

Women	The accounting profession provides women good opportunities	3.565	3.441	0.507	0.307
	All Items	3.674	3.324	2.850	0.003*
	All positive items	3.935	3.480	3.052	0.002*
	All negative items	3.337	3.029	1.712	0.046*

*Significant at the level of less than 0.05; applied one tail *t*-tests.

TABLE 6/D
THE T-TEST RESULTS FOR JOB-MARKET FACTORS OF THE ACCOUNTING
PROFESSION - ACCOUNTING/FINANCE VS. MARKETING

Feature	Statements	Mean of Accounting / Finance	Mean of Marketing	t-stats	P(T<=t) one-tail
Positive	The accounting profession offers good level of job availability	4.196	3.615	3.085	0.001*
Positive	The accounting profession has job security	3.957	3.846	0.637	0.263
Positive	The accounting profession allows you to enjoy quality family life	3.652	3.231	2.008	0.024*
Negative	The accounting profession requires you to work long hours	3.565	3.590	-0.135	0.447
Negative	The accounting profession is male dominated	3.109	3.385	-1.053	0.148
Women	The accounting profession provides women good opportunities	3.565	3.436	0.600	0.275
	All Items	3.674	3.517	1.553	0.062
	All positive items	3.935	3.564	2.645	0.005*
	All negative items	3.337	3.487	-0.925	0.179

*Significant at the level of less than 0.05; applied one tail *t*-tests.

Respondents' Perceptions of the Accounting Profession: Opportunity Costs

Statements provided on opportunity costs related to the accounting profession are the following:

- *You have no time to relax in the first few years from being a CPA – OP1*
- *The time taken to study to become a CPA – OP2*
- *It costs a lot of money to sit for a CPA exam – OP3*
- *Being a CPA requires difficult entry qualification – OP4*
- *Being a CPA requires to absorb personal liabilities for any malpractices – OP5*

Gender Based Analysis

For opportunity costs of the accounting profession, the overall mean of the respondents on the statements related to career prospects in the accounting profession is 2.89; for 2.97 female respondents and for male respondents it is 2.84, showing again that female ones are higher than male ones (Table 7/A).

Major Based Analyses

The mean scores of *accounting/finance sophomores*' thoughts and perceptions on opportunity costs of the accounting profession are greater than the overall (3.03 vs. 2.89) (Table 7/A). A one tail *t*-test at the significance level of 0.05 reveals that significant differences between **accounting/finance major and non-accounting/finance major** students do not exist on the statements provided of opportunity costs of the accounting profession (Table 7/B), except only one statement "It costs a lot of money to sit for a CPA exam" (p value 0.036). A one tail *t*-test at the significance level of 0.05 reveals that there are no significant differences between **accounting/finance major and management major** students relating to the statements provided about opportunity costs of the accounting profession. This is the same for **accounting/finance major vs. marketing major** students (Table 7/C-D).

**TABLE 7/A
BUSINESS SOPHOMORES' PERCEPTIONS ON OPPORTUNITY COSTS OF THE
ACCOUNTING PROFESSION**

	Mean scores of items on career prospects
<i>Gender</i>	
<i>Female</i>	2.97
<i>Male</i>	2.84
<i>Overall mean</i>	2.89
<i>Majors</i>	
<i>Accounting - Finance</i>	3.03
<i>Management</i>	2.72
<i>Marketing</i>	2.96
<i>Others</i>	2.61
<i>Overall mean</i>	2.89

**TABLE 7/B
THE T-TEST RESULTS FOR OPPORTUNITY COSTS OF THE ACCOUNTING
PROFESSION - ACCOUNTING/FINANCE VS. NON-ACCOUNTING/FINANCE**

Statements	Mean of Accounting / Finance	Mean of Non-A/F	t-stats	P(T<=t) one-tail
You have no time to relax in the first few years from being a CPA	2.870	2.667	0.870	0.193
The time taken to study to become a CPA	2.717	2.655	0.229	0.410
It costs a lot of money to sit for a CPA exam	2.978	2.540	1.819	0.036*
Being a CPA requires difficult entry qualification	3.522	3.287	0.993	0.162
Being a CPA requires to absorb personal liabilities for any malpractices	3.043	2.908	0.544	0.294
All items	3.026	2.811	1.173	0.122

*Significant at the level of less than 0.05; applied one tail *t*-tests.

TABLE 7/C
THE T-TEST RESULTS FOR OPPORTUNITY COSTS OF THE ACCOUNTING
PROFESSION - ACCOUNTING/FINANCE VS. MANAGEMENT

Statements	Mean of Accounting / Finance	Mean of Management	t-stats	P(T<=t) one-tail
You have no time to relax in the first few years from being a CPA	2.870	2.676	0.630	0.266
The time taken to study to become a CPA	2.717	2.529	0.534	0.298
It costs a lot of money to sit for a CPA exam	2.978	2.441	1.651	0.052
Being a CPA requires difficult entry qualification	3.522	3.176	1.028	0.154
Being a CPA requires to absorb personal liabilities for any malpractices	3.043	2.765	0.888	0.189
All items	3.026	2.718	1.221	0.113

*Significant at the level of less than 0.05; applied one tail *t*-tests.

TABLE 7/D
THE T-TEST RESULTS FOR OPPORTUNITY COSTS OF THE ACCOUNTING
PROFESSION - ACCOUNTING/FINANCE VS. MARKETING

Statements	Mean of Accounting / Finance	Mean of Marketing	t-stats	P(T<=t) one-tail
You have no time to relax in the first few years from being a CPA	2.870	2.744	0.422	0.337
The time taken to study to become a CPA	2.717	2.846	-0.412	0.341
It costs a lot of money to sit for a CPA exam	2.978	2.564	1.496	0.069
Being a CPA requires difficult entry qualification	3.522	3.538	-0.070	0.472
Being a CPA requires to absorb personal liabilities for any malpractices	3.043	3.128	-0.289	0.387
All items	3.026	2.964	0.303	0.381

*Significant at the level of less than 0.05; applied one tail *t*-tests.

LIMITATIONS

This study examines business sophomores' thoughts and perceptions of the accounting profession. One potential limitation of the study could be that more than 88% of the respondents (133/151) have already decided their major for career as accountancy, finance, management, marketing, etc. in the business fields. This decision could result in the respondents being negatively impacted and to provide their thoughts and perceptions of the accounting profession since they may already have certain prejudices about the subject. Thus, there might be significant differences already existing between accounting and non-accounting business sophomores. This may be particularly true regarding the negative statements provided as different aspects and features of the accounting profession might be supported by non-accounting ones. In this study, due to the number of respondents accounting and finance business sophomores are grouped as one for the

differential analyses that means accounting and finance business majors could have different perceptions and perspectives about the accounting profession.

Furthermore, one could also argue that this study's research methodology might have certain weaknesses such as the size of sample, the grouping of participants influencing career choices of the young generation even if they live in a well-informed society, and the statistical testing methods used to examine possible differences between accounting/finance and non-accounting/finance business sophomores in today's environment. In the literature, while certain studies applied one tail *t*-test to examine the differential analyses on the perceptions of the accounting profession, some others applied other statistical techniques to do so. Each of those undoubtedly has advantages and disadvantages for different circumstances to test the different stakeholders' thoughts and perceptions of the accounting profession.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

There is no doubt that globalization, technological innovations, evolutions, and developments have pervasively appeared in the last two decades, and this has made people and society more well-informed and more knowledgeable since access to the information needed has increased. Thus, under this assumption, we could argue that the people can make more effective decisions for their life and future since they have more options or alternatives to select from to make an informed choice. After considering these evolution and developments globally, in this study we aimed to examine and test whether business sophomores' thoughts and perceptions of the accounting profession have changed in the current environment, where exist in a knowledge-based society. We targeted business sophomores for two reasons: Firstly, more than 88% of the respondents have already decided their majors as career choices meaning we would be able to make differential analyses on their thoughts and perceptions of the accounting profession. Secondly, we assumed that almost all of those have not taken any college level accounting course up to this point in their academic lives. The survey was conducted in the first week of the semester in order to ensure that the respondent sophomores were taking the first business and accounting course of Accounting Principles I during their college education.

Early studies argued that the accounting profession has had a largely negative image and reputation around the world before innovative smartphone technologies became pervasive. Many of those concluded that the accounting profession is stereotyped as being conformist, cold, submissive, and lacking social skills. Thus, this study looks to the findings of those previous studies conducted prior to the dawn of the knowledge-based society by reviewing the literature before conducting a survey to achieve the goal of the study; to reveal the modern sophomore students' views and perceptions of the accounting profession. As such this study provides updated information about the business college students' thoughts and perceptions of the accounting profession, and states any changes occurred.

Through the research part of the study, descriptive statistics on the demographics of the respondents are examined with a focus on gender distribution, major choice distribution, and people who might have influenced respondents on their career choice decision. Ten sections of the course of Accounting Principles I were offered for about 300 business sophomores as a whole population. However, only five sections of those were included for the purposes of this study as a sample. The total sample collected was 151, with 95 males (63% of all) and 56 females (37%). This discrepancy between male and female respondents may be as a result of the school having a greater male population on the business degree programs.

Our study finds that marketing (MRKT) is nowadays the most preferred major [26% of the respondents (39/151)], management (MNGT) is the second most preferred major [23% of those (34/151)], and that finance (FIN) is the third most preferred according to the respondents in this study [21% of those (32/151)]. Only 9% of the respondents (14/151) mentioned interest in an accounting (ACCY) major. On the other hand, our study also examines gender based major preferences which show that only marketing female dominated; almost 57% of marketing majors are female. Other disciplines are more male dominated, in finance for instance 87.5% of the those are male respondents (28/32), in management 64.7% of those are male respondents (22/34) and this is almost the same in accounting of 64.2% (9/14)

This study shows that parents and high school teachers or counselors still have significant impacts on the college students' career choices. Our study reveals that parents have the greatest impact at 29.1% of those (44/151), high school environment are also significant at 20.5% (31/151), and friends of family accounts for 15.8% (24/151). However, our study also shows that factors out of box ("others" in our survey) also have a significant impact [29.1% of those (44/151)] on the college students' career choice. This could be important evidence to show that the new generations have been impacted by many factors existing on the accessible information platforms in the well-informed society.

The study followed the themes and factors that were drawn by Sugahara & Boland (2006) from previous studies. For **intrinsic values**, their composition consists of *areas of interest, glamor, intellectually challenging, contribution to society, satisfaction, attitudes, and beliefs*, for **career prospects**; *excellent prospects, powerful authority, good advancement opportunities, higher social prestige, higher salary even initially*, for **job market factors**; *job availability, job security, quality of life, long working hours, male dominance, opportunities for women* for **opportunity costs**; *workload for first years, preparation time for CPA exam, cost of CPA exam, difficulties for entry qualification, and personal liabilities for any malpractices*.

According to their mean scores, female respondents provide more strong perceptions on the overall statements of both positive and negative attributed features of the accounting profession. Mean scores of *accounting/finance sophomores'* thoughts and perceptions on intrinsic values of the accounting profession are greater than the overall (3.87 vs. 3.69) and positive attributed items (3.71 vs. 3.44). In the negative attributed intrinsic values, mean scores of groups of sophomores are almost the same as the average (4.27) and (4.26). Mean scores of *accounting/finance sophomores'* thoughts and perceptions on **career prospects** of the accounting profession are greater than the overall (3.64 vs. 3.49). Mean scores of *accounting/finance sophomores'* thoughts and perceptions on **job-market factors** of the accounting profession are greater than the overall (3.67 vs. 3.53), and positive attributed items (3.93 vs. 3.68), in the negative attributed items (3.34 vs. 3.31), and in women attributed item (3.57 vs. 3.50). Mean scores of *accounting/finance sophomores'* thoughts and perceptions on **opportunity costs** of the accounting profession are greater than the overall (3.03 vs. 2.89). We could argue that these findings are predictable in that accounting/finance major students may support the provided statements more than the others.

One tail *t*-test analyses of data collected from the survey conducted reveal some noteworthy findings. Significant differences between accounting/finance major and non-accounting/finance major students mainly from management and marketing are found on some statements of **intrinsic values** of the accounting profession. Also, a significant difference is observed on the statements all positive items (*p* value 0.000) and on all items of intrinsic values (*p* value 0.001). Significant differences between accounting/finance major and non-accounting/finance major students only from management exist on only two statements of **career prospects** of the accounting profession. Also, a significant difference is observed on all items of career prospects (*p* value 0.009). Significant differences between accounting/finance major and non-accounting/finance major students mainly from management and marketing are found on some statements of the **job-market factors** of the accounting profession. A significant difference is also observed on the statements positive at all (*p* value 0.000) and on all items of job-market factors (*p* value 0.007). Significant differences between accounting/finance major and non-accounting/finance major students do not exist on the statements provided relating to **opportunity costs** of the accounting profession, except only one statement which is "It costs a lot of money to sit for a CPA exam" (*p* value 0.036). Furthermore, there is no significant difference between accounting/finance major and management major students on the statements provided of opportunity costs of the accounting profession. This is the same for accounting/finance major vs. marketing major students.

This study provides updated information about the business college students' thoughts and perceptions of the accounting profession, and states no major significant changes have occurred in the currently well-informed and knowledgeable societies. We could conclude that the accounting profession has not been perceived at its deserved level at all even though many developments and innovations in technological areas have occurred supporting and adding means and values to the accounting profession.

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