

Preferences in Senior High School Tracks of the Grade 10 Students

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ABSTRACT

There are many influences that affect the preferences of grade 10 students in choosing a track to proceed to senior high school. Likewise, this study aims to identify influence of preference of a Senior High School track that is commonly encountered by the Grade 10 students in terms of Gender, Socio-Economic Status, Average academic grades, nature of parent's occupation; and, strand and the level of influence of the respondent to be associated with preferences in choosing a track in senior high school in terms of family influence-decision; peer influence; financial condition; and employability. The research tool was a survey questionnaire. The questionnaire is composed of respondent's profile and 10 statements to be rated. The factors fairly influence preferences of the senior high school. In terms of gender, male students consider their socio-economic status and their parent's occupation as factors in choosing their track in Senior High School while female students consider their peers as a factor in choosing a track in Senior High School.

Keyword: Academic Track, Career Choice, Decision-making, Influences, Senior High School Preferences

Introduction

Uncertainty is an unavoidable as well as career decision entailing unexpected outcomes[1]. Choosing a career is crucial especially among students in the secondary or in middle school. In making decisions in career selection, one has to undergo an intricate process and forcefully open-minded person to choose his speciality, practice and location of the educational institution [2]. Result expectancies, learning experiences, sex, personal interests and contacts influence the choice of career among students which leads to confusion, doubts and undecidedness of the students[3]. Undecidedness about choice of major course to take is a common condition on tertiary levels today [4]. To mention, money and average grade quota restrictions as potential obstruction of decision-making and major changers of desired career among students because it prohibited students to enrol from entering the productive field. undecided students are affected by the differences in institutional practices, policies, and attitudes[5]. Students should not be in a permanent status of undecidedness[6][7]. Misfit of choosing a career may result in unemployment and underemployment [8]. Professional life and future achievement is a result of the appropriate choice of career among students [9]. Students become confused, for instance, negative perceptions in certain specialities of a preferred career[10]. Advising is helping students to realize with their own ideas, feeling, and effort to understand and make meaningful concepts in the choice of their career [11]. Teachers are more influential compared to career counsellors [12]. Unfortunately, internet society has most probably replaced the influence of the family in this contemporary society [13].

In relation to this, this input information relays the crucial role of preferences of a senior high school track among grade 10 students. In this study, the process includes the gathering of data which uses the descriptive-analytical method using the survey questionnaire from the desired number of respondents of grade 10 students. The process pertains in organizing the collected data, analyzing and giving an interpretation of data. Lastly, recommendations shall help the students in choosing their desired track in senior high school when influential factors on the preferences of the grade 10 students are determined.

Statement of Purpose

This study aims to assess some selected factors associated with of preferences of senior high school track that are commonly adopted by the Grade 10 students of a secondary national high school of the school year 2017-2018. Specifically, it attempted to determine the profile of Grade 10 students in terms of gender, socio-economic status, parent's occupation consideration, strand-like Accountancy and Business Management(ABM), General Academic Strand (GAS), and Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS). Then, the researcher determines the level of influence to the Grade 10 students toward track preferences in Senior High School in terms of family influence and decisions, peer influence, financial condition; and employability. Finally, the association between the profile and level of influence of the Grade 10 students towards track preference for the Senior High School is also determined.

Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant association between the factors and the roles of preference of a Senior High School track of the grade 10 students.

H₁: There is a significant association between the factors and the roles of preference of a Senior High School track of the grade 10 students.

Related Review of Literature

A lot of factors must be considered in choosing a course. Gender is a crucial factor among students in their choice of a course. Gender distinguishes female students to be inclined to artistic related careers while male students select scientific-related careers[14]. Gender differences exist in selection of speciality medical courses [15][16]. On the contrary, in choosing journalism traditional sex-role stereotypes as careers become irrelevant[17]. It does not make any variations of influence of family members, peers, teachers and guidance counsellors in the choice of career [12]. Gender differences ascertain preferred specialities [18]. Also, similarity of career choice may be depicted in cases like mother and daughter close relationship [13] while in developing and undeveloped countries, career decision making for college is influenced by parents particularly the father [16].

Aside from gender, before entering college, socio-economic and related factors include lifestyle among some medical students [2][16]; personal factors, socio-economic factors and socializers determine career choice, the prestige of the course, indication of well-paying job and bright future prospects, influence of demand of job [20]; personality [8], personal interest and previous positive clerical experience [21]); job security, interest, less competition, less hours of practice, less investment and influenced by friends[22]. Remuneration is a paramount factor among accounting students to be in the profession[23], but financial reward does not determine the choice of a career [21]; socio academics, cultural factors and university including entrance examination [24]. Whereas, professionals preparation between government and academic positions are different [25]. Though, type of occupations which require similar investment do but differ in income do not necessarily influence the choice of a student [26].

Academic and academic-related factors include, ability and intellect determines career success among students [8] interest [20] particular learning style [14]; curricular – extracurricular and one's experiences, income, career choices, status, work-life equilibrium, labor content, and hours of working, [16]; adequate motivational, cognitive, and metacognitive skills which meet job or family responsibilities shall prepare students for science courses [27], and grade point average, advice from other people, and orientation session attendance [21]. Among medical students, the chosen career is relevant to the successful product of the medical-educational institution, the program offered and the characteristic of medical student [28].

Decision-making, negative thinking and career difficulties indicate undecidedness of a student [7]. In order for students to make a better decision, one can consider interest and intellectual ability [8]; interest in the subject, relationship with peers, members of the family and teachers, and by assessment and research in the internet and other sources before making the decision [29]. Many students need career counselling for choosing correct career path as clinical researcher or clinical practitioner [30]. The approach to supporting student willingness is a potential influence [6].

In terms of personal qualities, low self-confidence in the classroom implicates the behaviour to be less motivated and do less effort while adjusting their aspirations [31]. Confidence evolves through experiences in student's life and overconfidence is relevant to the good earning expectation of an individual [32]. Change of specialization is relevant with traits like optimism, sense of identity, work drive and career decidedness together with extraversion, openness, emotional stability and conscientiousness (Foster, 2013)

METHODOLOGY

Design, respondents, locus, sampling design and size

The study employed quantitative-descriptive survey via a researcher-made questionnaire in which copies are distributed to grade 10 students duly invited and involved senior high schools by complete enumeration. In particular, 188 students from five different sections of grade 10 positively responded and answered the given identical survey. The questionnaires are composed of respondent's profile and 10 questions.

Gathering of Data. The researchers personally distributed the questionnaires to the grade 10 students of the secondary school for immediate assistance to answer concerns and clarification of the given questions and retrieval of the questionnaires. The data were then collected, tallied and tabulated to be treated with Chi-square (χ^2).

PRESENTATION OF DATA, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter provides the gathered data and the researcher’s analysis and interpretation of the results of the distributed surveys. The data were presented in a clearly and concisely in tables.

TABLE I: FREQUENCY OF GENDER & LEVEL OF INFLUENCE

Gender	NI	%	FI	%	MI	%	SI	%	Total	%
Female	18	9.57	22	11.70	20	10.64	22	11.70	106	56.38
Male	20	10.64	21	11.17	21	11.17	30	15.96	82	43.62
Total	38	20.21	43	22.87	41	21.81	52	27.66	188	100.00

Legend: Strongly Influenced (SI=4); More Influenced (MI=3); Fairly Influenced (FI=2); Not Influenced (NI=1)

Table I shows that students are strongly influenced at 27.66% of the total population of the students. It is followed by 22.87% in which indicates that the students are fairly influenced. While 21.81% indicates that only few of the students are moderately influenced and 20.21% of the students are not influenced.

TABLE II: FREQUENCY OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS & LEVEL OF INFLUENCE

Socio-economic Status	NI	%	FI	%	MI	%	SI	%	Total	%
5000 and below	3	1.60	9	4.79	15	7.98	11	5.85	38	20.21
5,001-15,000	5	2.66	31	16.49	16	8.51	11	5.85	63	33.51
15,001-25,000	3	1.60	27	14.36	14	7.45	6	3.19	50	26.60
25,001 and above	4	2.13	10	5.32	13	6.91	10	5.32	37	19.68
Total	15	7.99	77	40.96	58	30.8	38	20.21	188	100.00

Legend: Strongly Influenced (SI=4); More Influenced (MI=3); Fairly Influenced (FI=2); Not Influenced (NI=1)

Table II shows that most of the students in terms of socio-economic status fall between 5,001-15, 000. 40.96% of the students are fairly influenced, 30.85% are moderately influenced, 20.21% are strongly influenced and 7.99% is not influenced.

TABLE III: FREQUENCY OF STUDENTS BY GENDER & STRAND

	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
STEM	14	7.45	9	4.79	23	17.55
ABM	15	7.98	31	16.49	46	24.47
GAS	31	11.17	39	20.74	70	31.91
HUMSS	9	4.79	12	6.38	21	11.17
I.T	5	2.66	0	0.00	5	2.66
Tech. Voc.	8	4.26	15	7.98	23	12.23
Total	82	38.31	106	56.38	188	100

Legend: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM); Accountancy Business and Management (ABM); General Academic Strand (GAS); Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS); Information and Technology (I.T); Technical Vocational (Tech. Voc.)

Table III shows that most students had chosen General Academic Strand (GAS) as their strand in which it indicates that they are still undecided of what degree they are going to take up in College. As a sort of suggestion, gender is also a factor in choosing a track. This is particularly important because some have suggested that the choice of the track of women and minorities create differential earnings, which perpetuate class differences. Some researchers argue that gender differences in student track choice are the result of socialization in traditional gender roles [33]. Researchers have explained that women tend to choose disciplines like education, nursing and English because of their female gender role orientation.

TABLE IV: INFLUENTIAL FACTORS AND LEVEL OF INFLUENCE

Influential Factors	NI	%	FI	%	MI	%	SI	%	Total	%
Family Influence	38	20.21	57	30.32	52	27.66	41	21.81	188	100
Peer Influence	39	20.74	95	50.53	38	20.21	16	8.51	188	100
Financial Condition	15	7.98	74	39.36	46	24.47	53	28.19	188	100
Employability	41	21.81	69	36.70	46	24.47	32	17.02	188	100
Total	33	17.69	74	39.23	46	24.20	36	18.88	188.88	100

Legend: Strongly Influenced (SI=4); More Influenced (MI=3); Fairly Influenced (FI=2); Not Influenced (NI=1)

Table IV shows that 295 students are fairly influenced by the influential factors namely; family, peer, financial condition and employability. Most number of students is fairly influenced by their peers and their financial condition in which peer influence is 50.53% of the total population and financial condition is 39.36% of the total population. Family is one of the most influential factors that impact Filipino students' career decision [8]. Peer factor is the most consideration of students in choosing a track in Senior High School. Since students' first consideration in choosing a course is their peers, researchers had also observed that the stability of the family's financial source which may pertain to the parent's occupation is considered by the students in choosing a track.

TABLE V: SUMMARY OF RESULTS

N = 188

Factors	χ^2	$\chi^2(.05,3)$	Decision	Interpretation
Family	1.24	7.815	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Socio-Economic	15.8	7.815	Reject	Significant
Peer Influence	26.41	7.815	Reject	Significant
In-demand	7.45	7.815	Failed to Reject	Not Significant

Legend: Strongly Influenced (SI=4); More Influenced (MI=3); Fairly Influenced (FI=2); Not Influenced (NI=1)

In the table above, computed $\chi^2(1.24)$ is lesser than critical $\chi^2_{.05,3}(7.815)$, the H_0 is failed to reject. There is no strong evidence that family influence student decision-making in choosing a track in senior high school.

While, in terms of socio-economic, computed $\chi^2(15.8)$ is greater than critical $\chi^2_{.05,3}(7.815)$, then the H_0 is rejected. The table shows that socio-economic is significant in student's choice in choosing a track in Senior High School. For practicality reasons, parents usually encourage careers that will not cost much money as well as are stable sources of income [8]

Third, computed $\chi^2(7.45)$ is lesser than critical $\chi^2_{.05,3}(7.815)$, then the H_0 is failed to reject. There is no strong evidence that employability influence student's decision-making in choosing a track in Senior High School track. Occupations included in this category include courses related to legal and social work, education work and personnel work. This could be the common response of students since nowadays graduates find it difficult to find a job even if they have already finished well-known courses such as nursing and education courses [8].

Fourth, computed $\chi^2(26.41)$ is greater than critical $\chi^2_{.05,3}(7.815)$, then the H_0 is failed to reject. It is significant in the decision-making of the students in their preference of choosing a track. Peers were also rated highly as individuals that senior high students would approach for help with career planning [8].

To sum up, family and employability are failed to reject and they are not significant in influencing the Grade 10 students in choosing a track in senior high school, socio-economic and peer influence are rejected and are significant in influencing the Grade 10 students in choosing a track in Senior High School. Family and employability do not affect the decision of the students in choosing a track for senior high school while socio-economic and peer influence affect the decision of the students.

DISCUSSION

This study aims to identify the associative influence in a senior high school track preference which is commonly encountered by the Grade 10 students. With respondents 106 are females and 82 are males, students have varied socio-economic status and it has fairly influenced their choice of track in senior high school. Students had the most number in choosing General Academic Strand (GAS) which indicates that they still doubt of what course to take in college since the track is considered to be a neutral track. Family, peers, financial condition and employability had fairly influenced the students in their preference of a senior high school track. There is a significant association between socioeconomic and peer influence and the level of influence of the grade 10 students in track preference. Researchers have noticed that students are affected by their socio-economic status and peers influencing preference which make choosing a senior high school track as one of the biggest challenges of a student in decision-making and inklings, choice of track may have long-lasting implications including on future earnings because there is growing evidence that at least some portion of the connection between choosing a track in senior high school and wages is casual [34]. Integration of career plans in the curriculum can help students in making sound decision in career selection [8]. Unfortunately, although students have expressed interest in career planning and sought support from parents and friends, students have expressed dissatisfaction with the current system of career counselling [35].

Thinking properly and selecting the right track for students will help them to be ready for their future and choosing the right track can help enhance their skills and capabilities in the track they will choose. Teachers should guide and help their students in choosing the right and appropriate track for them and keep their thoughts and arms open for students who intend to approach them in times of doubts and difficulty in decision-making. Career guidance may be given intensively and be implemented in school through the mandate of the school head. Meanwhile, parents should monitor and support their children for they will have a challenging step for their future. They shall be open to discussion with their son or daughter especially in education and the future that entails with it.

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