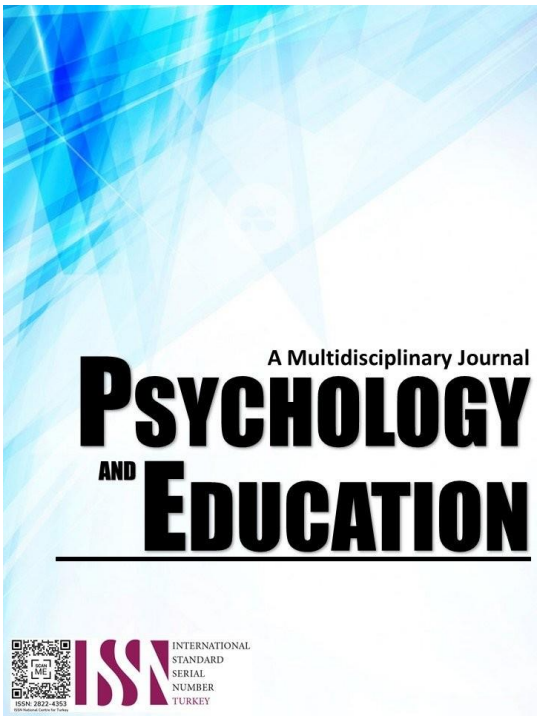
FACTORS AFFECTING HIGH SCHOOL TRACK PREFERENCES OF GRADE 10 STUDENTS IN LIBMANAN DISTRICT, DIVISION OF CAMARINES SUR: A BASIS FOR CAREER GUIDANCE PLAN



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Research Article

Factors Affecting High School Track Preferences of Grade 10 Students in Libmanan District, Division of Camarines Sur: A Basis for Career Guidance Plan

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine the factors affecting high school track preferences of grade 10 students: a basis for career guidance plan. This study was utilized descriptive method of research to determine the factors, and figure out if the dependent variables were related to personality, family/relatives, interests and job opportunities influencing the track preferences of the respondents. The descriptive research used quantitative methods to assess the feedback from the respondents. A research- made survey scale/questionnaire was given to the respondents to determine the factors that affect career preferences/choices, of the respondents in terms of personality, family, interests and job opportunities, which would specialize in high school of the k-12 curriculum. Results of the study revealed that Grade 10 students in terms of age were still young and comprises of male and female, The parents of the students are high school levels/ graduates, majority of them having non-professional, Majority of the students belong to families with an average or middle-class family. Majority of the students would pursue a career in Engineering, followed by Social Science, management and other fields. In the area of Personality factors, fitting the personality to career is the leading factor. The same goes for awareness of the family support on the area of family factors, particular interest on the career among interest factors, and awareness of the opportunities surrounding the chosen career among the factors regarding job opportunities. The students are influenced by Personality, Interests and Job Opportunities factors in choosing their Track preference. Family/Relatives factors somewhat influence the students in choosing their Track preference. As a recommendation a career guidance program is to be developed, aiming at the student's self-awareness of their personality, interests, strengths and weaknesses, among others. From that, the guidance counsellor can provide guidance towards orientation and choice of Track, a precursor towards pursuing chosen careers then career and Track course options are to be provided to the students as early as possible so that they will not be misled with information that they will acquire in choosing their future career. Also, Competency-based curriculum that responds to industry's needs is to be implemented so that students are guided in their career choice. And lastly Information seminar is to be developed so that the students may know essential information regarding careers, annual incomes, personal information awareness and the like.

Keywords: *career-pahays, interests, k-12 program, opportunities, personality*

Introduction

Philippines is one of the three countries remaining in the world, namely Djibouti and Angola in Africa, and the only remaining country in Asia with a 10-year pre-university program. This short period makes it difficult for Filipinos to be competitive with other countries that have at least 12 years of basic education. The majority who do not go to college are too young to enter the labor force, thus, they would either be unemployed to set up businesses or cannot legally enter into contracts.

With this apparent problem on education, the Department of Education has started to implement the new K-12 Curriculum, which is a major reform in the curriculum for all schools nationwide. This reform includes decongesting and enhancing the basic education curriculum for learners to master basic competencies, lengthening the cycle of basic education to cover kindergarten through year 12. By prolonging the basic education, that is, adding kindergarten and two years in high school, the program ensures that graduates earn the necessary skills and reach the legal age for employment to qualify entrance into the world of work, if they desire or need to do so. On the other hand, graduates who opt to go to tertiary education are deemed better prepared for college study (SEAMEO INNOTECH, 2012).

A major change brought about by K-12 curriculum is the addition of two years in secondary education, known as High School (HS). The old 4-year secondary curriculum will be now renamed as Junior High School (JHS)which starts from Grades 7 to Grade 10, and High School will follow through from Grades 11 to 12. The additional two years of HS would mean that the high school graduates are better prepared for whatever path they will choose, and be of legal age (18 years old) to be lawfully employed upon graduation.

The secondary education curriculum, in itself, would be reformed too. All core subjects,namely: Science, Mathematics, Araling Panlipunan, MAPEH and Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao; will be taught using the spiral approach wherein learning is a process of building upon previously learned knowledge. The newest addition and one of the main highlights of K-12 curriculum is the Career Pathways,more known as Tracks. It offers opportunities for specialization in Academic, Technical-Vocational-Livelihood, Sports and Arts fields.

The students may choose based on aptitude, interests and school capacity. The choice of the career track will determine the content of the subjects the student will take in High School as preparation for his/her career.

The tracks aforementioned are as follows:
1.Academic, which is further subdivided into three strands:
a. Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM)
b. Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS)
c. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)
2.Technical-vocational, which is further subdivided into four strands:
a.Agriculture-Fisheries
b.Home Economics
c. Industrial Arts
d.Information and Communications Technology (ICT)
3.Sports
4. Arts and Design

At Grades 7 and 8, students will study exploratory subjects by taking four Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE)courses for each Grade. At Grades 9 and 10, TLE specializations are offered, then at Grades 11 and 12 career pathway specializations are offered. Career pathways lead to eligibility for Certificate of Competency (COC), which TESDA issues to individuals who satisfactorily demonstrate competence on a particular or cluster of units of competency. The COC leads to certification beginning with NC 1 which indicates the performance of a routine and predictable task, requiring little judgment and supervision, and NC 2, the performance of a prescribed range of functions.

Aside from certification of TESDA, other recognition may be issued by other government or non-government agencies. For instance, art-related career pathways may be assessed by the National Commission for Culture and Arts (NCCA); sports-related career pathways may be assessed by the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC); and foreign languages may be assessed by TESDA or foreign language institutes.

The first phase of K-12 implementation has been started on AY 2012-2013,wherein the new curriculum is now being offered for Grade 1 and Grade 7. For AY 2014-2015, the pioneer Grade 7 class is now at Grade 9, and in AY2016-2017, they would be the first batch of High School graduates of the K-12 program, as this class would be the first to take up High. The career specializations offered by the K-12 curriculum serve as a stepping stone for the students to plan up and act upon on their chosen career. As the future pioneer batch of Grade 12 graduates, the Grade 10 students of AY 2017-2018, are at the phase wherein they would choose their specialization that they would take up in High School. Thus, it is important to determine the specialization that they are about to take and the factors as to why they chose the said track.

Research Questions

This study determined the factors that affect the high school track preferences of the Grade 10 Students of San Isidro National High School Academic Year 2017-2018. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following:

1. What is the socio-economic profile of the Grade 10 students in terms of:
    1.1. age;
    1.2. gender;
    1.3. parents' educational attainment;
    1.4. parents' occupation; and
    1.5. socio-economic status?
2. What career/field do the respondents want to specialize and pursue further once they graduated from Grade 10?
3. What track would the respondents prefer to take up for high school?
4. What are the leading factors that affect the respondents' preference among these areas?
    4.1. personality;
    4.2. family/relatives;
    4.3. interests; and
    4.4. job opportunities?
5. To what extent do the four factors mention in Question 4 influence the students 'track preference?

Methodology

Research Design

This study utilized the descriptive method of research to determine the factors that affect the high school track preferences of the Grade 10students of San Isidro National High School of the Academic Year 2017-2018. I seek dependent variables relating to personality, family/relatives, interests and job opportunities were significant factors influencing the track preferences of the respondents. This descriptive research used quantitative methods to assess the feedback from the respondents.

The research design, depict in Figure 3, follows an Input-Process-Output framework. The Input portion includes the socio-demographic

profile of the students, their choice of field of study to specialize, their track preference and the factors that affect their preference. The Process portion includes determining their track preferences and determining the leading factors that affect their preference.

Respondents

The research respondents in this study were Grade 10 students of the San Isidro National High School of Academic Year 2017-2018. The whole batch was divided into three (3) sections, withan average of 42 students per section. From the total population of 126 students, the study garnered 95 of the total respondent turnouts.

Instrument

For this study, a research-made survey rating scale/questionnaire was used to gather the respondents' feedback. Table 1 shows the specification grid of the 16-item rating scale/questionnaire for the respondents regarding the factors that affect the students' high school track preference.

Part I of the questionnaire covered the socio-demographic profile of the respondent; such as age, gender, parent's educational attainment, parents 'occupation, and socio-economic status. Part II covered the career/field that the respondent would pursue and their track preference as mentioned in Chapter 1. Lastly, the respondents were asked of their preferred response in a 16-item rating scale that is under Part III, wherein they would rate each item on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 as "not influenced" and 5 as "very much influenced".

Procedure

Approval to distribute the questionnaires and conduct the study was secured from the school administrator. The researchers then distributed the survey forms and conducted the study personally. The study was administered during the last 10-15 minutes of the morning part of their Final Exam.

Table 1. *Specification Grid on the Rating Scale/Questionnaire on the Factors Affecting the Student's High School Track Preference*

Content	*Item Numbers*	*Total Items*
Part I: Student Profile		
A. Gender		
B. Age		
C.Parents' Occupation		
D. Parent's EducationalAttainment		
E.SocioeconomicStatus		
Part II: Career Preferencesand Track Preferences		
A.Career/Field toSpecialize		
B.Track Preference		
Part Ill: Factors Affecting High School TrackPreference for Students		
A.ChildhoodAspirations	1-4	4
B.Family/Relatives	5-8	4
C.Peer Influences	9-12	4
D.Job Opportunities	13-16	4
Total		

Data Analysis

For Part I and II, covered the profiling of the respondents, frequencies and percentages are used. Part III comprises a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 for the lowest and 5 for the highest.

Ethical Considerations

To safeguard the identity of the respondents, the researcher made sure that the name, contact information, and any details of the respondents remained confidential.

Before answering the questionnaire, the researcher explain the objectives, scope and proposed output of the study.

Results and Discussion

In this section, the statistical results of the study were divided into 3(three) parts and each has a corresponding table for every topic/matter at focus. The first part consists of the socioeconomic profile of the Grade 10 students of San Isidro National High School. The second part of the statistical results was the field of study they would pursue and their track preferences. The third part consists of the factors influencing student's track preferences and the extent of which said factors influence the track preference. There will be a discussion regarding the data that be included.

Socio-Economic Profile Of The Students

Age

Table 2. *Frequency and Percentage Distribution by Age*

Age	*Frequency*	*Frequency*
13-14	0	0%
15-16	89	93.68%
17 and above	6	6.13%
Total	95	100%

Table 2 clearly showed that majority of the respondents are 15-16years old with a frequency of 93.68%. This implies that the common age of Grade 10 students is between 15-16 years of age.

Gender

Table 3. *Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents*

Male	*Frequeny*	*Female*	*Frequeny*
42	44.22%	53	55.80%

The respondents were comprising of males and females of SINHS grade 10 students. Table 3 clearly showed that majority of the respondents are female with a frequency of 55.80% This implies that the common gender of Grade 10students are female.

Parents Educational Attainment

Table 4. *Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Parents' Educational Attainment*

Educational Attainment	*Father*		*Mother*	
	Frequency	*Percent*	*Frequency*	*Percent*
No Education	1	1.053%	0	0%
Elementary Education	30	31.58%	27	28.42%
High School Level/ Graduate	43	45.26%	46	48.42%
College Level	14	14.74%	18	18.95%
Post Graduate Level	5	5.26%	4	4.21%
Unknown	2	2.11%	0	0%
Total	95	100	95	100

From the table above, it showed that the majority of fathers were high school level or graduates, which comprises 45.26% of the fathers. The same was applicable for mothers, majority of which are high school level or graduates at 48.42%. These high school level or graduates were categorized for nonprofessionals that had useful skill sets and knowledge for their fields.

It found out that "unknown" category that was added in the table because in the course of tabulation, some respondents did not fill in the specific field mostly on the reason that they did not know on what level of education their parents achieved the highest, among others.

Parents Occupations

Parents' occupations were classified into three dimensions namely: Unemployed (Unemployment is the situation of actively looking for employment but not being currently employed), Professional (White collar occupations a white-collar worker is a person who performs professional, managerial, or administrative work.

White-collar work is performed in an office, cubicle, or other administrative setting) and Non- professional (Blue-collar work may involve skilled or unskilled manufacturing, mining, sanitation, custodian, work, oil field, construction, mechanical, maintenance, warehousing, firefighting, technical installation fisherman, driver, farmer and other types of physical work. Often something is physically being built or maintained)

Table 5. *Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Parents' Occupations*

Educational Attainment	*Father*		*Mother*	
	Frequency	*Percent*	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Unemployed	4	4.21%	31	32.63%
Professional	2	2.11%	4	4.21%
Non Professional	82	86.31%	60	63.16%
Non-response	7	7.37%	0	0%
Total	95	100.00%	95	100.00%

Table 5 clearly showed us the difference between the husbands and the wives. Under the "none" category parents mostly do not have occupations and would default as being housewives/househusbands. Their primary role was a child-care provider, supporting their children's physical, intellectual, and emotional development while sharing or outsourcing other aspects of home care. Also under the same category were parents that retired or deceased. The “unknown" refers to the case wherein the respondents did not know the parent’s occupation of their parents.

For mothers, the distribution was evenly distributed among the Professionals and Non-professional, including 63.16% of the mothers' population.These were followed by "none" category, just short of 32.63% to make the three categories even. On the other hand, majority of the father's occupations were Non-professionals. This is indicative of the work environment that they've specialized on and the skill set that they had to carry out the work assigned.

Socioeconomic status

Socioeconomic status of the respondents was measured through the annual income of both parents. They were then classified into high-class (annual income of more than Php 300,000.00), middle-class (annual income ranging from Php 120,000.00 to Php 300,000.00) and low-class (annual income less than Php 120,000.00).

Table 6. *Frequency and Percentage Distribution by Socio-economic Status*

Socioeconomic status	*Frequency*	*Percent*
7,000-below	32	33.68
7,001-14,000	21	22.11
14,001-20,000	16	16.84
20,001-28,000	22	23.16
28,001-35,000	4	4.21
35,001-above	0	0
Total	95	100

From the table 6, it can be seen that majority of the students are from indigent families, making up 33.68% of the population, and is followed by students of middle-class families, comprising 21.56% of the respondents. It can be implied that the parents of the indigent families are financially incapable enough to sustain the family, enroll their sons in other schools like, and still be able to acquire their needs and wants.

Fields Of Study And Track Preferences

Field of Study

The following table showed the frequency of the fields of study of Grade 10 students that they want to pursue.

Table 7. *Fields of Study that the Students will Pursue*

Field of Study	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Medicine	11	11.58%
Engineering	28	29.47%
Business	9	9.47%
Language	4	4.22%
Arts	9	9.47%
Science	3	3.16%
Social Sciences	16	16.84%
Education	2	2.11%
Management	13	13.68%
Others	0	0%
Total	95	100%

Table 7 presented the fields of study of the respondents. Majority of the students will pursue the Engineering field, comprising 29.47% of the population.16.84% of the respondents would pursue Social Science, 13.68% purse for Management, while 11.58% of the respondents will specialize in the field of medicine, while 9.47% pursue Business and Arts and few were wanted to become a language instructor soon and the list among all the courses was education.

A sensible explanation as to why majority of the respondents would take up Engineering field due to the high performance of the students on mathematics and near quality school namely science high school that offers the said track that would give them an edge in the Engineering field.

Track Preferences

The following table showed the frequency and the percentage of the track preferences of Grade 10 students.

Table 8. *Track Preferences of the Grade 10 Students*

Track Preferences	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Academic	64	67.37%
Hums	19	20%
ABM	13	13.63%
Stem	32	33.68%
Technical-VocationalLivelihood	31	32.63%
Home Economics	12	12.63
Agriculture-Fishery	10	10.53
Industrial Arts	4	4.22
Information and CommunicationsTechnology (ICT)	5	5.26
Total	95	100%

Table 8 showed the track preferences of the respondents. Majority of the students prefer the Academic track specifically on STEM which comprises 33.68% of the population, followed by HUMSS at 20% and ABM at 13.63%.

It makes sense that the students that pursue Engineering and Medicine would take up STEM strand. Compatibility will be essential in this stage, for ifone does not know what strand or track would lead to his career, he may end up choosing the wrong one and regret it later on.

Personality

Personality helped a person in finding the career that he was inherently suited in (Adecco UK, 2015). As his characteristics define his behavior at work, this may affect his productivity.

Table 9 showed that personality was being put to consideration in choosing a career that they would specialize on the Track that they preferred. Rank 1, some students do believe that some students that their attributes should be ideal for the career on focus. Second is the increase in productivity due to the traits that the person has.

Table 9. *Personality as a Factor on Students' Track Choice (N=95)*

Percent	*Weighted Mean*	*D*	*Rank*
1. My personality fits best in my chosen career that I would take from this Track.	4.34	VI	3
2. My traits and understanding of them will giveme an advantage on landing to my pursuedcareer.	4.37	VI	2
3. I am more productive in the career that I'll practice due to my traits.	4.17	1	4
4. My attributes should be ideal for the career that Iwould focus on.	4.41	VI	1
Totality	4.3225	VI	

Third was the fitting of the personality to career choice. Lastly, some students believe that their understand of their traits give them as an edged in accomplishing his pursued career

The totality means of 4.32 meant that Personality influenced the students 'track preference. Students do consider personality as factors, and most of them let it influence their decisions that much, on a possibility that they can adjust to the occupation or career that they will be focusing on.

Family/Relatives

Many students seek for parents' or relatives' suggestion on what they should specialized when they grew up. Sometimes they suggested careers that wouldn't cost that much, and at the same time, were stable sources of income. Table 9 on the family/relatives showed that the students were aware that their own families would give support to him on their chosen career which Ranked 1. This factor influenced the student's choice on his Track. Of course there were lot of other factors that he would consider, and he would less likely be influenced by his family based on their socioeconomic status and the ability to financially support his schooling.

And the responsibility of the family to chosen on the basis of knowing what was best (Rank 2). Other factors that Somewhat Influenced the student's track choice on the aspect of family/relatives include: going for the same career as the other members of the family (Rank 3), and lastly, preferences made by the benefactor of the expenses (Rank 4),

Table 10. *Family/Relatives as a Factor on Student's Track Choice (N=95)*

Family/Relatives	*Weighted Mean*	*D*	*Rank*
1. My parents and/or relatives took the same career that I would pursue.	2.23	L	3
2. Preferences are made by a relative since they will provide for the expenses.	2.05	L	4
3. My family will give me support on the chosen career for me.	4.61	VI	1
4. I believe that they are the one who are responsible to choose a career for me since they may know what is best for me.	2.4	S	2

Totality	2.823	L

The totality means of 2.82 mean that the family/relatives Somewhat Influenced the track preference of the students. The results from the Socioeconomic Profile of the Students presented the high socioeconomic level of the students' families, the parents' educational status being high school graduate or level, and the parent's occupations which the majority having Blue Collar jobs which pursued their students of at least college support. It would imply that the students can think less on worrying on sustaining college support themselves.

Interests

Most students, when making career choices, will say "I want something interesting". The interests have been influenced many choices that a person has made, from the choice of breakfast in the morning to the late-night movie to watch before going to bed. And those are likely to have been similar influenced to career choice, the main emphasis on choosing a Track.

Table 10 on the interests showed that the students are particularly interested in the career that they will pursue from the Track. Among the categories: Ranked 1, they had chosen a career that was timely in demand. This factor Very Much influenced the student's choice on his Track. Particularity on the interest sparks a person's curiosity about an object or an activity, and in turn, will surely find a way so that he can to learn most from it and earn something valuable from it.

Table 10 on the interests showed that the students are particularly interested in in the career that hook their curiosity (Rank1), Once their interest arouse the vision of being competent in the career they pursue (Rank 2).

Table 11. *Interests as a Factor on Student's Track Choice (N=95)*

Interests	*Weighted Mean*	*Description*	*Rank*
1. I am particularly interested in this career that I'll pursue from this Track.	4.49	Very Much Influenced	4
2. I like doing things related to the career that I would specialize in this Track.	4.36	Very Much Influenced	3
3. An experience piqued my interest for this career.	3.88	Some what Influenced	1
4. I see myself as competent at this career that I'll pursue from this Track.	4.27	Very Much Influenced	2
Totality	4.25	Very Much Influenced	

Other factors that influenced the students' track choice of interest's aspect includes: the work related to the career that they have been takin up (Rank 3) and lastly, the particularity on the interest sparks a person's curiosity about an object or an activity, and in turn, will surely find a way so that he can to learn most from it and earn something valuable from it.

The totality mean of 4.25 meant that interests influenced the track preferences of the students. There may be other major factors that, in one way or another, overshadow interest as being very much influencing, such as the nature of the career, skills, and limitations, among others.

Job Opportunities

There were many opportunities that surround the career a person wanted to pursue. Being investigative with opportunities makes him discover more, and those opportunities would make his career life better.

Table 11 on the job opportunities showed that the students were aware on the opportunities specifically on finding a suitable career once they finished the track, (Rank 1) the student's awareness of the abundant opportunities available on the track they've chosen. (Rank 2), it also implies that the student was able to investigate, knows what opportunities are present in the career and which among the opportunities would be the one that the person would surely seize.

And lastly, the timeliness of the demand of the career (Rank 4).

The totality mean of 4.23 meant that interests Somewhat Influenced the track preferences of the students. The students may consider the opportunities less in making track preferences, but it shouldn't be disregarded, especially in today's fast-paced world, wherein many opportunities are open for people to grab.

Table 12. *Job Opportunities as a Factor on Student's Track Choice (N=95)*

Job Opportunities	*Weighted Mean*	*Description*	*Rank*
1. There are abundant opportunities I can avail from the career I would pursue.	4.39	Very Much Influenced	3
2. The Track that I chose will help me to find a suitable career easily.	4.47	Very Much Influenced	1
3. The career that I would pursue is timely in demand.	3.86	Influenced	4
4. I am fully aware of the opportunities that surround the career that I seek.	4.18	Influenced	2

Totality	4.23	Very Much Influenced

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the followings conclusions are drawn.

The Grade 10 students of San Isidro National High School Academic Year 2017-2018 are of ages 15-16, including males and females on the premise that SINHS is an all-boys school. The parents of the students are college graduates, majority of them having white-collar jobs, while a considerable number having blue-collar jobs and/or staying at home as housewives. Majority of the students belong to families with high socioeconomic status.

Majority of the students would pursue a career in Engineering, followed by Medicine, Business and other fields.

3.In the area of Personality factors, fitting the personality to career is the leading factor. The same goes for awareness of the family support on the area of family factors, particular interest on the career among interest factors, and awareness of the opportunities surrounding the chosen career among the factors regarding job opportunities.

The students are influenced by Personality, Interests and Job their Track preference. Opportunities factors in choosing Family/Relatives factors somewhat influence the students in choosing their Track preference.

Based on the findings, and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are forwarded:

A career guidance program is to be developed, aiming at the student's self-awareness of their personality,interests, strengths and -weaknesses, among others. From that, the guidance counsellor can provide guidance towards orientation and choice of Track, a precursor towards pursuing chosen careers.

Career and Track course options are to be provided to the students as early as possible so that they will not be misled with information that they will acquire in choosing their future career.

Competency-based curriculum that responds to industry's needs is to be implemented so that students are guided in their career choice

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