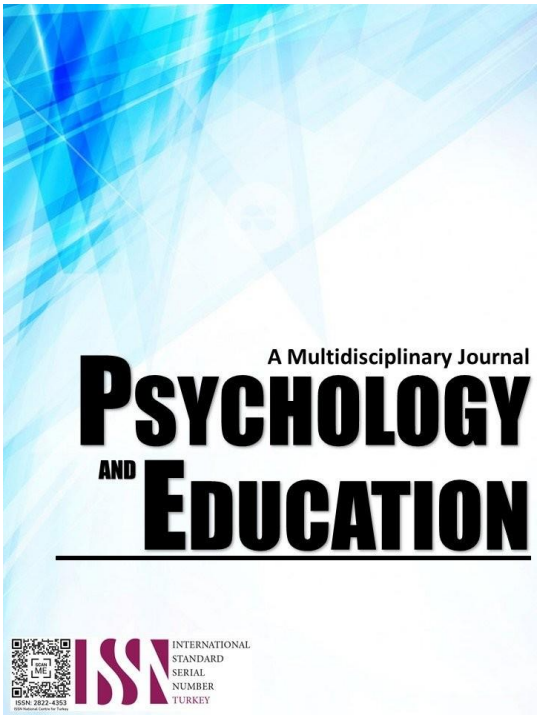
ALIGNING SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL TRACKS WITH CAREER ASPIRATIONS: AN ANALYSIS OF THE COMPETENCIES, EMPLOYABILITY, AND COLLEGE COURSE CORRESPONDENCE OF TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL GRADUATES



PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL

Volume: 32
Issue 9
Pages: 1086-1093
Document ID: 2025PEMJ3122
DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.14946926
Manuscript Accepted: 02-10-2025

Psych Educ, 2025, **32**(9): 1086-1093 Document ID:2025PEMJ3122, doi:10.5281/zenodo.14946926, ISSN 2822-4353

Research Article

Aligning Senior High School Tracks with Career Aspirations: An Analysis of the Competencies, Employability, and College Course Correspondence of Technical-Vocational Graduates

Joel M. Ligoyligoy,* Lino C. Corneja, Archie L. Corneja, Myra M. Ligoyligoy
For affiliations and correspondence, see the last page.

Abstract

This study rigorously analyzes the attributes of technical-vocational graduates in the Maasim, Sarangani Province, emphasizing their skills, curriculum completion, employability, and correlation with college course enrollment. The study employed a purposive sampling method to survey 119 participants from three senior high schools. A descriptive-correlational study methodology was utilized to evaluate the correlations between the graduates' profiles and the important factors. The results indicated no substantial association among competency, employability, the finished track, and the students' current college courses. The National Career Assessment Examination (NCAE) demonstrated a substantial correlation with the alignment of students' selected college courses. This indicates that the choice of senior high school tracks ought to be based on the outcomes of the NCAE, the High School Occupational Inventory of Interest, and the National Career Achievement Examination. The research reveals that students selecting pathways closely matched with their prospective college courses, especially the General Academic Strand and Humanities and Social Sciences, are more favorably positioned for future professional success. This highlights the necessity for a comprehensive and data-informed methodology in the selection of senior high school tracks, guaranteeing congruence with students' academic and occupational objectives. The study emphasizes the shortcomings of providing educational courses simply based on the geographic location of schools, indicating that programs in remote locations, such as agriculture and technical-vocational education, may insufficiently equip students for higher education. This misalignment can pose difficulties for students transitioning to more demanding academic programs, highlighting the necessity of a curriculum that facilitates both short-term and long-term academic and career goals.

Keywords: *alignment, employability, curriculum, correlation, and readiness*

Introduction

In the always-changing realm of education and employment, comprehending the intricacies of technical-vocational education is becoming essential. This study building on foundational work by scholars such as (Albina et al, 2020) investigates the profile of technical-vocational graduates in the West Maasim District, Maasim, Sarangani Province, with a focus on their competence, curriculum exit, employability, and subsequent enrollment in college courses. Through a purposive research design, this investigation surveys a sample of 119 graduates drawn from three senior high schools, aligning with the recommendations regarding robust sample selection techniques in educational research. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational approach, the analysis evaluates the relationships between various factors influencing graduates' profiles, including their competencies and employability, as established in similar studies by (Abdullah et al, 2022). The findings of this study reveal a curious absence of a significant correlation between graduates' competencies, their tracked exit points, and their current college courses. However, echoing insights from (Anderson, 2020), a noteworthy significant correlation is identified between the National Career Assessment Examination (NCAE) results and the alignment of students' chosen college courses.

This study's findings indicate a notable lack of a substantial association among graduates' skills, recorded exit points, and current college courses. Echoing observations, a considerable association is discovered between the National Career Assessment Examination (NCAE) outcomes and the alignment of students' selected college courses. This study's findings indicate a notable lack of a substantial association among graduates' skills, recorded exit points, and current college courses. Echoing observations from (Anderson, 2020) between the National Career Assessment Examination (NCAE) outcomes and the alignment of students' selected college courses. This study emphasizes the importance of data-driven decision-making in senior high school tracks, arguing for empirical evidence such as NCAE scores and interest inventories (Bennett, 2009). It indicates that graduates in the General Academic Strand and Humanities and Social Sciences, whose selected tracks correspond with their college courses, gain significant benefits in their future careers, highlighting the importance of strategic academic planning in facilitating successful transitions from education to employment. As we progress

This study provides essential insights into the complexities of education-to-employment paths, which can guide policy and practice in technical-vocational education. Competencies are learning outcomes that equip graduates to execute tasks to the standards expected in the workforce, utilizing a suitable combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. It is an essential element of intellectual capital for any significant endeavor in the labor market. It includes the ability to execute duties that align with pertinent working demands and other professional necessities. (Chukwuedo et al, 2022). The humanistic schools emphasize the significance of choosing the appropriate trajectory for a lifelong profession that fosters active and productive contributions to the community and the nation. The androgyny school emphasizes the necessity of a supportive and respectful atmosphere that allows learners to affirm and articulate their unique objectives, highlighting the significance of substantial learner involvement in collaboratively shaping progress toward desired

outcomes. Critical pedagogy in education should emphasize the necessity of student empowerment through enhanced communal, historical, and political consciousness (Cosenza et al, 2014). The synthesis of these theories enables us to delineate and understand the profiles of post-grade 12 graduation.

Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of grade 12 graduates in terms of competency?
2. What is the profile of grade 12 graduates based on their curriculum exit?
3. What is the profile of grade 12 graduates based on courses enrolled in college, and senior high school track/strand alignment?
4. What is the profile of grade 12 graduates in terms of career, and employability alignment?

Literature Review

The profiles of technical-vocational graduates, specifically on their competencies, curriculum completion, employability, and eventual college enrollment, are crucial for assessing their readiness for the job market and further education opportunities. A recent study emphasizes the essential connection between vocational education and employability results. (Cosenza et al, 2014). Underscore the necessity for alignment between vocational training programs and labor market demands to mitigate skill mismatches, as reiterated by (Cosenza et al, 2014). who examine how competency-based education improves employability by providing students with pertinent skills. (Fakir, 2019). Examines how students' choices in vocational education can profoundly impact their career trajectories, highlighting the significance of selecting courses that align with personal employment objectives. (Fakir, 2019). Elucidate the function of career assessments, including the National Career Assessment Examination (NCAE), in directing students' educational decisions to correspond with their prospective employment options. This association underscores the need for comprehensive assessment tools to assist students in selecting college courses that align with their occupational training.

The significance of curricular design on student achievement is paramount. (Fakir, 2019). Content that curriculum should mirror contemporary industry trends to adequately equip students for the workforce, as the congruence between technical training and market requirements directly influences employability. This concept corresponds with the research conducted by (Cedefop, 2019) which examines the influence of congruence among academic interests, career aspirations, and educational trajectories on academic achievement and student happiness. Examines the substantial impact of career evaluation instruments on students' educational decisions, emphasizing how these resources might aid in the selection of academic and professional advantageous pathways. These studies highlight the intricate relationship among vocational education, assessment results, curriculum relevance, and employability, offering a thorough framework to evaluate the profiles of technical-vocational graduates in the West Maasim District, Municipality of Maasim, province of Sarangani. Positioning our research within the existing literature clarifies the specific dynamics involved and enhances the comprehension of how educational techniques might address the needs and ambitions of students in rural regions.

The characteristics of technical-vocational graduates are essential for developing efficient educational and professional pathways that cater to student demands. Research has continuously shown the crucial impact of vocational education in influencing employment outcomes. (Cosenza & Fakir,2019). Content that is robust alignment between vocational training and labor market requirements is important to reduce skills mismatches, which frequently result in graduates being insufficiently equipped for work. (Fakir, 2019). Affirm that competency-based education improves the work readiness of vocational graduates by equipping them with the precise skills desired by employers. The choice of suitable educational pathways is essential for students as they progress through their academic journeys. Indicates that students' decisions in vocational education profoundly affect their career opportunities, implying that students ought to be motivated to choose routes aligned with their personal and professional aspirations. In this setting, career evaluation instruments like the National Career Evaluation Examination (NCAE) are essential for informing these judgments. (Huang et al, 2022). Underscore the significant influences, these assessments have in influencing students' educational paths by aligning their decisions with prospective career opportunities.

The correlation between assessment outcomes and students' future educational trajectories highlights the imperative of utilizing data-driven methodologies in educational planning. The relevance of the curriculum is a crucial aspect associated with students' success post-graduation (Huang et al, 2022), contend that vocational curricula must evolve by changing industry norms to sufficiently prepare students for the workforce, emphasizing that a curriculum tailored to market demands is essential for improving employability chances. (Khan & Mojkury, 2021) substantiate this concept by examining how the congruence between students' academic interests and professional aspirations can enhance academic performance and overall satisfaction. Their findings indicate that students engaged in a curriculum aligned with their job goals are more likely to excel academically, alongside curricular factors, strategically employed career evaluation instruments significantly aid students in making informed decisions regarding their educational trajectories. (Khan & Mojkury, 2021), examine the effects of these tools, demonstrating that they substantially affect students' choices, ultimately directing them into pathways that correspond with their objectives and ambitions. This idea is crucial for comprehending how educational interventions might be designed to enhance alignment between students' experiences and their professional aspirations.

The current corpus of literature on the profiles of technical-vocational graduates in the West Maasim District offers significant insights

into competency, curriculum exit, employability, and college enrollment trends. This study examines the manifestation of connected variables within a specific geographical and socio-economic environment, contributing to the broader conversation on the efficacy of vocational education. This may provide a basis for governments and educational institutions seeking to enhance their programs to more effectively address student needs, ensuring that educational pathways are substantiated by empirical evidence and matched with labor market realities. This stringent methodology can ultimately improve the educational experiences of technical-vocational graduates, providing them with the skills required for successful transitions into higher education or the labor market.

The K to 12 program seeks to align students with 21st-century competencies and prepare them for further education, mid-level skills development, employment, and entrepreneurship. The SHS comprises two years of focused upper-secondary education. The student has the opportunity to select a specialization according to their aptitude, interests, and the school's resources. The career path will determine the disciplines they must undertake, categorized under either the core curriculum or specialized tracks (SEAMEO INNOTECH, 2015). In the current SHS format, students may select from four tracks: (1) Academic, (2) Technical-Vocational Livelihood, (3) Sports, and (4) Arts and Design. The Academic track comprises four strands: General Academic Strand, Accountancy, Business, and Management (ABM), Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS), and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

The SHS program embodies the provisions of Section 2, paragraph (a) of RA 10533, which mandates that the state shall "expand the objectives of high school education to encompass college readiness, vocational and technical career prospects, as well as creative arts, sports, and entrepreneurial employment in a dynamic and progressively globalized context." Senior High School Students must possess the requisite aptitude, interest, and cognitive ability to align with their chosen tracks (SEAMEO INOTECH, 2015). The recent competencies offer a precise foundation for mastery of students focusing on the common core domains (language, mathematics, and science). Aptitude assesses the extent of students' capacity for future education. The aptitude test results indicate the likelihood of learners' success in their selected tracks.

These competencies are necessary for the chosen track. Achievement and aptitude are indicators of cognitive abilities that reveal pupils' strengths and limitations. Achievement, aptitude, and interest should provide the foundation for the entry-level evaluation to ascertain the suitable pathway for students, necessitating the identification of specific constructs in the form of variables, abilities, and competencies required for each track. Students pursuing the science, technology, and engineering track must have mastered competencies in science and mathematics, shown proficiency in syllogism and event analysis, and exhibit interest in life sciences, medicine, and engineering. (Fakir et al, 2019).

Given the escalating demand for skilled labor in a competitive job market, it is essential to comprehend the elements that affect the employability and academic paths of technical-vocational graduates. Although prior research has examined multiple aspects of vocational education, including training efficacy and the correlation between education and employment results, a significant gap persists in the literature regarding the specific profiles of technical-vocational graduates, especially in localized settings like the West Maasim District of Maasim, Sarangani Province. (Grollmann & Rauner, 2007).

1. Localized Studies is substantial amount of contemporary research on technical-vocational education emphasizes broader national or metropolitan contexts, resulting in a deficiency in literature pertaining to rural or inadequately examined geographical areas. The distinct socio-economic dynamics in regions such as West Maasim may substantially affect the educational and job experiences of graduates, setting them apart from those in bigger metropolitan centers. This emphasizes the necessity for localized studies that consider these particular issues, as indicated by prior research on regional differences in schooling (Grollmann et al, 2007). These studies provide significant insights into how localized environments influence the efficacy and results of technical-vocational education.

2. This study utilizes a descriptive-correlational research methodology to assess graduates' competency, employability, and college course enrollment. Nevertheless, the findings indicate no substantial connections among these variables. This conclusion prompts critical inquiries regarding the mechanisms underlying the lack of correlation and underscores the necessity for future investigation into additional variables that may affect these outcomes, such socioeconomic situation, parental influence, or individual objectives. Prior studies have likewise underscored the significance of examining extrinsic influences, such as socioeconomic background and individual ambitions, in comprehending vocational education results (Chukwuedo & Ementa, 2022).

3. The significant correlation between the National Career Assessment Examination (NCAE) results and students' chosen college courses underscores the utility of evaluations in guiding educational decisions. However, there is insufficient research regarding the interplay between results from other evaluations, such as the High School Occupational Inventory of Interest and the National Career Achievement Examination, and students' competencies and employability results. Additional comprehensive research is necessary to ascertain the aggregate effect of these assessments on track selection and subsequent career paths. Comparable research has underscored the significance of integrating several evaluation instruments to better efficiently inform students' educational and vocational choices (Cedefop, 2019).

4. The impact of curriculum and instruction and the relationship between technical-vocational curriculum design and student outcomes is inadequately explored, particularly concerning the influence of curriculum relevance, instructional methodologies, and workplace experiences on graduates' competencies and employability. Comprehending these elements may yield essential insights that inform

curriculum creation to improve student readiness for both higher education and the labor market. Prior research has underscored the necessity of connecting curriculum content with industry requirements and incorporating practical experiences into education to close the divide between academia and employment (Mulder et al, 2007). This method is essential for enhancing the employability of graduates from technical-vocational institutions.

5. Longitudinal studies is a significant gap exists in longitudinal studies that monitor the career progression and educational paths of technical-vocational graduates over time. This research would yield significant insights into the long-term effects of early educational choices on employment outcomes and the effectiveness of various academic programs in equipping students for their selected career trajectories. Prior studies have emphasized the necessity of longitudinal data to evaluate the sustainability of vocational education in enhancing career advancement and employability (Albina & Sumagaysay, 2020). This method would improve comprehension of the impact of school decisions on long-term career success.

These identified gaps, future research can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing technical-vocational graduates' success, ultimately guiding policymakers and educators in creating more effective programs tailored to the specific needs and contexts of students.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employs a descriptive research methodology, specifically a descriptive correlational study design, to examine the profiles of technical-vocational graduates to their competencies, curriculum exit, employability, and college course enrollment). This research seeks to elucidate these critical dimensions and their impact on graduates' preparedness for advanced education or workforce entry (Micabalo, et al, 2021). The participants were selected from a cohort of technical-vocational graduates from three specific senior high schools in the West Maasim District. To guarantee the ethical conduct of the research and get requisite institutional backing, the researchers adopted a systematic method to acquire authorization from the school officials. This was achieved by composing a formal letter that explicitly delineated the research aims the importance of the study, and a solicitation for collaboration. Securing this license complied with academic standards and cultivated a collaborative relationship with educational institutions essential for the integrity of the study process (Karmel, 2018).

A structured survey was created and distributed to the selected respondents following the approval of the school administrators. The study aimed to collect quantitative data on graduates' competency levels, curricular exit points, employment status, and subsequent college course enrollments. This quantitative methodology facilitates the recognition of patterns and connections among the pertinent variables. Qualitative insights were obtained from interviews with chosen graduates in the study of (Yaniv et al, 2013). The interviews sought to explore the graduates' experiences, perspectives, and contextual elements influencing their school decisions and jobs Interacting with respondents in this manner yielded a more profound and thorough comprehension of the obstacles and opportunities they faced during their transition from technical-vocational education to higher education or the workforce. (Jaana, 2019).

This mixed-methods approach aims to quantify the correlations among the variables while also capturing the participants' lived experiences. This thorough investigation can yield significant insights for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders, guiding the formulation of curricula and interventions that more effectively correspond with the requirements and goals of technical-vocational graduates. The study aims to enhance the current discussion over the efficacy of technical-vocational education in equipping students for prosperous future trajectories (Anderson, 2020).

Respondents

This study is conducted in three senior high schools situated in the Maasim, Sarangani Province, known for its cultural diversity and societal harmony. The community comprises diverse ethnic groups, including Cebuanos, T'boli, B'laan, Maguindanaon, Tausug, Maranao, and Sangir. These diversities, while posing potential obstacles, have cultivated a distinctive ecosystem in which individuals cohabit happily and amicably, exemplifying a robust sense of communal identity and mutual respect among many tribes. The socio-economic circumstances of Maasim, Sarangani Province inhabitants are mostly influenced by their dependence on terrestrial and marine natural resources. Numerous families in coastal regions participate in fishing and small business enterprises, encompassing retail operations such as managing local stores and engaging in agricultural trade of commodities such as copra, bananas, abaca, corn, and coffee.

These organizations furnish in rural areas, families participate in agriculture, with many practicing farming through tenancy agreements or small-scale land ownership. This sector frequently comprises economically disadvantaged persons who depend on subsistence farming as their principal source of livelihood. Agricultural activities are essential for household nourishment and serve as a foundation for community resilience, allowing households to utilize resources efficiently and preserve cultural practices.

The socio-cultural landscape of Maasim, Sarangani Province characterized by tribal variety and residents' reliance on natural resources, offers a profound backdrop for analyzing the dynamics influencing technical-vocational education and the economic prospects for graduates. This contextual comprehension is essential for analyzing the data gathered in this study and for developing pertinent

educational initiatives that cater to the distinct needs and ambitions of the community.

Table 1. *Percentage of Grade 12 In Terms of Competency*

School	*Number of graduates*	*No. Of NCII passers*	*Percentage of NCII passers*
Senior High School A	71	67	94%
Senior High School B	14	13	93%
Senior High School C	34	14	70%

Table 1 illustrates the proficiency of Grade 12 pupils. The National Certificate II serves as the fundamental criterion to assess their competence in their selected strand. Of the 119 respondents, 94 successfully passed the NCII evaluation, or 86%. Specifically, Senior High School A has 71 graduates, of which 67 pupils possess NCII or 94%. Senior High School B has 34 graduates, of which 14 successfully passed the NCII assessment, representing 70%. Senior High School C has 14 graduates, of which 13 possess NCII or 93%.

Table 2. *Profile of Grade 12 Graduates Based on Curriculum Exit*

Name of School	*Number of graduates*	*Number of students who are enrolled in college*	*Number of students who are into entrepreneurship*	*Number of students who are employed*	*Number of students who are not employed*
Senior High School A	71	18	0	37	16
Senior High School B	14	14	0	0	0
Senior High School C	34	14	0	17	3

Table 2 delineates the Profile of Grade 12 Graduates According to Curriculum Exits. Of the 71 graduates from Senior High School A, 18 are attending college, 37 are employed, 16 are unemployed, and none are involved in entrepreneurship. Senior High School B has 34 alumni; 14 are enrolled in college, 17 are employed, 3 are jobless, and none are active in entrepreneurship. Senior High School C has 14 alumni, all of them are enrolled in college.

Table 3. *Profile of Grade 12 Graduates Based on Course Enrolled in College*

Name of School	*Number of graduates enrolled in college*	*College course/ Senior High School Track/ Strand alignment*	
Senior High School A	18	HUMMUS	12
		ABM	0
		STEM	4
		GAS	2
		TVL	0
		SPORTS	0
Senior High School B	14	HUMMUS	5
		ABM	1
		STEM	0
		GAS	7
		TVL	1
		SPORTS	0
Senior High School C	13	HUMMUS	1
		ABM	3
		STEM	0
		GAS	8
		TVL	1
		SPORTS	1

Table 3 presents the profile of Grade 12 graduates according to their college course enrollment. Senior High School A has 18 students enrolled in college: 12 in HUMMS, 4 in STEM, 2 in GAS, and none in ABM. Senior High School B has 13 students enrolled in college: 8 in GAS, 3 in ABM, 1 in HUMMS, 1 in TVL, 1 in SPORTS, and 0 in STEM. Senior High School C has 14 students enrolled in college: 7 in GAS, 5 in HUMMS, 1 in ABM, 1 in TVL, and none in STEM.

Table 4. *Profiles of Grade12 Graduates Who are Into Entrepreneurship*

Name of school	*Number of Graduates*	*Number of Entrepreneurs*
Senior High School A	71	0
Senior High School B	34	0
Senior High School C	14	0

Table 4 delineates the profiles of Grade 12 graduates from three senior high schools with no engagement in entrepreneurship. The data reveals that Senior High School A has 71 graduates, Senior High School B has 34 alumni, and Senior High School C has 14 graduates, culminating in a total of 119 graduates across all three institutions. Notably, none of these graduates have participated in entrepreneurial endeavors or established their enterprises.

Table 5. *Profile of Grade 12 Graduates in Terms of Career/Employability Alignment*

Name of school	*Number of graduates who are employed*	*Career/employability*	
Senior High School A	37	Aligned with NCII	3
		Not aligned with NCII	34
Senior High School B	0	Aligned with NCII	0
		Not aligned with NCII	0
Senior High School C	17	Aligned with NCII	0
		Not aligned with NCII	17

Table 5 displays the job status of Grade 12 graduates with the National Competency II (NCII) requirements. The data delineates from three senior high schools, A, B, and C, and classifies their work with NCII alignment. Senior High School A has 37 graduates employed, of whom 3 are aligned with NCII and 34 are not. This signifies a considerable proportion of graduates who are employed yet fail to satisfy the competency standards established by NCII. This mismatch prompts inquiries on the applicability of abilities obtained via school and the possible disconnect between academic preparation and industry demands. Senior High School B has no alumni employed, with a total of 0 graduates both aligned and not aligned with NCII. The total absence of employment among graduates from this institution indicates potential deficiencies in the educational methodology, the regional labor market, or a combination of both, constraining students' opportunities for post-graduation work. Senior High School C has 17 employed graduates, none NCII criteria. This indicates that similar to Senior High School A, individuals from Senior High School C also secured employment without fulfilling the established competency levels. It underscores a possible disparity between the training provided and the expectations of companies in the industry.

Results and Discussion

Competence of Grade 12 Students Based on NCII Certification

Table 1 depicts the performance levels of Grade 12 students as determined by their acquisition of the National Certificate II (NCII), which serves as the standard for assessing their expertise in their selected strand (TESDA, 2020). 119 respondents, 94 students (86%) completed the NCII evaluation. An analysis by the schools indicates that Senior High School A achieved the best success rate, with 67 of 71 graduates (94%) obtaining NCII certification. Senior High School C achieved a passing percentage of 93% (13 out of 14 graduates), whereas Senior High School B had the lowest pass rate, with just 14 out of 34 graduates (70%) obtaining NCII certification. The results indicate that students from Schools A and C were more prepared for the examination, potentially attributable to superior academic programs, enhanced teachers, or more efficient training facilities. The comparatively lower passing percentage in School B may suggest deficiencies in training quality or resource availability that could be remedied through focused interventions (Cosenza, 2014).

Graduate Profile Based on Curriculum Exits

Table 2 delineates the post-graduation status of Grade 12 graduates, classified into individuals who pursued higher education, secured employment, remained unemployed, or engaged in entrepreneurial activities. Of the 71 graduates from Senior High School A, 18 pursued higher education, 37 secured employment, and 16 were unemployed, with no individuals participating in entrepreneurship. At Senior High School B, 14 graduates matriculated to college, 17 obtained jobs, and 3 remained unemployed, with no documented entrepreneurial endeavors (Cruz & Villanueva, 2020). Senior High School C had a notable trend, with all 14 graduates advancing to college. These suggest that Senior High School C favors academic advancement, whereas Schools A and B have a more even distribution between employment and higher education. The lack of entrepreneurship among graduates indicates a possible deficiency in business education or insufficient motivation and resources for self-employment (Chukwuedo et al, 2022).

Course Enrollment of College-Bound Graduates

Table 3 elucidates the favored college courses among graduates who engaged in higher education. Senior High School A had 18 college enrollees, with the majority (12) selecting the Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) strand, 4 students opting for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), and 2 enrolling in the General Academic Strand (GAS), while no students chose Accountancy, Business, and Management (ABM). At Senior High School B, 13 students registered in college, with the majority (8) choosing GAS, 3 in ABM, and 1 student each in HUMSS, TVL, and Sports. Senior High School B lacks pupils engaged in STEM disciplines (Dela Cruz, 2019). Simultaneously, Senior High School C recorded 14 college enrollees, comprising 7 in GAS, 5 in HUMSS, and one each in ABM and TVL. The patterns in course selection indicate a notable inclination towards HUMSS and GAS among graduates, whereas STEM and ABM seem to be less favored. This distribution indicates that students favor social sciences and general academic skills over business or technical disciplines (Bennett, 2009).

Entrepreneurship Engagement Among Graduates

Table 4 presents information regarding the entrepreneurial involvement of 119 graduates from the three senior high schools. Remarkably, none of the students participated in entrepreneurship. This discovery prompts apprehensions regarding the efficacy of

entrepreneurial education and the support systems accessible to students pursuing business ventures (Chukwuedo et al, 2022). The absence of entrepreneurship in the senior high school curriculum suggests potential deficiencies in practical application, student motivation, or external support for entrepreneurial initiatives. Future initiatives to emphasize entrepreneurial education and practical business experiences, mentorship programs, and access to start-up resources.

Employment and NCII Alignment

Table 5 examines the employment status of graduates of NCII alignment. Senior High School A had 37 employed graduates; however, only 3 were linked with NCII, whereas 34 were not. This mismatch indicates that numerous graduates secure employment beyond their recognized skills, highlighting problems regarding the alignment of occupational training with labor market demands (Anderson, 2020). Senior High School B reported a complete lack of employment among its graduates, indicating possible concerns regarding job market accessibility, curriculum efficacy, or career counseling. Senior High School C had 17 hired graduates, and none conformed to NCII requirements, reflecting the pattern seen in Senior High School. The results indicate a disparity between the skills provided by NCII training and the real requirements of the job market. Resolving this issue necessitates fortifying industry connections, refining curriculum material, and improving career advice services to ensure skills correspond with employment prospects (Torres et al, 2023).

Conclusions

This study provides a thorough assessment of the educational trajectories of Grade 12 students from three senior high schools in the Maasim, Sarangani Province. The research indicates an 86% pass rate for the National Certificate II (NCII), implying that students attain the competences required for professional certification (Davis, 2018). Significant discrepancies in pass rates among schools indicate inconsistencies in educational quality, resulting from variations in instructional methods, course offerings, demographic factors, and resource accessibility (Brown, 2019). Although several graduates seek advanced education, the lack of entrepreneurial involvement highlights a deficiency in developing entrepreneurial competencies, essential for economic autonomy and flexibility in the job market (Khan et al, 2021). Employment outcomes indicate difficulties in matching graduates' competencies with industry requirements, especially in Senior High Schools A and B, where skill discrepancies and unemployment rates are elevated. The deficiency of employed graduates from Senior High School C who fulfill NCII standards underscores the necessity for enhanced competency-based training and improved alignment of educational programs with industry demands (Karmel, 2018).

Senior high schools ought to incorporate experiential entrepreneurship activities to foster students' self-employment mindsets and improve their flexibility in the labor market. Hosting an annual "Young Entrepreneurs Challenge" can motivate students to create business plans and present them to a panel of local entrepreneurs, with winners awarded seed capital to initiate their companies. Furthermore, creating student-run firms, such as a campus canteen, printing service, or online marketplace, enables students to use business principles in a practical environment. A finishing touch entrepreneurship project necessitating students to establish and oversee a small firm for a semester might enhance their practical expertise in financial management, marketing, and customer service.

Senior high schools must carefully align track offerings with students' National Career Assessment Examination (NCAE) results and interest inventories to provide a seamless transition into higher education and the workforce. If a student exhibits exceptional proficiency in STEM disciplines, the school ought to provide specific classes in robotics, engineering, or software development, instead of relegating them to a generic curriculum dictated by geographical limitations. Enhancing industry collaborations via internships and job shadowing can improve students' readiness. Collaborations with local offices for humanities students, and General academic strands or manufacturing firms for technical-vocational students can offer practical training and industrial exposure. Connecting curricula with certification prerequisites such as instructing automotive students in diagnostic and repair competencies pertinent to NCII certification examinations—guarantees that graduates fulfill industry standards.

Senior high schools ought to augment career advising programs by incorporating resume development workshops, mock interviews, and job search training in partnership with local enterprises. Facilitating resume and cover letter writing workshops with HR professionals can assist students in creating persuasive applications. Facilitating mock interview sessions with hiring managers from local enterprises would furnish students with practical experience and enhance their confidence in job applications. Moreover, organizing career fairs with local firms and university officials would provide students with exposure to employment and academic prospects, aiding them in making informed decisions regarding their career trajectories. By employing these tactics, schools may connect education with employment, ensuring students are adequately equipped for both professional and academic progression.

References

Abdulloh, F. F., Rahardi, M., Aminuddin, A., Sharazita, D. A., & Nugraha, A. Y. A. (2022). Observation of imbalance tracer study data for graduates' employability prediction in Indonesia. International Journal of Advanced Computer Science and Applications, 13(8). https://doi.org/10.14569/IJACSA.2022.0130820

Albina, A. C., & Sumagaysay, L. P. (2020). Employability tracer study of information technology education graduates from a state university in the Philippines. Social Sciences & Humanities Open, 2(1), Article 100055.

Anderson, V. (2020). A digital pedagogy pivot: Re-thinking higher education practice from an HRD perspective. Human Resource

Development International, 23(4), 452–467. https://doi.org/10.1080/13678868.2020.1778999

Bennett, E. E. (2009). Virtual HRD: The intersection of knowledge management, culture and intranets. Advances in Developing Human Resources, 11(3), 362–374. https://doi.org/10.1177/1523422309339724

Chukwuedo, S. O., & Ementa, C. N. (2022). Students work placement learning and employability nexus: Reflections from experiential learning and social cognitive career theories. Industry and Higher Education, 36(6). https://doi.org/10.1177/09504222221099198

Cosenza, R. M., & Taylor, S. L. (2014). Determinant skills for developing effective marketing curriculum. In M. Moore & R. Moore (Eds.), New meanings for marketing in a new millennium (pp. 7–11). Developments in Marketing Science: Proceedings of the Academy of Marketing Science. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-11927-4_3

Fakir, M. S. I. (2019). Curriculum gaps of Bachelor's Business Education in universities of Bangladesh: An analysis. International Journal of Vocational Education and Training Research, 5(1), 16–22. https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ijvetr.20190501.1

Gat, Y., & Shapira–Lishchinsky, O. (2023). Exploring teachers' social-emotional competencies to navigate ethical dilemma discussions. Teacher Development, 0(0), 1-20.

Grollmann, P., & Rauner, F. (2007). Combining work and learning: A neglected issue in European VET policy. European Journal of Vocational Training, 42(2), 71-86.

Huang, X., Cao, J., Zhao, G., Long, Z., Han, G., & Cai, X. (2022). The employability and career development of finance and trade college graduates. Frontiers in Psychology, 12. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.719336

Huismann, A. (2020). Vocational education and training for the future of work: Germany (Cedefop ReferNet Thematic Perspectives Series). Cedefop.

Juvonen, J., Lessard, L. M., Rastogi, R., Schacter, H. L., & Smith, D. S. (2019). Promoting social inclusion in educational settings: Challenges and opportunities. Educational Psychologist, 54(4), 250-270.

Karmel, T. (2018). The value of vocational education and training qualifications: An analysis of income and employment rates. National Centre for Vocational Education Research.

Khan, Md. A. I., & Mojkury, Md. A. H. (2021). Curricula and employability: An empirical study on tertiary level students of Bangladesh. Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies, 17(2), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.9734/ajess/2021/v17i230415

Meegan, J. (2023). You Can Do It! A narrative inquiry into children's experiences of a social-emotional and academic learning program. Irish Educational Studies, 42(4), 617-633.

Micabalo, K., Poliquit, W. M., Ibanez, E., Cartalla, K. F., & Calimpong, R. (2021). Accounting skills in practice and their impact on employability: A curriculum review in an autonomous Philippine university. JPAIR Institutional Research, 17(1), 76–94. https://doi.org/10.7719/irj.v17i1.817

Mulder, M., Weigel, T., & Collins, K. (2007). Reconceptualizing the curriculum for the knowledge era: Higher education and the demands of employability. Journal of Curriculum Studies, 39(3), 299-312.

SEAMEO INNOTECH. (2015). K to 12 toolkits: A resource guide for teacher educators, school administrators, and educators. Regional Center for Educational Innovation and Technology of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization.

Affiliations and Corresponding Information

Joel M. Ligoyligoy, FHEA
Walailak University – Thailand

Lino C. Corneja, MA-EDMAN
Colon National High School
Department of Education – Philippines

Archie L. Corneja, LPT
Happy Valley Integrated School
Department of Education – Philippines

Myra M. Ligoyligoy, MST
Aniceto C. Lopez National High School
Department of Education – Philippines