

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS: THEIR INFLUENCES ON THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL SELECTION OF CAREER TRACKS

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to determine the extent of influence of the internal and external factors on the Senior High School selection of career tracks of the Grade 10 students in the Trento District II, Trento, Agusan del Sur for school year 2023-2024. Descriptive survey research design was conducted using validated, adapted, and modified survey questionnaire for the indicators on both variables. The questionnaire was a 38-item questionnaire with three identified internal factors and four external factors. The study found that the factors influencing Grade 10 students on the selection of Senior High School career tracks are personal interests as most influential, followed by future job opportunities, family influence, school consideration, teacher influence, financial stability, and peer influence. The result showed that the internal and external factors identified influence students on the selection of Senior High School career tracks. It is recommended that schools will continue to strengthen effective guidance program for students as well as for the parents to understand what are the factors to be considered and be informed on the different career tracks.

Keyword: Internal Factors, External Factors, Senior High School, Career Tracks, Trento, Agusan del Sur

1. INTRODUCTION

Students' career selection is one of the crucial issues faced in the Senior High School Curriculum upon its implementation under the K to 12 Program of DepEd. Students in Senior High School must complete a basic curriculum as well as courses within a chosen track. It has been noticed that the admission of students to Senior High School is just haphazard, there is indefinite direction of selection. Students preferably choose whatever is available and convenient without proper career plan in mind. Some wouldn't mind about the cost they could spend just to pursue what they really want without considering different factors. Grade 10 students were offered with a variety of career options, which made it difficult for them to determine which path to follow after Junior High School. Choosing the appropriate Senior High School career track for Grade 10 students is a crucial decision.

According to Joshua et al. (2018), one of the most important decisions that Nigerian students have to make when deciding what they want their futures to be is choosing a career. Regardless of age, the decision of a career is a crucial one for everyone. While making career choices in secondary schools, students face the problem of career track selection frequently matching several interests and other issues involved (Edwards & Quinter, 2011). An incorrect choice of career would lead all individual resources and efforts in a direction that's not suitable. It would be a waste of resources and energy for the individual and also frustrating. It is also stated that the most dangerous cause of dissatisfaction and stress-related career failure is a lack of fit (Ahmed et al., 2017).

In the Philippine context, there are also problems encountered when choosing a career. When a Junior High School student is faced with the decision to choose their Senior High School path or track, it is considered as one of their toughest. This makes them revisit whatever factors they were putting into considerations. If a wrong choice is made, disappointment and frustrations always come in hand. (Quiño, 2022). Significantly, selecting the best career can be very challenging in both school and work environment due to several factors involved. For this reason, a large number of Senior High School students find it difficult when they need to make decisions on their own (Bangayan, 2022). There are important factors that need to take a look and must take into consideration in career selection. As emphasized by Dublin et al., (2020), the choice of career and profession for the future can be quite difficult; to have a meaningful and successful life in the end, many aspects have to be accounted for in education and career development. A large number of students in Junior High Schools make regrettable career choices, and as a result, there are high rates of underemployment and unemployment among the fresh graduates (Pascual, 2014). The issue is that a lot of students did not place much emphasis on choosing a career, leading them to feel that their secondary school career path has nothing to do with the career they may choose to specialize in later in higher education or with future employment prospects. Therefore, Junior high school students need to consider carefully before deciding of which career track to pursue for their Senior High School.

The Senior High School curriculum differs in career tracks because it takes a wide range of career options that are categorized as Academic, Arts and Design, Sports, and TVL/TLE are the four career tracks; and ABM, STEM, HUMSS, GAS, HE, ICT, Agri-fishery, IA are the eight learning strands respectively under the K–12 program of the DepEd. This gives Grade 10 students a wide range of career options, which made it more challenging for them to choose one to pursue after Junior High School. As stated by Kilag et al., (2023), a crucial decision that every student in grade 10 must make is the correct selection of Senior High School career tracks and strands. This is a difficult decision that they must not make hastily because it will impact their future academic and professional endeavors. Ouano et al., (2019) added that lack of information causes students to have misconceptions about certain careers tracks, which discourages them from choosing them. Therefore, students must become more aware of and be knowledgeable about the career path they must choose. Several research has conducted that determines some of the factors that influence students' career preferences. Moreover, Ouano et al., (2019) identified factors like interest and decision-making, peer influence, future job opportunities, and institution considerations that influence career choices. Arif et al., (2019) identified family, academic and other socioeconomic factors in career decisions. However, these studies were limited in scope. It is essential to conduct further research on what are those factors that influence the selection of students in selecting Senior High School career tracks that are still not being explored.

In schools of Manat National High School and Kapatungan National High School of Trento District II, it was observed that the entry of students to Senior High School is just haphazard. Almost all students are unsure about what they really want to be while choosing a career. Some students tend to select whatever is offered without making adequate career or long-term objectives. Given their financial situation, some students can potentially decide to attend other schools without taking the cost into account. They lack sufficient information and expertise on many career tracks offered by the Senior High School program, which discourages others from enrolling and makes them opt not to attend Senior High School. Therefore, the researcher believed that factors affecting Senior High School career selection must be put into consideration. Further, being aware with the internal factors which includes personal interest, family influence, and economic status together with the external factors that includes peer influence, teacher influence, school consideration, and future job opportunities would be a guide for the students to determine what Senior High School career track to choose considering these factors. Thus, by conducting this research on how internal and external factors influence nothing but high school learners' career tracks selection, students will be encouraged to proceed in Senior High School, given advice on what factors that need consideration when selecting a career track, and given the opportunity to create a future career plan. Giving students an opportunity to choose from more track options considering their internal and external factors is likely to lead more success in their future lives.

1.1 Research Questions

The main purpose of the study was to determine the influence of internal and external factors on the Senior High School selection of career tracks of Grade 10 students of Manat National High School and Kapatungan National High School, Trento, Agusan del Sur, school year 2023-2024. Specifically, the study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in choosing Senior High School Tracks?
2. What is the frequency of those choosing Senior High School Strands?
3. What is the extent of the influence of the factors in choosing Senior High School Tracks and Strands in terms of:
 - 3.1 personal interest
 - 3.2 family influence;
 - 3.3 economic status;
 - 3.4 peer influence;
 - 3.5 teacher influence;
 - 3.6 school consideration; and
 - 3.7 future job opportunities?
4. What is the most dominant influencing factor?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature relevant to this study focused on researches and studies compiled on the Internal and External Factors and Senior High School Career Tracks.

Internal Factors. Career selection is one of the decisions that has a significant influence on personal and professional development of an individual. Various researchers have looked into the internal variables that affect and determine one's career choice. As a result of decision's dependence on numerous factors, selecting a career has recently become a very complex science (Nyamwange, 2016). According to Humayon et al. (2018), economic factors, personal interests, and familial influence all made a significant effect on students' career decisions. Career choices are positively correlated with self-efficacy, personal interests, family, and financial concerns (Abdo et al., 2016). Therefore, internal factors were identified as personal interest, family influence, and economic status that are in consideration.

Personal Interest. A student's career selection may be influenced by how a student identifies himself in a situation where personality is the deciding factor. Interest had more influence over courses preferred by students and is therefore significant to be considered when choosing a career (Qiya, 2022). Students must be aware of themselves to be the basis of their career decisions on their sense of confidence of own abilities. In regards to personality playing a role in making career decision, it is important that people should be aware of who they are and use that awareness as a tool (Olamide and Olawaiye, 2013). As supported with the study of Ogowewo (2010), the influencing factor among others of the students' career choice is interest. Accordingly, Theodora et al. (2019) stated that interest is highly important determining factor in career selection; when students have interests and have made professional decisions, they will investigate, prepare for, and plan every action required to obtain the desired career. Students will be motivated enough to pursue whatever career track that interests them. They will do whatever it takes just to reach their goals in aiming for their desired careers in the future. It is dangerous to select a career that does not fit your personality and is uninteresting in you; this can have terrible consequences for the students you teach, such as demotivation and low productivity that increases dropout rates and career failure (Ahmed and Ahmad, 2017). Thus, there is a need for students to be knowledgeable and consider their personal interests in career track selection in the Senior High School for greater success in their future endeavors.

Family Influence. According to a study, a choice of career of a student is indirectly influenced by family support, and expectations (Vautero et al., 2021). A study by Digamon (2021) found out that the most significant influence on students' career choices is their parents. Students who sense their parents' affection and support are better at considering careers and navigating the world of work than those who do not. Family is an influential factor

among others in making decision. It includes the influence of a particular person's siblings and parents (Abdo et al., 2016). As immediate persons, they would be of a great help for them to be guided on the selection of careers. Through constantly communicating with each other and discussing such matter, students can be guided. Career decisions are taken by students in close consultation with regard to advice given by their parents as well as issues to do with career counselling (Simmons, 2008). Therefore, Shumba and Naong (2012) emphasized that one of those most important things that affect students' career choices and ambitions is family. Thus, as positively influenced by parents' advice, there is a need for social interactions (Koech et al., 2016). A constant communication and interaction within the family with regards to career selection and decision-making must be given attention and importance for the students to be guided. Taking into consideration that parents have an effect on career selection that their children make, it is recommended that the parents of the students should look and ask for help from experts in career guidance who can help their children when making wise career decisions. (Samaila et al., 2024). Thus, there is a need for students to consider family influence as one of the factors in career track selection especially in Senior High School.

Financial Stability. The opportunities available to everyone have been significantly influenced by the problem of poverty. Choosing a career during a certain period of one's life—decisions that will shape a significant portion of one's future—might be influenced financially by the family's income level. The socioeconomic level was substantially connected with both career self-efficacy and maturity in making decision. According to Yunusa et al. (2022), financial considerations play a positively significant role in career selection. There is a need for students to consider their family's financial situation in career selection. Research revealed that students with different socioeconomic status had considerably different levels of career maturity and self-efficacy while making career decisions (Bozgeyikli et al., 2009). According to Obiyo & Eze (2015), students from high-income backgrounds have higher career aspirations such as becoming professionals and executives compared to their counterparts from low-income backgrounds who are more interested in technical professions or skilled careers. Moreover, families with higher incomes tend to have children who aspire to higher education and careers, showing that income positively impacts career choices. Conversely, students from lower-income families may struggle to pursue more competitive career paths due to financial limitations (Kaberl et al., 2017). Thus, the study of Bangayan (2022) emphasized that in selecting a career, students must consider the financial state of his or her family as it stands today. While selecting careers, money should not be the only thing that is looked at but it should be among the various factors to look at.

External Factors. Deciding upon a career to pursue is a crucial mark for any student's life. In order to arrive at a decision, there are many things that students have to put into consideration. Researchers from various fields have observed the outside factors that highly influence the choice of career. Singaravelu et al., (2005) identified some external factors that includes peer influence, teacher influence, and other outside factors. Recognizing and addressing personal requirements while also taking into account external factors and life's realities is the process of career development. Therefore, the researcher identifies external factors that would affect Senior High School career track selection which includes peer influence, teacher influence, school consideration, and future job opportunities.

Peer Influence. In varied ways, career decisions of students are influenced by their peers (Mtemeri, 2020). It is widely recognized that friends and peers are key components of the socialization process and that they greatly influence the trajectory of someone's life. Colleagues and friends assist in making professional career decisions, aiding in job selection, helping with employment prospects, and it is the friends and peers who influence earning tendencies most (Naz et al., 2014). Students' friends and peers have a significant influence on career choices, often outweighing the influence of parents in shaping lifestyles, making decisions, and choosing educational paths. It was found out that the peer groups play a vital role in molding students' career goals and job selections, underscoring the importance of seeking guidance beyond just peers' advice (Naz et al., 2014). According to the study of Pereira et al. (2009), when young people are deciding on their careers, the influence of their peers is a major factor. This influence can affect what academic paths they choose, what professions they pursue, what jobs they apply for, and what opportunities they have for employment. Many students agree that their peers play a role in shaping their future goals, the courses they choose, and even their preferred learning methods (Maxwell et al., 2021). Students often rely on the preferences of their peers when making decisions about their education, particularly when it comes to choosing between academic and vocational paths. Those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are more inclined to follow the crowd, but having ambitious peers can balance out the disparities in track selection (Smith, 2022). Thus, as peers positively influenced students in their career choice, there is an indication that all social set ups

interaction has influence over career selection (Koech et al., 2016). In deciding on a career path, Grade 10 students should keep in mind the impact that their peers have on their career selection.

Teacher Influence. There are some factors that high school students' interest in pursuing a career was influenced, one of which is the support from their teachers (Christensen et al., 2019). Several studies have found that teachers are one of the factors that highly influences the life of a student when it comes to career choices. Teachers can often provide guidance, inspiration, and advice that can significantly impact a student's decision-making process. They made an impact to students that they were considered as role models. Role models for career that they want in the future (Rickels et al., 2009). Upholding the skills and expertise in the field that they want in the future and having knowledge with the different career path that would make students knowledgeable and encourage to take their desired path. A study revealed that career optimism and teacher support were positively correlated (Garcia et al., 2015). Effective communication between teachers and students about career choices can significantly impact a student's decision-making process. Additionally, Shumba & Naong (2012) found out that teachers are one among others that have a significant factor that influence the career choice and aspirations of students. Students tend to choose careers based on the influence of teachers. Teacher recommendations that evidently supported by the passion and dedication they possess motivate students that it made them more eager to pursue career and encourage them to continue their studies. Teacher's advice positively influenced students' consideration of careers (Koech et al., 2016). According to Mtemeri (2022), teachers in schools have had a big impact on their students' career choices. It is a clear indication of the importance of teacher counselors in establishing viable career development programs for students (Ajayi et al., 2023). The teaching-learning experience of the students with the teachers would be a great impact that need to put into consideration while in career decision.

School Consideration. School considerations play an important role in career selection, with access to resources such as career guidance counseling, extracurricular activities, and quality educational opportunities being critical components. According to Yaacob et al. (2014), when choosing to enroll their students in a school, parents often viewed the curriculum, resources and environment provided by the institution in question as crucial. Teachers' quality and performance in academics were often key factors in choosing the schools where they would take their children. Looking at the over-all image of the schools is being considered. Schools that provide enough resources can help students explore their interests, identify potential careers, and develop educational plans to achieve their goals. In the study of Nguyen and LeBlanc (2001), it was found out that the school image and school reputation is significant in the formation of students' loyalty. The study indicates that when schools have good reputations and positive images, there tends to be a stronger sense of loyalty. The career paths of alumni and the guidance provided by the school and institution also plays a key role in influencing students' career choices (Mtemeri, 2022). Moreover, school factors were the most commonly cited influences in Senior High School students on the career decision-making process. A strong relationship was also found between personal factors, school factors, and the students' top career preferences (Micabalo et al., 2021). Additionally, the distance of the schools from home was one of the concerns of the students with their parents. A study revealed that students with their parents, considers the location of the school from home given the cost of it aside from the cost of education. The school near from home would be an advantage to lessen the cost to spend and for the students to be kept monitored easily with their school performance. According to Napompech (2011), teaching-learning is one of those factors that affect the student's selection of school. It was added that location of the school also contributed influence to the student's school choice and that being considered. Students take into account factors such as the school's location, size, and cost, as well as its traditions, financial aid options, extracurricular activities, and social connections (Rafes et al., 2024). Thus, Agrey and Lampadan (2014) emphasized that key determinants in the selection of educational institutions are settings for learning, assistance, physical and non-physical services, strong student support services as well as extra-curricular programs and last but not least safety and good environments. Providing these will improve the school image as a whole that will let students to be at ease and positively made an impact to the over-all aspects of the students.

Future Job Opportunities. The likelihood that students would pursue a specific career path may depend on how they perceive their future. Opportunity may have an impact on this. Students considers the availability of works and jobs and desired salaries in the future for stability. Their current situation would drove and motivate them to consider this factor. According to Ouano et al. (2019), future job opportunities is one of those factors that students consider in making career decision. Students were likely to select a career path if they could see the possible advantages of it, such as employment opportunities and income potential (Jüttler et al., 2021). A study of Umar (2014) found that high salary income, status, and opportunities for the future were discovered to be the main factors

in the selection of career choices. Accordingly, student career choice is often subject to their desire for job availability and opportunities that comes along with a possible better and high salary. (Duku et al., 2021). When this put into consideration, there is a greater possibility that they will have stability in jobs as well as in finances. As supported by the study of Ogowewo (2010) that the students' career choice is influenced by high salary and job prospects. Additionally, when deciding to pursue a career, students are often influenced by a combination of economic and school-related factors. The desire to work in financial institutions, favorable working conditions, and the potential for high salaries all play a role in this decision. (Abu et al., 2023). Therefore, when choosing a career, future jobs, professional options, and intellectual challenge should be put into consideration (Glynn & Kerin, 2010). Thus, there is a need for students to be educated and guided with their choice of career. Being knowledgeable with career to pursue would lead to future success and wide variety of different opportunities especially in future job.

Senior High School Career Tracks. For K to 12 curriculum implementations, Senior High School program has also been put in place, which provides various options through a number of career tracks for students to choose from for the professions they would like to pursue. According to Sarmiento and Orale (2016), the purpose of Senior High School curriculum is to help students to be ready for college, universities, sector work or entrepreneurship while the program is the climax of basic education systems in the countries examined. In the Philippines, this has at least four tracks including academics, tech-vocational education, sports education as well as arts and design with ten strands each. Finally, there is no fixed track that one follows because choice remains with every student and their school districts. Align with the DepEd Memo No. 76, s. 2016, the aim of this program is to make student graduates who are well-rounded, having the 21st century skills of learning and innovation, life and career skills, skills in information and communication media and skills in technology and whose readiness for the future like going to colleges, acquiring middle level skills, seeking employment and entrepreneurship. Students can choose different subject combinations depending on their interests among the four career tracks which are Academic Track, Technical-Vocational-Livelihood Track, Arts and Design Track, or Sports Track when completing core curriculum and elective courses. The institutionalization of Senior High School (SHS) program is vital considering the increase in schools that are coming up with appropriate career guidance programs to reach out to students to help them know their exit points—university education, employment, business start-up, or technical middle-level training. (Arcayera, 2021).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study used descriptive survey research design which used a survey questionnaire to identify the extent of the influence of the internal and external factors in Senior High School selection of career tracks by Grade 10 students in relation to personal interest, family influence, financial stability, peer influence, teacher influence, school consideration, and future job opportunities. According to Siedlecki (2020), descriptive research design is the act of studying population, things or situations or phenomenon as they are in nature by characterizing them systematically. The researcher merely gave a description of the sample and/or variables without manipulating any of the variables.

3.2 Research Locale

The study was conducted in two high schools, Manat National High School and Kapatungan National High School, from Trento District II, situated in the Municipality of Trento, Agusan del Sur. Trento previously identified as “Bahayan” after the legendary “Bagani” warriors Bagani Dago and Bagani Kawayan used to be a village in Bunawan before it became an independent town. The Jesuit Missionaries christened Bahayan as “Trento” when they reached an agreement in 1845; Trento formally became a municipality on June 15, 1968 due to Republic Act No. 5283. The name of the town is derived from the Council of Trent.

The Manobo Tribes, who were originally based near the Bahayan River, were the first people to live in Trento. In the enormous area of forested land, they established a Kaingin to support themselves. When the migrating tribes arrived at that time, they sold their farmed lands to the settlers and relocated to the Municipality's interior. They had a Chieftain or Datu as their ruler. Later, a great bulk of immigrants from Mindanao, Visayas, and Luzon settled in Trento. In 1990, the population grew quickly as a result of births and immigration. The decision made by the people to migrate and then settle as well as improved economic situations is influenced by the rich soil, mining

and forest resources, a peaceful and orderly environment, more opportunities for employment and business, the provision of transport infrastructure, the construction of major roads from Butuan to Davao and many more government programs and projects.

The municipality occupies a total of 555.70 km² or 214.56 square miles, which is similar to 5.56% of Agusan del Sur's entire area. It has a population as per 2020 Census 54,492 people representing 7.37% Agusan del Sur's entire population and 1.94% of Caraga Region's total population. The population density is found to be 98 people per square kilometer or 254 people per square mile. Trento is at the southernmost end of Agusan del Sur. It is exactly about its neighboring towns Bunawan, Monkayo in Compostela Valley Province, Surigao del Sur Province including Sta. Josefa in Agusan del Sur. The municipality is situated between Davao City, which is roughly 143 kilometers to the south, and Butuan City, which is roughly 141 kilometers to the north.

Manat National High School is a public High School that offers both Junior High School from grades 7 to 10 and Senior High School with career track: Technical-Vocational Livelihood (Agri-Crop). Junior High School department has 10 sections in which there are 2 to 3 sections per grade level and has a total of 318 students. Senior High School has 1 track and 1 section per grade level with 28 students. In total, the school has 346 students.

Kapatungan National High School is also one of the public high schools in Trento District II that offers both junior high school from grades 7 to 10 and senior high school with career track: Technical-Vocational Livelihood (Cookery and Dressmaking). Junior high school department has 10 sections in which there are 2 sections per grade level and has a total of 205 students. Senior high school has 1 track and 1 section per grade level with 45 students. In total, the school has 255 students.

3.3 Research Participants

The research study respondents were the 122 Grade 10 students of Manat National High School and Kapatungan National High School. The researcher used a universal sampling technique. This study used universal sampling where not all in the population has an equal probability of being included in the sample and each member of the population has an equal chance of being chosen randomly (Ramoso & Ortega-Dela Cruz, 2019). The researcher preferred universal sampling technique to select Grade 10 students from schools as respondents for this study who were able to provide the needed information of this study.

3.4 Instruments of the Study

The study questionnaire determined the respondents' profile and their preferred Senior High School Career Tracks as well as to measure the extent of the influence of the internal factors which consist of 3 indicators, Personal interest, Family influence, and Economic status, and external factors which consist of 4 indicators, Peer influence, Teacher influence, School consideration, and Future job opportunities, affecting the Senior High School Career Track selection.

3.5 Procedure

After the approval of the panel members, the researcher underwent the following procedures:

The survey questionnaire was validated by identified validators from the Assumption College of Nabunturan. After which a letter request was submitted to the school principals requesting a permit to conduct the study in Manat National High School and Kapatungan National High School, Trento, Agusan del Sur. The researcher administered to the respondents the survey questionnaires who were the subjects for this research as soon as approval was granted. The researcher was personally administering the questionnaire and responsible for explaining the nature of the research instrument and its purpose. The researcher retrieved the survey questionnaire and tallied the data. The researcher statistically analyzed all the information collected from the respondents. The statistical data was analyzed and made interpretations of them then a conclusion and recommendations were made as a result of the data analysis and findings.

3.5 Statistical Treatment of Data

The statistical method was utilized in this investigation in order to process the responses to the questions. The responses from the questionnaire of the respondents were tallied, tabulated, and then interpreted in the appropriate manner. The statistical tool that was used for data analysis and interpretation was as follows:

Mean. This was used to determine the extent of the influence of the factors in choosing Senior High School Tracks and Strands.

4. RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the computation of the data in tabular form. Such results were presented in tabular form which is strengthened by the analysis and interpretation made by the researcher.

4.1.1. Profile of the Respondents' Choice of SHS Career Tracks

Table 1 shows the respondents' profile in selecting career tracks in the Senior High Schools of Manat National High School and Kapatungan National High School, Trento, Agusan del Sur.

Table 1
Profile of Respondents' Choice of SHS Career Tracks

Career Tracks	Number of Students			Percent (%)
	Male	Female	Total	
Academic Track	27	49	76	62.30
Arts and Design	0	0	0	0.00
Technical-Vocational Livelihood	21	16	37	30.33
Sports	9	0	9	7.37
Total	57	65	122	100.00

Table 1 shows that there are 76 or 62.30% both male and female students prefer academic track for their SHS career preference, 49 or 75% of female students composed the majority and 27 or 47% of the male students composed the group. This indicates that female students most probably look ahead for the college courses. The data further shows that TVL is the second option among male and female students that is considered as practical arts at 30.33% or 37 students which may prepare them after two years for job opportunities and/or livelihood after SHS, where 16 or 25% are female students and 21 or 37% are male students. Expectedly, male prefers a track with practical skills more than female. It also shows that Sports are only conducive for male students for being physical in nature and none opted for Arts and Design as a career track.

4.1.2 Profile of the Respondents' Choice of SHS Career Tracks and Strands

Table 2 shows the profile of Grade 10 students of Manat National High School and Kapatungan National High School, Trento, Agusan del Sur in choosing Senior High School career tracks and strands.

Table 2
Profile of the Respondents' Choice of SHS Career Tracks and Strands

Career Tracks' Strands	Number of Students			Percent (%)
	Male	Female	Total	
1. Academic Track				
1a. General Academic Strand (GAS)	11	17	28	22.95
1b. Humanities & Social Sciences (HUMSS)	6	24	30	24.59
1c. Science, Technology & Engineering (STEM)	7	4	11	9.02
1d. Accountancy, Business & Management (ABM)	3	4	7	5.74
2. Arts and Design				
2a. Arts and Design	0	0	0	0.00
3. Technical, Vocational Livelihood				

3a. Agri-Fishery Arts (AFA)	3	2	5	4.10
3b. Home Economics (HE)	0	2	2	1.64
3c. Information & Communication Technology (ICT)	6	11	17	13.93
3d. Industrial Arts (IA)	12	1	13	10.65
4. Sports				
4a. Sports	9	0	9	7.38
Total	57	65	122	100.00

Table 2 shows that HUMSS is the preferred strand of the students under Academic Track at 24.59% with 11 or 19.30% of male students and 17 or 26.15% of female students. This was followed by GAS at 22.95% with 6 or 10.53% of male students and 24 or 36.92% of female students. Results further indicate that 13.93% of students preferred ICT, 10.65% of students preferred IA, 9.02% of students preferred STEM, 7.38% of students preferred Sports, 5.74% of students preferred ABM, 4.10% of students preferred AFA, and 1.64% of students preferred HE.

4.1.3 Profile of the Level of the Influencing Factors to SHS Career Tracks Selection

Two factors could influence the choices of students when selecting career paths in senior high school as well as respective strands, namely, the internal factors and the external factors. Internal factors included the students' personal interest, family influences, and economic status. External factors included peer influence, teachers' influence, school consideration, and future job opportunities.

Table 3 presents the responses of the students to the statements with respect to the internal factors regarding their choices of a career track with respect to personal interest.

Table 3
Responses of Students to the Internal Factors re: Personal Interest

Item	Question	Ave. Score	Interpretation
1	I think about my passion to do things.	3.34	Strongly Agree
2	I select a career track based on my skills.	3.17	Agree
3	I cannot finish this career because it does not interest me.	1.83	Disagree
4	I prefer doing things that I like the most.	3.44	Strongly Agree
5	I am focused because it interests me.	3.48	Strongly Agree
6	I can finish this career because it interests me.	3.40	Strongly Agree
7	It is my passion that motivates me to pursue the career to take.	3.42	Strongly Agree
	Average Score	3.16	Agree

Table 3 shows that in the average, the students agreed that personal interest plays an important role to the choice of preferences at 3.16 which is interpreted as agree. Item number 5 got the highest score at 3.48 interpreted as strongly agree. This indicates that students were more likely showed focus on career tracks when this interests them. As a contrapositive to this item, item number 3 got the lowest at 1.83 interpreted as disagree since most of the students agreed that they can finish their preferred career because of their interest.

Table 4 shows the responses of the students to the questions with respect to the internal factors regarding their choices of a career track with respect to family influence.

Table 4
Responses of Students to the Internal Factors re: Family Influence

Item	Question	Ave. Score	Interpretation
1	My parents introduce me to a specific career.	2.80	Agree
2	I rely on my parents' career choice.	2.57	Agree
3	I seek my parents' advice when making career decision.	3.32	Strongly Agree
4	My career decision is not influenced by my parents' occupations.	2.60	Agree
5	My parents provide guidance and advice when it comes to	3.30	Strongly Agree

	selecting a career.		
6	My family have specific expectations or preferences regarding the career I should pursue.	2.86	Agree
7	My career decision is influenced by my parents' occupations.	2.54	Agree
	Average Score	2.82	Agree

Table 4 shows how student's career selection in Senior High School is influenced with internal factors in terms of family influence. In the average, the students agreed that the family influence plays an important role to the choice of preferences at 2.82 interpreted as agree. Item number 3 got the highest score at 3.32 interpreted as strongly agree, which means that students always seek their parents' advice when making career decision. Item number 5 also interpreted as strongly agree with a score at 3.30 which means that most of the parents of the students provide guidance and advice when it comes to selecting a career. The data further indicate that item number 7 got the lowest effect at 2.54 interpreted as agree, which means that parents' occupation influenced career decision as agreed by few of the students.

Table 5 shows the responses of the students to the questions with respect to the internal factors regarding their choices of a career track with respect to financial stability.

Table 5
Responses of Students to the Internal Factors re: Financial Stability

Item	Question	Ave. Score	Interpretation
1	I consider our financial situation in choosing my career track.	3.24	Agree
2	I can afford to study far from home.	2.39	Disagree
3	My family's economic status allowed me to consider studying in private schools.	2.19	Disagree
4	My family's financial situation limited my career choices.	3.00	Agree
5	The cost of education affects my decision to pursue my career choice.	2.95	Agree
6	The fear of financial insecurity to meet basic needs is what I consider.	2.93	Agree
7	I do not consider our financial situation in choosing my career track.	2.06	Disagree
	Average Score	2.68	Agree

Table 5 shows the effect of internal factors of students' career selection in terms of financial stability in the Senior High School. In the average, the students agreed that financial stability plays a significant role to the choice of preferences at 2.68 interpreted as agree. Item number 1 got the highest score at 3.24 interpreted as agree, which means that in choosing a career track, students consider their financial situation.

The data further indicates that item number 7 got the lowest at 2.06 interpreted as disagree, which means that most of the students disagree on the statement that they do not consider their financial situation in choosing career track.

Table 6 shows the responses of the students to the questions with respect to the internal factors regarding their choices of a career track with respect to peer influence.

Table 6
Responses of Students to the External Factors re: Peer Influence

Item	Question	Ave. Score	Interpretation
1	My peers 'career choices influence my own career goals.	2.47	Disagree
2	I seek advice from my peers who can provide me valuable insight and guidance.	2.85	Agree
3	I pursue a career that is popular or trendy among my peers.	2.22	Disagree
4	The competition and comparison with my peers affect my choice	2.39	Disagree

	of career.		
5	The experiences and stories shared by my peers influence my own career choice.	2.80	Agree
6	My peers' career choices do not influence my own career goals.	2.66	Agree
	Average Score	2.56	Agree

Table 6 shows the effect of external factors in terms of peer influence of students' career selection in the Senior High School. In the average, the students agreed that peer influence plays a significant role to the choice of preferences at 2.56 interpreted as agree. Item number 2 got the highest score at 2.85 interpreted as agree, which means that students seek advice from peers who can provide valuable insight and guidance.

The data further indicates that item number 3 got the lowest at 2.22 interpreted as disagree, which means students did not prefer to pursue career that is popular or trendy among their peers. Result also shows that students career goals did not influence by their peers' career choices and did not affect by the competition and comparison with their peers. Furthermore, data showed that from the 6 items, there are 3 interpreted as agree and 3 for disagree, which means that almost one-half of the students agree and one-half of them disagree with the peer influence as an external factor.

Table 7 shows the responses of the students to the questions with respect to the internal factors regarding their choices of a career track with respect to teachers' influence.

Table 7
Responses of Students to the External Factors re: Teachers' Influence

Item	Question	Ave. Score	Interpretation
1	Teacher's recommendation influences my career choice.	2.80	Agree
2	The teaching method have inspired me to pursue a career related to their field of expertise.	2.96	Agree
3	I choose a career based on the positive experiences with my teachers.	2.74	Agree
4	The passion and dedication of teachers have motivated me.	3.06	Agree
5	I actively seek feedback and guidance from teachers about my career aspiration.	2.71	Agree
6	Teacher's recommendation does not influence my career choice.	2.34	Disagree
	Average Score	2.77	Agree

Table 7 shows the effect of external factors of students' career selection in the Senior High School in terms of teachers' influence. In the average, the students agreed that teachers' influence played a significant role to the choice of preferences at 2.77 interpreted as agree. Item number 4 got the highest score at 3.06 interpreted as agree, which means that students are motivated with the passion and dedication of teachers. As a contrapositive, item number 6 got the lowest at 2.34 interpreted as disagree which indicates that they do not agree on the statement that the teachers' recommendation does not influences the students' career choice.

Table 8 shows the responses of the students to the questions with respect to the internal factors regarding their choices of a career track with respect to school consideration.

Table 8
Responses of Students to the External Factors re: School Consideration

Item	Question	Ave. Score	Interpretation
1	The image and reputation of a school strongly influence me.	2.81	Agree
2	The location and proximity of school from home affects my choice of career.	2.88	Agree
3	The facilities and academic resources available at a school impact my consideration.	2.75	Agree
4	The over-all educational environment and culture of a school	2.67	Agree

	affect my decision.		
5	I am more likely to choose a safe and child-friendly environment.	3.29	Strongly Agree
6	The image and reputation of a school do not influence me.	2.47	Disagree
	Average Score	2.81	Agree

Table 8 shows the effect of external factors in terms of school consideration of students' career selection in the Senior High School. In the average, the students agreed that school consideration plays a significant role to the choice of preferences at 2.81 interpreted as agree. Item number 5 got the highest score at 3.29 interpreted as strongly agree, which signifies that students are more likely to choose a safe and child-friendly environment. As a contrapositive, item number 6 got the lowest at 2.47 which interpreted as disagree, which indicates that students did not agree with the statement that they are not influence by the image and reputation of a school.

Table 9 presents the responses of the students to the questions with respect to the external factors regarding their choices of a career track with respect to future jobs opportunities.

Table 9
Responses of Students to the External Factors re: Future Jobs Opportunities

Item	Question	Ave. Score	Interpretation
1	I pursue career that focuses more on financial stability.	3.42	Strongly Agree
2	I prioritize career path that offers greater stability and financial security.	3.36	Strongly Agree
3	I consider career that offer high salary in the future.	3.39	Strongly Agree
4	I consider future job growth and demand.	2.89	Agree
5	I seek career that makes me easier to find job opportunities after graduation in the future.	3.31	Strongly Agree
6	I do not consider a career that offers high salary in the future.	1.84	Disagree
	Average Score	3.04	Agree

Table 9 shows the effect of external factors in terms of future job opportunities of students' career selection in the Senior High School. In the average, the students agreed that future jobs opportunities play a significant role to the choice of preferences at 3.04 interpreted as agree. Item number 1 got the highest score at 3.42 interpreted as strongly agree, which means that students highly pursue career that focuses more on financial stability. Item number 6 got the lowest at 1.84 interpreted as disagree, which means that students disagree on the statement that they do not consider a career that offers high salary in the future. As strongly agreed by them, they highly consider career that offers high salary in the future.

Table 10 presents the average responses of the students to the questions summarized with respect to the external and internal factors regarding their choices of a career track.

Table 10
Comparative Results of the Internal and External Factors

Item	Internal Factors	Ave. Score	Interpretation
1	Personal Interest	3.16	Agree
2	Family Influence	2.82	Agree
3	Financial Stability	2.68	Agree
	Average Score	2.89	Agree
Item	External Factors	Ave. Score	Interpretation
1	Future Jobs' Opportunities	3.04	Agree
2	School Consideration	2.81	Agree
3	Teacher' Influence	2.77	Agree
4	Peer Influence	2.56	Agree
	Average Score	2.80	Agree

Table 10 shows the effect of internal and external factors of students' career selection in the Senior High School. Comparatively, the respondents agreed that both internal and external factors influence their choices in the career tracks. Internal factors were found to be more influential in their choices than external factors although the difference was not that high. Among the factors, personal interest affected most of their choices internally and future jobs' opportunities externally. Comparing the two, personal interest yielded as the most influenced.

5. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the discussions of the results of the study, conclusion and recommendations.

5.1 Discussions

The succeeding discussions are based on the data collected and these are supported by some related literature and studies.

Respondents' Profile on their Choice of Senior High School Career Tracks. The results revealed that all male and female students prefer academic track for their SHS career preference. Female students composed the majority which indicates that they are most probably look ahead for college courses. While, male prefers a track with practical skills. Based on the result, mostly students preferred academic track than the other tracks when they enroll in Senior High School. This indicates that most of the students want to pursue their studies in college or higher education to become professionals. It is then followed by TVL Track for those students who prefer skills and vocational courses.

Respondents' Profile on their Choice of Senior High School Career Tracks and Strands. Results showed that the preferred track of the majority of students is academic track with preferred strand of HUMSS followed by GAS. Results further indicate that other students opted for TVL track with preferred strand of ICT, IA, AFA, and HE. For Arts and Design track, none of the students opted for this while there are some male students preferred track for Sports. According to the study of Malaga and Oducado, (2021), academic track and strands were more preferred by female students, while TVL track and strands was preferred by male students.

The extent of the influencing internal factors to Senior High School career tracks selection in terms of Personal Interest is in the average with a mean of 3.16. The result further indicates that students agreed that personal interest has an influence on the selection of the Senior High School Career Tracks. According to the research study of Theodora et al. (2019), interest is the most important determining factor; when students have interests and have made professional decisions, they will investigate, prepare for, and plan every action required to obtain the desired career. Students driven by their interest are motivated enough to pursue career that leads to its success in the future. Saleem et al. (2014) also stated that, "personal interest" has a significant and immediate influence on students' career selection. Thus, this is an important factor to be considered always by many of the students especially on the selection of career tracks for Senior High School.

The extent of the influencing internal factors to Senior High School career tracks selection in terms of Family Influence. In the average, the students agreed that family influence plays an important role to the choice of preferences at 2.82 which interpreted as agree. According to Jamim et al. (2022), the overall career decision making process for students is influenced by family members. They are the immediate persons who serve as a guide and navigator for their career journey especially during the selection process. Students seek their parents' advice when it comes to career selection (Simmons, 2008), that provide them proper guidance and advice to whatever career track they want to pursue in the future especially in the Senior High School. They would be a big help the students to be more knowledgeable on the factors that they need to consider along the way. When the students feel that they are supported by their family, then this encourages them even more to pursue their careers.

The extent of the influencing internal factors to Senior High School career tracks selection in terms of Financial Stability. In the average, the students agreed that financial stability plays an important role to the choice of preferences at 2.68 interpreted as agree. This means that most of them consider their financial situation. For students who choose to pursue careers, the cost of education is a major consideration (Dalci, İ., & Özyapici, H., 2018). The result also shows that considering their financial stability, students cannot afford to study far from home

and did not allow them to consider studying in private schools, therefore they prefer those schools that is just a walking distance from home.

The extent of the influencing internal factors to Senior High School career tracks selection in terms of Peer Influence. In the average, the students agreed that peer influence plays an important role to the choice of preferences at 2.56 interpreted as agree. Results showed that from the 6 items, there are 3 interpreted as agree and 3 for disagree, which means that almost a half of the students agree and a half of them disagree with the peer influence as an external factor. This means that peers have influence on students when they could provide valuable knowledge that can be used by them along in the process of selecting a career. Students prefer those peers who are knowledgeable enough and have a positive influence to them that they can benefit with. According to Kaur (2020), the connections between peers and career choices are remarkably strong. There is a significant relationship between the two. Peers have an impact on students as to career selection given that they are one of the individuals whom they are socializing with every day. Students are more expected to be influenced by group norms because they require constructing a personal identity that matches with their peers' norms. The advice of peers could play a role in determining the careers to choose. The encouragement from our peers also counts towards this (Mtemeri, 2017). This is exactly why peers have a big influence on how students choose their careers. Consequently, career selection of students can be influenced by their friends in many different ways. (Mtemeri, 2020).

The extent of the influencing internal factors to Senior High School career tracks selection in terms of Teacher Influence. In the average, the students agreed that teachers' influence plays a significant role to the choice of preferences at 2.77 interpreted as agree. According to Shumba and Naong (2012), Teachers play a crucial role in shaping the career paths and ambitions of students. Students tend to choose careers based on the influence of teachers. The recommendations that evidently supported by the passion and dedication they possess made the students more eager to pursue career and encourage them to continue their studies on the next levels.

The extent of the influencing internal factors to Senior High School career tracks selection in terms of School Consideration. In the average, the students agreed that school consideration plays a significant role to the choice of preferences at 2.81 interpreted as agree. This means that students agreed that they are influence by the image and reputation of the school. According to Agrey and Lampadan (2014), deciding factors as to which school to attend include institutional support systems (physical and non-physical), learning environment, a robust student life program with lots of activities and lastly a secure and welcoming environment. Similarly, students consider these factors as they select on which school to enroll in the Senior High School, as they continue to pursue their careers.

The extent of the influencing internal factors to Senior High School career tracks selection in terms of Future Job Opportunities. In the average, the students agreed that future jobs opportunities played a significant role to the choice of preferences at 3.04 interpreted as agree. As data shown, students highly consider career that offers higher salary in the future. According to Ouano et al. (2019), future job opportunities is one of those factors that students consider in making career decisions. Students believe that when they are knowledgeable and guided with their career path, they are confident to have future jobs that could expect stability and good salary to sustain their needs.

The extent of the influencing internal and external factors to Senior High School career tracks selection. Results showed that the identified internal and external factors influenced the students' choices in the Senior High School selection of career tracks. Based on the data in Table 10, internal factors are more influential than external factors in the selection of career tracks. Among the factors, personal interest as the most influential internally and future jobs' opportunities externally. According to Humayon et al. (2018), family influence, personal interest and economic considerations exercised big influence on the career choice of students. It was evident on the result that these internally factors have effects on the career selection of the students. Similarly, Singaravelu et al., (2005) identified some external factors that includes peer influence, teacher influence, and other outside factors that have also influence students in their career selection. Career choice in individualistic settings was majorly influenced by personal interest. Furthermore, as far as the students were concerned, they were more independent in making decisions about their careers (Akosah-Twumasi et al., 2018). As supported by the study of Ogowewo (2010), high salary potential and prospects of job opportunity is one of those factors that influenced the students' choice of career.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, internal and external factors have effect on the senior high school selection of career of students. From the data analysis, academic track was evidently the most preferred track of the students. HUMSS and GAS were the preferred strand of the students for the Senior High School under Academic Track. It is more likely that students will pursue careers for professional studies in the future. Personal interest has the most effect as internal factor in the selection of Senior High School Career Tracks. Future job opportunities have the most effect as external factor in the selection of Senior High School Career Tracks. The results further showed that the considerations about personal interests as most significant, followed by future job opportunities, family influence, school consideration, teacher influence, financial stability, and peer influence.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions derived from the findings of the study, the following recommendations are hereby presented:

1. Students should be aware with both the internal and external factors that they need to consider on the selection of the Senior High School career tracks for them to be guided.
2. Teachers should continue to strengthen effective guidance program for students as well as for the parents to understand what are the things to be considered and be informed on the different career tracks.
3. Schools may consider offering HUMSS and GAS strand under academic track to give students the opportunity to choose based on their interests.
4. Schools should continue to improve the facilities and resources of it for the students to utilize in the teaching-learning process and to maintain the positive image of the school.
5. The research will be relevant to the future research that will be conducted in schools with complete offering of tracks and strands.

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