



GSJ: Volume 11, Issue 11, November 2023, Online: ISSN 2320-9186

www.globalscientificjournal.com

Factors that Influenced the Course Preferences of Senior High School: Basis for Career Guidance

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, the importance of career guidance for senior high school students has gained significant attention. This study examined the factors that influenced the course preferences among senior high school students, including personal interest, parental influence, and support systems. Using a descriptive survey design, quantitative data was collected from 174 Grade 11 students from Southern de Oro Philippines College through random sampling. A checklist questionnaire was administered as the research instrument. The collected responses were then tallied, computed, and analyzed using statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, valid percent, and cumulative percent to

determine the profile of the respondents and the factors influencing their course preferences. The findings highlight the importance of personal interest, parental influence, and support systems in shaping students' course preferences. Recommendations include implementing comprehensive career guidance programs, training counselors and coaches, collaborating with public employment service offices (PESO) and professionals, involving parents and family in career discussions, engaging community organizations, and seeking support from government agencies and policymakers to enhance career guidance services and opportunities for students.

Keywords: course preference, career guidance, career path

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the importance of career guidance for senior high school students has gained significant attention. The transition from high school to higher education or the workforce is a critical phase in a student's life, and making informed decisions regarding course preferences plays a crucial role in their future success. Understanding the factors that influence students' course preferences is essential for developing effective career guidance programs. Selection of course preference constitutes one of the most critical turning points of every Senior High School student, and most of them go through college without knowledge on what career they would pick. Learners must know on what course to get in. Tertiary level, one thing that captivate their interest and must also suitable for their skills and abilities so that it will not be challenging for them to select the right course that determine their future professional path (Giustinelli, 2016).

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, the unemployment rate in the Philippines increased to 5.3% in the first quarter of 2018 from 5.0% a year ago. Misfit

graduates are one of the considered reasons why the country has an increasing unemployment and underemployment rate annually. The possible reasons could be either that the produced course of graduates does not suit the demand of the present economy, or the graduates do not possess the characteristics required by the industries in need.

The wrong choice of course taken by most of the college students brought about by unguided decision-making in choosing career course preferences is the primary cause. And this is also true after former Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz said that only 10 out of 1,000 Filipino applicants are getting hired because many lack the skills needed for available jobs; thus, the rate of unemployment in our country is commonly associated on misfit graduates from schools and universities. To be able to find ways to lessen misfit qualification of graduates to the needed workforce of companies and institutions and establish a consistent rising of the country's employment rate, the government, specifically the Department of Education, finds ways to solidify the quality education of students before reaching college. This is one of the reasons why the government implemented the K -12 program in the Philippine educational system. One of the objectives of the DepEd's K-12 program is to produce graduates who are equipped with the knowledge and skills to be productive citizens and an additional work force to promote economic development after high school.

Also, to produce life-long learners ready for higher education. It's been five years since Former President Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino III approved the K to 12 Curriculum for Philippine educational reform. Truly, that the Department of Education has extended its pillars from junior high school to senior high school and now having the second batch for the SHS Program who are troubled in choosing their college course. Yet, the curriculum

exit will let them decide on what to continue in the four exits envisioned for SHS graduates –higher education, entrepreneurship, employment, and middle-level skills development. The decision on good career choice and school sometimes depends on how the way students perceive the world and their future. Some of them may not have enough knowledge and consciousness about how they should process information from personal, social, economic, political, spiritual and environmental aspects of putting into context and realization of having a successful profession. Pafili and Mylonakis (2015) emphasized that in coming up with the right decision of what profession to take, students can properly utilize their skills and knowledge to gain proper experience who could contribute to the development and welfare of the society.

According to the research home, social environment and school. Their profession choices are influence by monetary consideration as they need to pay for family expenses. Parents are significantly influential in their children's education selection in homes, where both parents and children overtly expressed decision, on what profession to be taken in college, they have insufficient knowledge of each other's choice, which parents are more likely to know their children's desires considerably better. Children whose parents complain about the struggles to support the family with their income are likely to take a career field that could lead to a job with higher earnings. In this parental preference were observed to be chosen with a higher percentage than the preference of the children due to the fact that parents is usually who provided monetary support to them. Eremic and Okwulehei (2018).

A person's professional success is based achieved when his course selection is based on the career for his talent personality, background and intelligence. Many students make judgement based on their personal preferences rather than what the work matters

requires. According to the findings, understanding entrepreneurship and its process requires passion (Magdadaro, 2020).

As observed, Grade 11 students were troubled to which course they preferred and they will consider and this may encounter factors. Some of the factors that influenced the course preferences of senior high school students were the personal interest, parents influence, and other support systems including the influence of friends, school personnel, relatives, opportunities (e.g., scholarship, opportunity to work abroad), school's proximity to the residence, and availability of job.

FRAMEWORK

Career development theory is the study of career paths, success and behavior. It aims to explain why a person might be a good fit for a certain career and provide advice on how to attain a promising trajectory. It also focuses on identifying common career stages when education, guidance and other interventions are necessary. States of Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad, and Herma Career Development Theory, released in 1951, validates this study. Recognizing that vocational choice is influenced by four facts: the reality factor, the influence of the educational process, the emotional factor and individual values this theory proposes that it is a development path that leads to career choice.

According to Krumboltz Career Choice Theory (2017), "the learning experiences you have been exposed to largely shape of career choices, identifying three types of such experiences." Instrumental learning experiences are those in which a person is directly involved in a learning situation and experiences the reward or punishment from good or mistaken deeds firsthand. Associative experiences arise when the person associates previous events with a later positive or negative reinforcement, concluding that certain acts must have indirectly resulted in later outcomes. Finally,

vicarious experiences occur when individuals learn by observing directly and indirectly, through such media as TV and the Internet (Ozyasar, 2017).

Social Cognitive Theory, developed by Albert Bandura, is the idea that an individual's motives and behaviors are based on experience. These experiences can break into three main categories: A person is influenced by self-efficacy, or what they believe they can achieve. A person is influenced by what they see other people achieve and the actions they take. A person is influenced by factors around them that they cannot control. In career development, Social Cognitive Theory helps to explain how a person can set up their career development plan for success. Through a positive view of their own abilities and surrounding themselves with a positive network of mentors, a person has a better chance of achieving their career goals (Birt, 2022).

Figure 1 provides a schematic diagram illustrating the relationships between the independent variable, dependent variable, moderating variable, and intervening variable. The diagram is presented on page 18, visually representing the conceptual framework discussed in the preceding section

The independent variables are factors that influence the course preferences of the respondents. These include personal interest, parents' influence, and other support systems. Personal interest refers to the individual's own preferences, passions, and inclinations towards certain fields of study. Parents' influence encompasses the impact of parents or guardians on the course preferences of the respondents, which can be through their guidance, suggestions, or expectations. Other support systems refer to external factors such as friends, school personnel, and opportunities that may influence the respondents' course preferences.

The dependent variables in this study are the course preferences of the respondents. The identified course preferences include criminology, nursing, education, culinary arts, civil engineering, and maritime. These are the specific fields of study and career paths that the respondents express a preference for based on their own considerations and influences.

The moderating variables in this study are the profiles of the respondents, specifically their strand, gender, and socio-economic status in terms of their parents' income. The respondents' strand refers to the specific academic track or specialization they are enrolled in, such as Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS), Accountancy, Business, and Management (ABM), Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), General Academic Strand (GAS), or Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL). Gender represents the distinction between male and female respondents. Socio-economic status, as measured by the parents' income, categorizes the respondents into different economic backgrounds, such as low-income, middle-income, or high-income families.

The career guidance program and course counseling provided to the students and parents. These interventions act as mediators or facilitators in shaping the course preferences of the respondents. The career guidance program includes various initiatives and strategies implemented by educational institutions to assist students in making informed educational and career choices. Course counseling involves providing guidance, information, and support specifically related to course selection and career planning, aiming to help students and parents navigate the decision-making process effectively.

By examining the relationships between the independent variables (personal interest, parents' influence, and other support systems), dependent variables (course

preferences), moderating variables (strand, gender, and socio-economic status), and the intervening variables (career guidance program, course counseling), this study seeks to explore and understand the complex dynamics influencing the course preferences of the respondents.

SCHEMATIC DIAGRAM OF THE STUDY

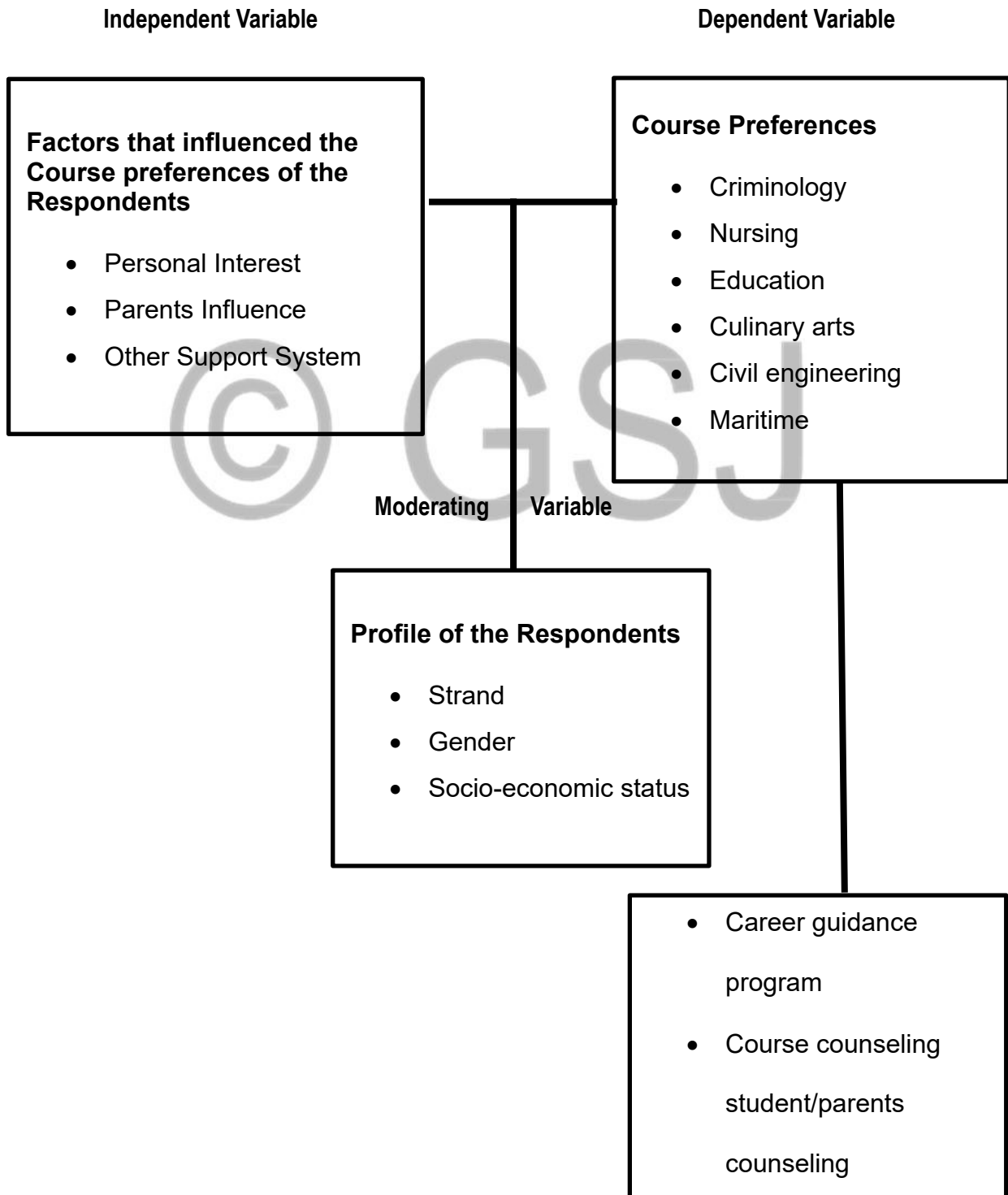


Figure 1 *The schematic diagram showing the interplay of the Independent Variable and Dependent Variable with Moderating Variable and Intervening Variable*

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1. What are the potential factors that influence the course preferences of the respondents in terms of:

1.1 Personal interest;

1.2 Parents influence; and

1.3 Other support system?

2. What are the course preference of the respondents?

3. What is the profile of the Senior High School student in terms of:

3.1. Strand;

3.2. Gender; and

3.3. Socio-economic status

4. What career guidance can be developed from the findings of the study?

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study used the descriptive survey design, descriptive survey research design is a type of descriptive research that presents quantitative data to give you with reliable and relevant facts. Descriptive survey design is a research method used to collect and analyze

data on a particular population or phenomenon. (Zitter, 2020). Since the researchers was conducted an opinionated survey, students' stand on this matter was correlated in the topic.

RESEARCH SETTING

This study was conducted to assess factors that influenced the course preference of Senior High School students at Southern de Oro Philippines College. To be able to gather the necessary data, the researcher utilized the descriptive method, using quantitative approach.

Here in, the chosen respondents we're randomly selected from students of Southern de Oro Philippines College. The survey methods where the research instruments used for the data-gathering. The students of Southern de Oro Philippines College who have been chosen in this study, to accomplish a survey questionnaire to evaluate the factors that influenced the course preference s of Senior High School at Southern de Oro Philippines College. This chapter will be dedicated to the description of the methods and procedures done to obtain the data, on how they will be analyzed, interpreted, and how the conclusion will be met. This section is to justify the means in which the study was obtained and will help in giving it purpose and strength as it will then be truthful and analytical.

PARTICIPANTS AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

In this study, the chosen respondents were selected from students of Southern de Oro Philippines College. All these participants were selected through random sampling. Random sampling is a statistical technique used in research and data analysis to select a subset of individuals or elements from a larger population in such a way that each individual or element has an equal probability of being chosen (Lohr, 2019) This

sampling method is conducted where each member of a population has an equal opportunity to become part of the sample. To conduct this sampling strategy, the researcher defined the population first, listed down all the members of the population, and then selected members to make the sample. Herein, there are 311 Grade 11 students enrolled at Southern de Oro Philippines College and there were 174 participants for the questionnaire survey. The respondents were given 2 days to complete the survey questionnaire upon request. After collecting the questionnaires, the responses were tallied, computed, analyzed, and recorded.

STATISTICAL TREATMENT

The collected data was analyzed, and its meaning was determined using the following statistical tools:

The frequency of respondents who checked in particular questions was influenced by how frequently each response was given. Percentage, Valid percent, and Cumulative percent formula were used to calculate the respondents' profile and the potential factors that influence their course preferences. The formulas were included to ensure accurate data calculation (Valid Percent) and provide a clear understanding of the distribution pattern (Cumulative Percent), enhancing the research's reliability and interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Problem 1. What are the potential factors that influence the course preferences of the respondents in terms of:

1.1 Personal interest;

1.2 Parents influence; and

1.3 Other support system?

Table 1 on the next page presents the respondents' potential factors that influence the course preferences in terms of personal interest. The overall analysis focuses on the total sample of 174 respondents. It shows that the highest that among the indicators under personal interest, preferred college degree was the highest with a frequency of 94 (54.0%), with a valid percent of 54.0 and a cumulative percent of 54.0. This factor has the highest score among all the factors. It indicates that a significant proportion of respondents consider their preferred college degree as a crucial factor influencing their course preferences based on personal interest. This indicator most likely to affect one's decision in choosing a course is a commonly acknowledged belief in the field of career guidance and educational psychology. This statement supports the claim, while it's important to study a subject you enjoy, if one of your reasons for entering higher education is related to career progression, it's worth thinking about what type of career you want when you've finished your course (Nidirect, 2022). On the other hand, the lowest score among the indicators was the multiple interest with a frequency of 15 (8.6%), with a valid percent of 8.6 and a cumulative percent of 100.0 in total. This factor has the lowest score among all the factors. It suggests that a relatively smaller proportion of respondents mentioned multiple interests as a factor influencing their course preferences based on personal interest.

Table 1

Potential Factors That Influence the Course Preferences in terms of Personal Interest

	Personal Interest	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	preferred college degree	94	54.0	54.0	54.0

stage when individual thought of the career to pursue	45	25.9	25.9	79.9
level of career aspiration	20	11.5	11.5	91.4
multiple interest	15	8.6	8.6	100.0
Total	174	100.0	100.0	

FRECUENCIAS VARIABLES=Interest
/ORDER=ANALYSIS.

Table 2

Potential Factors That Influence the Course Preferences in terms of Parent's Influence

	Parent's Influence	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	parents' educational attainment	63	36.2	36.2	36.2
	influence of school personnel	14	8.0	8.0	44.3
	influence of relatives	45	25.9	25.9	70.1
	opportunities	33	19.0	19.0	89.1
	Multiple influence	19	10.9	10.9	100.0
Total		174	100.0	100.0	

FRECUENCIAS VARIABLES=Support
/ORDER=ANALYSIS.

Table 2 presents the respondents' potential factors that influence the course preferences in terms of parent's influence, the total number of respondents is 174. The factors with the highest overall scores are parents' educational attainment (63) and influence of relatives (45). This suggests that these factors were commonly cited as influential by the respondents when it came to their course preferences based on parental influence. Parents' educational attainment received the highest score of 63 of (36.2%),

with a valid percent of 36.2 and a cumulative percent of 36.2. This indicates that a significant number of respondents considered their parents' educational attainment as a crucial factor influencing their course preferences. On the other hand, the factor "influence of school personnel" has the lowest score among the listed factors that influence course preferences in terms of parent's influence. It received a frequency of 14, representing 8.0%, with a valid percent of 8.0 and a cumulative percent of 44.3 of the total respondents. This suggests that, compared to other factors such as parents' educational attainment, influence of relatives, and opportunities, the influence of school personnel had a relatively lower impact on students' course preferences as perceived by the respondents. It also indicates that students may not attribute significant weight to the opinions or guidance provided by school personnel when making decisions about their course preferences.

Table 3

Potential Factors That Influence the Course Preferences in terms of Other Support System

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	influence of friends	12	6.9	6.9	6.9
	influence of school personnel	10	5.7	5.7	12.6
	influence of relatives	31	17.8	17.8	30.5
	opportunities	35	20.1	20.1	50.6
	track popularity	4	2.3	2.3	52.9
	school's proximity to residence	3	1.7	1.7	54.6
	availability of job	10	5.7	5.7	60.3
	multiple support system	69	39.7	39.7	100.0
	Total	174	100.0	100.0	

ONEWAY Interest Influence Support BY Career
 /MISSING ANALYSIS.

Table 3 indicates that there were 174 respondents in total who provided their responses regarding the factors influencing their course preferences in terms of other support systems. The factor with the highest frequency is "multiple support system" with a frequency of 69, representing 39.7% of the total respondents. This suggests that a significant proportion of students identified multiple support systems as influential factors in their course preference decisions. This could indicate that students consider a combination of different support systems, such as friends, school personnel, relatives, opportunities, track popularity, school's proximity, and availability of jobs, when making their course preferences. Smith, Johnson, and Brown (2019) found that the presence of multiple support systems, including friends, family, school personnel, and other sources, significantly influenced students' course preferences and career decision-making processes." Furthermore, According to Smith et al. (2019), "students who reported having a diverse network of support systems were more likely to explore a wider range of course options and consider different career paths, as they received guidance and advice from various perspectives."

On the other hand, the factor with the lowest frequency was the school's proximity to residence with a frequency of 3 (1.7%). This indicates that a smaller proportion of students considered these factors as influential in their course preference decisions. This implies that the respondents didn't matter with regards to how near or far the school is away from their individual's residences since there's already an increase of mobility, program suitability, expanded choices, and also, their individual's preference.

Since the mentioned preferred college courses were mostly offered in any schools, increasing mobility where students today have greater mobility and accessibility to educational institutions, thanks to improved transportation systems and online learning opportunities. This allows them to consider a wider range of options beyond their

immediate geographic area. Increasing mobility among students has been facilitated by advancements in transportation systems and the rise of online learning platforms. This has expanded students' access to educational institutions beyond their immediate geographic area. With improved transportation options and the availability of online courses, students now have the flexibility to explore and consider a wider range of educational opportunities, regardless of their proximity to their residence (Smith, Johnson, & Brown, 2019).

Table 4

Overall Factors That Influenced the Course Preferences

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Personal interest	94	54.0	54.0	54.0
Parents influence	63	36.2	36.2	36.2
Other support system	69	39.7	39.7	100.0

Table 4 presents data on the overall factors that influenced the course preferences of the respondents. Among the factors listed, personal interest emerged as the most prominent influencer, with 54.0% of the total respondents citing it as a crucial determinant in their course selection. This indicates that a majority of students made their decisions based on their own passions and inclinations towards particular subjects or fields of study. The second most significant factor was parents influence, with 36.2% of respondents acknowledging the impact of parental guidance on their course preferences. The involvement of parents in the decision-making process suggests the importance of familial support and the role parents play in shaping their children's educational choices.

Additionally, other support system was chosen by 39.7% of the respondents, signifying the presence of external factors beyond personal interest and parental

influence that influenced course preferences. These external support systems might include career counselors, mentors, or other individuals who provided valuable insights and guidance to students during their decision-making process.

The cumulative percentage of 100.0% highlights that respondents were allowed to select multiple factors, implying that some students might have been influenced by a combination of factors in making their course preference decisions. This emphasizes the complexity of the decision-making process and the need for a comprehensive approach in providing guidance and support to students.

Overall, the data underscores the significance of considering students' personal interests, parental influence, and other support systems when offering guidance in course preference decisions. Educational institutions, policymakers, and career counselors can utilize this information to tailor their strategies and resources effectively, empowering students to make well-informed choices aligned with their aspirations and goals.

Problem 2. What are the course preference of the respondents?

Table 5 shows the field of study of the respondents. Majority of the respondents would pursue Criminology with 65 out of 174 or 37.36%, with a valid percent of 37.36 and a cumulative percent of 37.36. This implies that out of curiosity about the criminal justice system for instance, students wanted to understand how the criminal justice system works and how it can be improved are drawn to criminology. They want to explore topics such as policing, the court system, and the prison system, and examine the issues and controversies associated with these institutions. This supports the statement that students who are drawn to criminology may have a natural curiosity about human behavior and a desire to develop their critical thinking and analytical skills. Criminology provides an interdisciplinary approach that draws on psychology, sociology, criminology, and other fields to understand crime and its effects (Jowett & Peel, 2019). On the other hand, the

lowest field of study that the respondents wanted to pursue in college based on the table was Maritime with 15 out of 174 or 8.62%, with a valid percent of 8.62 and a cumulative percent of 100.0 in total. This implies that because of the high cost of education, pursuing a degree in the maritime industry can be expensive, particularly if students have to pay for specialized certifications. This supports with a statement that the cost of acquiring maritime education may be high for some students, making it difficult for them to pursue their studies. (Khairil, 2015).

Table 5

Course Preference of the Respondents

	Field of Study	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Criminology	65	37.36	37.36	37.36
	Nursing	20	11.49	11.49	48.85
	Education	30	17.24	17.24	66.09
	Culinary Arts	25	14.37	14.37	80.46
	Civil Engineering	19	10.92	10.92	91.38
	Maritime	15	8.62	8.62	100.0
	Total	174	100.0	100.0	

Problem 3. What is the profile of the Senior High School students

3.1. Strand;

3.2. Gender; and

3.3. Socio-economic status?

Table 6

Profile in terms of Strand

	Strand	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	STEM	32	18.4	18.4	18.4
	GAS	29	16.7	16.7	35.1
	TVL	28	16.1	16.1	51.1
	HUMSS	69	39.7	39.7	90.8
	ABM	16	9.2	9.2	100.0
	Total	174	100.0	100.0	

Table 6 represents the profile of respondents in terms of different academic strands. The total number of respondents considered in the analysis is 174, with a total percentage, valid percent, and cumulative percent of 100.0. It reveals that highest frequency among the strands is observed in the HUMSS (Humanities and Social Sciences) strand, with 69 respondents (39.7%), with a valid percent of 39.7 and a cumulative percent of 90.8. This implies that most of the respondents under this strand were most likely to take their courses in line with their strand.

In addition, for their personal skills and strengths where students who excel in critical thinking, communication, writing, and analysis may be drawn to the HUMSS strand, as these skills are often emphasized in these subjects. This supports the statement based on the result on the study about “The Common Reasons of Grade 10 Students of Emiliano Tria Tirona Memorial National High School in Choosing their Academic Track/Strand”, where their respondents believed that this strand helps them to become more creative and imaginative (Niño et al., 2019). On the other hand, the lowest frequency among the strands was observed in the ABM (Accountancy, Business, and Management) strand, with 16 respondents (9.2 %), with a valid percent of 9.2, and a cumulative percent of 100 a total. This implies that students perceived difficulty, where ABM strand often includes subjects like accounting, economics, and business-related

topics, which some students might perceive as challenging or intimidating. This perception could lead them to choose other strands that they consider more manageable or aligned with their strengths. This finding supports the statement that Huy (2015) capitalized on writing skills which most of the college students in business struggle.

Table 7 below presents the gender distribution of the respondents. The data reveals that out of the total respondents, there were 104 males, accounting for 59.8%, while there were 70 females, making up 40.2% of the respondents. These figures indicate that slightly more than half of the population consisted of boys. This differs from the typical proportion of genders observed in many high schools, where there tend to be more females than males. The noteworthy distribution of genders in the population can be attributed to the higher representation of boys in the technical-vocational track, where they have greater exposure to hands-on activities.

Table 7

Profile in terms of Gender

	Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	104	59.8	59.8	59.8
	Female	70	40.2	40.2	100.0
	Total	174	100.0	100.0	

FREQUENCIES VARIABLES=Gender
 /ORDER=ANALYSIS .

Table 8

Parents Socio-economic Status in terms of Income

	Income	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	below 10k	81	46.6	46.6	46.6
	10-15k	40	23.0	23.0	69.5
	15001-20k	19	10.9	10.9	80.5
	20001-25k	8	4.6	4.6	85.1

25001-30k	7	4.0	4.0	89.1
30001-35k	5	2.9	2.9	92.0
35k up	14	8.0	8.0	100.0
Total	174	100.0	100.0	

FREQUENCIES VARIABLES=Incomee
 /ORDER=ANALYSIS.

Table 8 presents the socio-economic status of the respondent's parents in terms of their income. The total number of respondents considered in the analysis is 174, with a total percentage, valid percent, and cumulative percent of 100.0. Almost one-half (46.6%) of the respondents' parents have monthly income ranging P10, 000 and below, with a valid percent of 46.6 and a cumulative percent of 46.6. This pay range is considered in this study as low-income status. This implies that there were instances as regional differences where income levels vary by region, and parents living in areas with a higher cost of living may struggle to make ends meet. This supports the facts according to a report by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), as of 2018, the poverty incidence among families in the country is at 16.6%. This implies that a significant number of Filipino families are still struggling to meet their daily needs, including providing for their children's education. Furthermore, a study by the World Bank found that persistent high-income inequality is one of the main barriers to poverty reduction in the Philippines.

This inequality affects not only access to education but also health, nutrition, and other basic needs of families. These factors might explain why most student's parents have low monthly income below 10,000. On the other hand, the lowest frequency distribution with 5 out of 174 or 2.9% of the respondent's parents have monthly income ranging 30,001-35k, with a valid percent of 29.9 and a cumulative percent of 92.0 a total. This pay range is considered in this study as high-income status. This implies that in terms on their occupation and education, parental income is often linked to their occupation and educational attainment. Certain occupations or industries may offer higher salaries, while

higher education levels tend to be associated with higher income. Factors such as the availability of job opportunities in high-paying sectors or the educational attainment of parents in the specific locality can impact the number of parents with high incomes. This supports the findings that research has consistently shown a positive correlation between occupation and income, with individuals in higher-skilled or managerial positions earning higher salaries (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). Furthermore, research studies have shown that the average income tends to increase with higher educational attainment, such as completing a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020).

Problem 4: What career guidance can be developed from the findings of the study?

Mrs. Annabelle T. Verula, the guidance counselor from the SPC Guidance Office, emphasized the importance of career coaching as a key component of effective career guidance. She suggested several specific strategies that can be implemented based on the findings of the study:

1. **Career Coaching:** Mrs. Verula highlighted the importance of career coaching as an essential component of effective guidance. She suggested providing one-on-one career coaching sessions to students, wherein their interests, skills, and aspirations can be assessed to help them identify suitable career paths.
2. **Inviting Speakers from PESO:** Mrs. Verula recommended organizing guest speaker sessions from the Public Employment Service Office (PESO). These sessions would provide students with valuable insights into different career options, industry trends, and employment prospects, thereby broadening their understanding of available opportunities.
3. **Information Rides about Career Guidance:** Mrs. Verula proposed arranging information rides where students can visit various educational institutions,

companies, or workplaces. These visits would allow students to observe different professions firsthand, interact with professionals, and gain practical knowledge about specific career fields.

- 4. Career Orientation Information for SHS-JHS:** Mrs. Verula stresses the importance of tailored career orientation programs for high school students, encompassing workshops, seminars, and informative resources.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

Problem 1: The preferred college degree was found to be the most influential factor in shaping course preferences based on personal interest. This highlights the importance of aligning academic pursuits with students' desired college degrees. Additionally, the influence of parents' educational attainment and support from relatives played a significant role in guiding students' course choices. Students who had a diverse support system were more likely to consider various career paths. Parental educational attainment and support from relatives also play a significant role in guiding students' course choices (Bangera & Brownell, 2015). Conversely, the proximity of the school to students' residence had the least impact on their course preference decisions, suggesting that other factors such as mobility and expanded choices have become more influential in recent times. Students benefit from a diverse support system, encouraging them to explore various career paths beyond their primary college degree preference (Bangera & Brownell, 2015).

Problem 2: In terms of course preference, the study findings highlight that Criminology received the highest preference among respondents, showcasing a significant interest in the field and its focus on the criminal justice system. A common reason given by students

for studying criminology is because it is thought to be an 'interesting' subject (Walters and Kremser, 2016). While some speculate that students may be influenced by the crime scene investigation 'CSI effect', 'just as many are propelled into the field as a result of more altruistic and personal motivations' (Belknap and Potter, 2015: 16) and because they want to 'help people' (Eren et al., 2019). Career-related motivations, increased media consumption, being good at similar subjects at school/college and deterred by more 'scientific' subjects, have also been identified as motivating factors (Barthe et al., 2015; Collica-Cox and Furst, 2019; Krimmel and Tartaro, 2017). Conversely, Maritime had the lowest preference, possibly due to financial considerations and specialized requirements associated with pursuing a degree in this field. Additionally, the lack of awareness and information about the potential benefits and diverse career prospects within the maritime industry could contribute to the lower interest in maritime courses. Students may be more familiar with traditional career paths and industries, which receive more visibility and promotion in educational and societal contexts. (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2019).

The results suggest that students are more inclined towards disciplines like Criminology, which offer interdisciplinary perspectives, while factors such as costs and specific qualifications may deter them from pursuing Maritime studies.

Problem 3: HUMSS strand was the most preferred among respondents, highlighting their strong interest in subjects related to critical thinking, communication, and analysis. HUMSS prepares students for further studies in disciplines such as social sciences, humanities, education, psychology, communication, and arts-related fields. It equips them with the necessary skills to pursue careers in research, writing, teaching, counseling, advocacy, and other professions that require strong analytical, communication, and critical thinking abilities. (Gabriel and Delos Santos, 2019).

Conversely, the ABM (Accountancy, Business, and Management) strand had the lowest frequency, potentially influenced by the perceived difficulty of accounting and economics subjects. Additionally, the higher representation of male respondents can be attributed to their greater involvement in the technical-vocational track. The study also revealed a diverse socio-economic background among the respondents, with a majority coming from low-income families but also representation from high-income families.

Problem 4: Finally, the implementation of career coaching, speaker invitations, information rides, and career orientation programs can significantly enhance career guidance and empower students to make well-informed choices about their future paths.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the study's concluded outcomes, the following recommendations are suggested:

Problem 1: Based on the research findings, it is evident that the proximity of the school to students' residence has the lowest impact on their course preference decisions. This could be attributed to the increasing mobility of students, expanded choices, and the rise of online learning opportunities. Although there are few studies that report the online learning challenges that higher education students experience during this days, limited information is available regarding the specific strategies that they use to overcome them (Barrot et al., 2021) To address this issue, the researchers can provide valuable recommendations to educational institutions and policymakers.

Firstly, they can focus on enhancing online learning opportunities, offering students more flexibility and access to courses regardless of their location. Secondly, by increasing awareness of diverse course options, educational institutions can encourage students to

explore a broader range of fields aligned with their interests and career aspirations. Lastly, fostering a supportive environment through student engagement and support systems will empower students to make well-informed decisions, aided by friends, school personnel, and relatives. Implementing these suggestions will create a more inclusive and accommodating educational environment, enabling students to make course preference decisions that align with their individual goals and interests.

Problem 2: The findings of the study regarding the lowest preference for the field of Maritime can be recommended to educational institutions, career counsellors, and policymakers. To address the lowest preference for the field of Maritime, researchers can conduct in-depth surveys and interviews with respondents to understand the factors influencing their course preferences. By gaining direct insights from students, educators, and industry professionals, the researchers can identify specific barriers, such as the high cost of education and specialized certifications required in the maritime industry, that contribute to the lack of interest in Maritime.

Analyzing the cost and certification requirements of Maritime compared to other fields, like Criminology, can offer valuable context on the economic considerations influencing students' decisions. Additionally, researchers should examine students' perceptions of career prospects in Maritime and collaborate with industry partners to understand the challenges faced by the maritime industry in attracting talent. Developing awareness campaigns that showcase diverse career opportunities and success stories in Maritime can help dispel misconceptions and increase students' interest in the field. By implementing these strategies and conducting targeted research, researchers can contribute to fostering a more informed and enthusiastic approach towards pursuing careers in the maritime industry (Global Maritime Issues Monitor, 2020)

Problem 3: The findings regarding the lowest frequency in choosing the ABM (Accountancy, Business, and Management) strand can be recommended to educational institutions, career counsellors, and curriculum planners. Researchers can conduct further studies to identify the specific challenges that students face in subjects like accounting and economics within the ABM strand (Henderson & Johnson, 2019), gaining valuable insights through surveys, interviews, and focus groups. Understanding the perceived difficulties will aid in designing targeted support programs and interventions. Additionally, they can collaborate with educational institutions and industry professionals to develop awareness campaigns showcasing the diverse career opportunities and success stories associated with the ABM strand (Smith et al., 2020) By highlighting the achievements of ABM graduates and the potential for career growth in business and management fields, researchers can enhance students' awareness and interest in the ABM strand.

Regarding the gender distribution and socio-economic status of the respondents' parents, the information can be recommended to educators, policymakers, and social welfare organizations. They can use these findings to inform and guide initiatives aimed at addressing gender disparities in education and providing support to students from low-income backgrounds. Strategies may include promoting gender equality in educational opportunities and resources, implementing scholarship or financial aid programs, and offering mentorship or career guidance programs to help students from low-income families overcome barriers and achieve their educational and career aspirations. Researchers can collaborate with policymakers and social welfare organizations to design targeted interventions aimed at promoting gender equality in education and providing support to students from low-income backgrounds (Williams & Martinez, 2018). This may include implementing scholarship or financial aid programs that specifically

target female students and those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, and offering mentorship or career guidance programs to assist them in overcoming barriers and achieving their educational and career aspirations.

Problem 4: Based on the research findings, it is evident that comprehensive career guidance strategies play a crucial role in enhancing students' career readiness and decision-making. Therefore, educational institutions and career guidance practitioners should prioritize the implementation of such strategies (Miller et al., 2016). These strategies can include personalized one-on-one career coaching sessions, where students receive tailored guidance based on their individual interests, skills, and aspirations (Brown & Johnson, 2019). Moreover, inviting speakers from the Public Employment Service Office (PESO) can provide valuable insights into various career options and industry trends, broadening students' understanding of potential career paths (Garcia et al., 2015).

Furthermore, organizing information rides, practical experiences, and career orientation programs can provide students with hands-on experiences and exposure to different career fields, helping them make informed decisions about their future careers (Wilson et al., 2020). By adopting these strategies, educational institutions can equip students with the necessary knowledge and resources, empowering them to confidently pursue their chosen career paths (Miller et al., 2016). Ultimately, enhancing career guidance strategies will contribute to students' overall career readiness and increase their chances of making successful transitions from education to the workforce (Clark et al., 2018).

These recommendations involve the collective efforts of schools, guidance counselors, PESO, professionals, parents, community organizations, and government agencies. By working together, they can create a supportive and informative environment

that empowers students to make well-informed career decisions and successfully navigate their educational and professional journeys.

School Action Plan on Senior High School Career Guidance Program: Enhancing Student Guidance and Career Readiness

OBJECTIVES	KEY RESULT AREAS	PROGRAM/ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES			SUCCESS INDICATOR	TIMELINE
			MANPOWER	MONEY	MATERIALS		
Enhance guidance and support for students in course preference decisions.	Improved student decision-making based on personal interests and goals.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create and distribute informational resources on college degrees, career aspirations, and parent's influence. 2. Conduct workshops and seminars for educational institutions, policymakers, and career counsellors to promote these factors' significance. 3. Provide relevant support and flexible course options to students. 	Career counselors, Educational institutions' staff, Policymakers.	Funding for workshops, Seminars, resource development, and Flexible learning arrangements.	Informational resources, course catalogs, and online platforms.	Increase in students' awareness and consideration of preferred college degrees, career aspirations, and parents' influence in their course preference decisions.	September 2023(week 1-2)
Address barriers and increase interest in the field of Maritime.	Increased enrollment and awareness of career opportunities in Maritime.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Address barriers to Maritime education. 2. Provide financial assistance and alternative pathways. 3. Develop awareness campaigns with industry partnerships. 	Career counsellors, Industry professionals, educational institutions' staff.	Funding for scholarships, awareness campaigns, internships, and mentorship programs.	Informational resources, industry partnerships, internship opportunities.	Increase in the number of students pursuing degrees in Maritime and a greater understanding of career opportunities in the field.	September 2023 (week 3-4)
Address the low frequency of choosing	Increased interest and enrollment in the	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement support programs for accounting and economics subjects. 2. Enhance ABM teaching methods 	Educators, career counsellors, professionals in the business	Funding for support programs, additional resources, career fairs, and	Teaching materials, industry partnerships, success stories.	Increase in the number of students choosing the ABM	October 2023 (week 1-2)

the ABM strand.	ABM strand.	and accessibility with additional resources. 3. Promote ABM value and career opportunities through events and collaborations.	and management field.	mentorship programs.		strand and positive feedback on improved accessibility and teaching methods.	
Implement comprehensive career guidance strategies.	Enhanced career readiness and informed decision-making among students.	1. Personalized one-on-one career coaching sessions. 2. PESO speakers for industry insights. 3. Information rides, practical experiences, and mentorship opportunities.	Career guidance practitioners, PESO representatives, professionals in various fields.	Funding for coaching sessions, speaker invitations, information rides, and internship programs.	Career resources, networking opportunities, internships.	Improved student career readiness and an increase in the number of students making informed decisions about their future careers.	October 2023 (week 3-4)

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