

Career Preferences and Factors Influencing the Career Choice of Senior High Students of a Catholic School

Julde E. Dangoy¹ and Dennis V. Madrigal²

¹St. Blaise High School, Sebaste, Antique, Philippines

²University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos, Bacolod City, Philippines

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Introduction. The adolescent stage is considered one of the challenging stages in human development. A stage where a student is planning and preparing himself in a role, he would like to take part in the community by taking his desired course or job to uplift his dignity as a person. Career decision making is undoubtedly one of the most difficult and challenging in any students' life. As students continue to college, wisely choosing a career greatly impacts their future career life. For some instances, changing courses could be a cause of having the wrong decision in choosing a career that could lead to a waste of time, resources, and career frustration. Hence, the paper assessed the degree of career preferences and the extent of factors influencing the career choices of senior high school students in a Catholic School in Antique during the school year 2019-2020. Likewise, it compared the students' career preferences and factors influencing career choices in terms of their demographics. Also, it correlated career preferences and the influence of factors in career choices.

Methods. A descriptive-comparative and correlational research design was used to assess the degree of career preference and extent of influence of factors influencing the career preferences of senior high school students of a Catholic School in Antique during the school year 2019-2020. Utilizing stratified random sampling, 139 students participated in the study. The data was gathered using a validated and reliability-tested researcher-made instrument. Mean, Standard Deviation, Mann Whitney U Test, Kruskal-Wallis, and Spearman rank correlation were used to analyze the data.

Results. The findings of the study revealed that senior high school students have a high degree of career preference for Accountancy and Business Management (ABM) and moderate preference for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), Sports Science (SS), Arts and Design (AD), Technical Vocational Livelihood (TVL), and Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS). Moreover, students' career choices were generally influenced to a great extent by socio-economic, psychological, occupational, and school-related factors. Meanwhile, a significant difference was found in the degree of career preference, such as HUMSS and SS, when grouped according to sex and STEM when grouped according to grade level. Furthermore, no significant difference was found in the extent of influence of factors in the students' career choices when grouped according to demographics. Finally, a significant relationship was found between preferred careers such as Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and factors in career choices.

Conclusion. The design and implementation of a career guidance program is important to develop the individual competencies of students in self-knowledge, educational and occupational exploration, and career planning. Moreover, career guidance as part of a guidance program, the guidance counselor and school administrators have the great responsibility in designing and implementing of career guidance program to develop the career maturity of the students that will ensure success, productivity, and commitment in their future careers. Such students with a clear view and maturity of their career will not be astray in the field of their chosen career in the future.

Practical Value of the Paper. The study significantly provides something for the existing literature and studies on career preference and factors influencing the career choice of senior high school students of a Catholic school in Antique. Moreover, the findings of the study brought about the basis

for designing and implementing a career guidance program to ensure that the career development of the students was on the right track.

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Correspondence:

Julde E. Dangoy [kimjhudiel@gmail.com]
<http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8087-0636>