Full Length Research

Personality and Socio-Economic Factors Influencing the Choice of Academic Track among Senior High Schoolers

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The study deals with the personality and socio-economic factors influencing the academic track/strand among Senior High Schoolers. It answered the following questions: What is the chosen academic track among Senior High Schoolers?; How may the personality and socio-economic factors among Senior High Schoolers be described; Is there significant relationship between personality and socio-economic factors and chosen academic track among Senior High Schoolers?; and To what extend do personality and socio-economic factors predict the chosen academic track? Descriptive method of research was used with 225 Senior High Schoolers from Wesleyan University – Philippines, Aurora Campus located at Maria Aurora, Aurora, Philippines during the School Year 2018-2019. Questionnaire with the aid of interview were used as data gathering instruments and subjected to frequency distribution, percentage, weighted mean, test of correlation and regression. Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) strand is the first choice among the respondents. Personality factors obtained a weighted mean of 3.51 described as agree, considering that strand which were important and vital in deciding and choosing future career, giving them the challenge to bring out their best, and further development with their values as a person lead the factors. Likewise, supporting the needs of their family and valuing in the future" ruled the socio-economic factors in choosing strand. Students chose General Academic Strand (GAS) strand still on the process of deciding what degree they will be going to enrol in college which manifested on the finding that high significant correlations were observed to all personality and socio-economic factors in choosing the academic strand. Fourteen per cent of personality factor; "students' intellectual capacity to finish their studies can predict academic strand while socio-economic factor; "choosing strand that they value in the future" can predict 13.1%.

Keywords: socio-economic factors, Senior High Schoolers, personality, correlation and regression

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INTRODUCTION

Philippines education system underwent too many changes, much so in terms of curriculum. K-12 is the latest innovation in the curriculum, wherein additional two years in the secondary level was implemented. The K to 12 Program covers Kindergarten and 12 years of basic education (six years of primary education, four years of

Junior High School, and two years of Senior High School [SHS]) to provide sufficient time for mastery of concepts and skills, develop lifelong learners, and prepare graduates for tertiary education, middle-level skills development, employment, and entrepreneurship.https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/k-12/

Senior High School is two years of specialized upper secondary education; students may choose a specialization based on aptitude, interests, and school capacity. The choice of career track will define the content of the subjects a student will take in Grades 11 and 12. SHS subjects fall under either the Core Curriculum or specific Tracks.

There are seven learning areas under the core curriculum. These are Languages, Literature, Communication, Mathematics, Philosophy, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences. Current content from some General Education subjects are embedded in the SHS curriculum.

Senior High Schoolers can choose academic; technical-vocational-livelihood; and sports and arts. The Academic track includes Business, Accountancy, Management (BAM); Humanities, Education, Social Sciences (HESS); and Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM).

Choosing a strand is the crucial decision on the life of Junior High school students after graduation. Mistrack means additional subjects will be taken during the college as a bridging program to assess their preparedness in the field of study chosen. Knowing and understanding the area the students are competent is the best measure in making decision on the right choice of track. Once a student is good in communications, she/he may decide to take HUMMS, however if the student is good with numbers, ABM or STEM would be the best right tracks to enrol in order to further enhance his/her numerical skills.

There are different factors to be considered in choosing the right and like track. Right track is the very vital considerations in pursuing future career during college level. Personality and socio-economic factors are the two factors that are very crucial and critical in choosing college degree among Filipinos. In choosing future career, personality is one of the essential factors should one's be considered – values, interests and aptitudes. Other consideration is the socio-economic factor; this perhaps is the most important factor for most families particularly the demands financial resources. Some expenses might be too prohibitive for some students and their families,

Making a decision for one's career is the hardest decision that one's to make. It is very stressful, and ones never know if ones are making the best decision for oneselves. Once this happened, the best thing ones can do is ask God for help. We can trust in Him to give us inspiration and faith that our decision is indeed the correct one. As stated: *"Whatever your hand finds to do,*

do it with all your might" (Ecclesiastes 9:10).

Wrong tracking means mismatch career choice, this is the evident why some students in college shifting from one course to another every semester – thus this study was conducted in the fulfilment the researcher's advocacy is assisting students in making the right career for their future.

OBJECTIVES

The study attempted to determine the personality and socio-economic factors influencing the academic track/strand among Senior High Schoolers. It sought to answer the following questions:

1.   What is the chosen academic track among Senior High Schoolers?
2.   How may the personality and socio-economic factors among Senior High Schoolers be described?
3.   Is there significant relationship between personality and socio-economic factors and chosen academic track among Senior High Schoolers?
4.   To what extend do personality and socio-economic factors predict the chosen academic track?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Academic Track

Academic track under the Senior high strands are most popular and chosen track among incoming Grade 11 students, followed by Technical-Vocational Livelihood (TVL) Track according to an impact report on the Assessing the post-College and Career Awareness and Readiness Seminar (CARES) by the local social enterprise Edukasyon.ph. (Malonda, 2017). Furthermore, Accountancy, Business, and Management (ABM), Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), and Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) were the most chosen choice of the students.

Enrolment in the Grade 11 in the Philippines shows that around 60.6% were enrolled in the academic track while only 39% were in tech-voc curriculum and less than 0.5% chosen the sports, arts and design curriculum. (Sarmiento and Orale, 2016).

Personality Factors and Choosing Strand/Career

Splaver (2000) stated that personality plays an important role in the choosing of the right course.

Student's personality must be self-motivated type so that they need to investigate courses possibilities from early on their lives. Furthermore, personality is important to have a good understanding of student's self and his/her personality.

Olamide and Olawaiye (2013) claimed that students agreed that personality plays an important role in career choice. Furthermore, they found out that there is significant difference in the perception of influential factors on personality in determining the choice of career.

Socio-economic Factors and Choosing Strand/Career

The income level of the families determine what career a student chooses during a specific time in the student's life while some students will have to budget education according to their personal income (Olamide and Olawaiye, 2013). Each track has certain requirements that demand financial resources; thus assessing the other expenses that need to prepare is considerable. Knowledge on estimated expenses is important to the budget in order to help a lot in deciding whether or not to pursue a track at a certain school or go for other possible options.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher utilized the descriptive method of research, composed 225Senior High Schoolers from Wesleyan University – Philippines, Aurora Campus located at Maria Aurora, Aurora, Philippines during the School Year 2018-2019. Questionnaire was the main tool used in gathering data with the aid of interview. Data were organized, classified, tabulated, analyzed and interpreted using the frequency distribution, percentage, weighted mean, test of correlation and regression.

RESULTS

Table 1. Chosen Academic Track among Senior High Schoolers

ACADEMIC TRACK	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM)	62	27.6
General Academic Strand (GAS)	31	13.8
Humanities, and Social Sciences (HUMSS)	95	42.2
Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)	37	16.4
TOTAL	225	100

Table 2. Personality and Socio-economic Factors in Choosing Academic Track among Senior High Schoolers

FACTORS	WEIGHTED MEAN	DESCRIPTION	RANK
PERSONALITY FACTORS *I prefer to choose a strand:*			
1. that suits my intellectual capacity so as to finish my studies.	3.57	Agree	4
2. that suits my physical abilities to compete for a job after graduation.	3.52	Agree	7
3. that will further develop my values as a person.	3.58	Agree	2.5
4. that gives me the challenge to bring out the best in me.	3.63	Agree	1
5. that provides chances for me to excel.	3.58	Agree	2.5
6. that creates a good personal image for me in the future.	3.54	Agree	5
7. that provides high prestige in my job after graduation.	3.50	Agree	8
8. that will not create stress/exhaustion in my studies.	3.21	Somewhat Agree	10
9. that provides opportunities for self-expression.	3.48	Agree	9

Table 2. continuation

10. that I believe I can finish with my combined personality traits.	3.52	Agree	7
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN	**3.51**	**Agree**	
SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS _I prefer to choose a Strand:_			
1. that will improve our living condition	3.53	Agree	3
2. that is in consonance to my religious beliefs	3.34	Somewhat Agree	7
3. that I will support the needs of my family	3.68	Agree	1
4. that I will value in the future	3.60	Agree	2
5. that I can make more friends	3.33	Somewhat Agree	8
6. that I can be a boss later	3.20	Somewhat Agree	9.5
7. that is held traditionally by the gender I belong.	3.20	Somewhat Agree	9.5
8. that will result to an enjoyable worklife after graduation.	3.51	Agree	5.5
9. that suits my lifestyle as a person.	3.51	Agree	5.5
10. that creates a good personal image for me in the future.	3.52	Agree	4
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN	**3.34**	**Agree**	

Table 3. Significant Relationship between Academic Track Choose and Personality and Economic Factors

FACTORS	R	α
PERSONALITY FACTORS _I prefer to choose a strand:_		
1. that suits my intellectual capacity so as to finish my studies.	0.378**	0.000
2. that suits my physical abilities to compete for a job after graduation.	0.325**	0.000
3. that will further develop my values as a person.	0.305**	0.000
4. that gives me the challenge to bring out the best in me.	0.364**	0.000
5. that provides chances for me to excel.	0.314**	0.000
6. that creates a good personal image for me in the future.	0.331**	0.000
7. that provides high prestige in my job after graduation.	0.293**	0.000
8. that will not create stress/exhaustion in my studies.	0.240**	0.000
9. that provides opportunities for self-expression.	0.286**	0.000
10. that I believe I can finish with my combined personality traits.	0.310**	0.000
SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS _I prefer to choose a Strand:_		
1. that will improve our living condition	0.340**	0.000
2. that is in consonance to my religious beliefs	0.258**	0.000
3. that I will support the needs of my family	0.319**	0.000
4. that I will value in the future	0.362**	0.000
5. that I can make more friends	0.289**	0.000
6. that I can be a boss later	0.235**	0.000
7. that is held traditionally by the gender I belong.	0.279**	0.000
8. that will result to an enjoyable work life after graduation.	0.319**	0.000
9. that suits my lifestyle as a person.	0.309**	0.000
10. that creates a good personal image for me in the future.	0.313**	0.000

Table 4.Model Summary of Personality and Socio-economic Factors that Predict the Chosen Academic Track.

Model Summary – Personality Factors

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.379[a]	.144	.140	.85280

a. Predictors: (Constant), *I prefer to choose a Strand*that suits my intellectual capacity so as to finish my studies.

Model Summary – Socio-economic Factors

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.362[a]	.131	.127	.85900

a. Predictors: (Constant), *I prefer to choose a Strand*that I will value in the future

DISCUSSION

Chosen Academic Track among Senior High Schoolers

Table 1 shows that HUMSS obtained the highest frequency of 95 or 42.2%, followed by ABM (62 or 7.6), STEM (37 or 16.4%) and GAS (31 OR 13.8%). This result implied that senior high schoolers preferred courses in education, criminology, and social sciences. These courses were offered in the university and other colleges in the locality. Teaching and law enforcement are one of the in-demand and high paying jobs in the country.

Personality and Socio-economic Factors in Choosing Academic Track

All personality factors in choosing the strands were described as "agree" except "strand that will not create stress/exhaustion in my studies" with weighted mean of 3.21 described as somewhat agree. "Further develop my values as a person" and "provides chances for me to excel" were the topped personality factors in choosing strand. The adolescents now looking for a job which is not stressful and its does not exhaustive during their studies.
On the socio-economic factors, "I will choose a strand that I will support the needs of my family and I will value in the future" ranked the first two factors. This is the always the aspiration of adolescent to support their family needs, the fact that majority of the students were belonged to the poor family.

Relationship between Academic Track Chosen and Personality and Economic Factors

All personality and socio-economic factors were high significantly related in choosing the academic strand. This result implied that students in the General Academic Strand (GAS) perceived disagreement in the personality and economic factors in choosing strand. Students enrolled in the GAS strand is undecided yet of what course they will going to enrol in college due to the newest implementation of the K-12 program in the country.

Personality and Socio-economic Factors that Predict the Chosen Academic Track.

Only "I prefer to choose a strand that suits my intellectual capacity so as to finish my studies" can predict the chosen strand with R square value of 0.144 means 14.4% of the variable can be predicted the chosen strand.

"I prefer to choose a strand that I will value in the future" obtained the R square value of 0.131, thus only 13.1% can be predicted by this socio-economic variable on choosing strand.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the study the following conclusions were drawn:

Senior high schoolers preferred courses under the HUMSS strand leading to the baccalaureate degrees in education, criminology, and social sciences due to the availability of these courses in the locality.

Both personality and socio-economic factors in choosing strand were perceived as important and vital in deciding and choosing future career. Giving them the challenge to bring out their best, further development with

their values as a person and provide chances for them to excel dominant personality factor while socio-economic factors include supporting the needs of their family and valuing in the future" ranked the first two factors. This is the always the aspiration of adolescent to support their family needs, the fact hat majority of the students were belonged to the poor family.

High significant correlations were observed to all personality and socio-economic factors in choosing the academic strand; evident that students enrolled in General Academic Strand (GAS) were still on the process of deciding their degree to be enrolled in college.

Students' intellectual capacity to finish their studies is the personality factor that predict stand which attributed 14.4% while socio-economic factor; choosing strand that they value in the future can predict 13.1%.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions presented the following recommendations are hereby given:

Strand orientation program be instituted to the Junior High Schools so that in-coming Senior High School students be oriented to what strand they will enrol. Strengthening the guidance program of the schools to cater the needs of the students is a must. Career orientation, advising and consultation should be conducted so that students will be informing about the latest needed manpower in the future. Additional course offerings are needed to prioritize by the different colleges and universities on the locality to cater students enrolled in STEM and ABM.

Other factors such as personality test, multiple intelligence, emotional quotients, aptitude test, and the likes, should be administered to students so that they could able to harness their full potentials once they will be in college and universities. Parents' consultation is highly recommended so that parents will be informed the possible cost and economics of college education of their children, this is also the avenue in promoting the government supports to higher education thru scholarship, grants and subsidy.

Orientation to all students enrolling General Academic Strand (GAS) must be conducted, explaining the possible courses they will take on their higher education; thus career counselling is vital.

Enriching the immersion program in the Senior High School is recommended so that students will love and value their career in the future. Varied companies, other immersion venues and practical experiences on immersion must be instituted by the schools, so that students will gain sight and experience in their future work.

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