

## **An Inquiry on School Preferences of Senior High School Students and Their Relationship to Career Choices**

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### **Abstract**

Numerous high school graduates have expressed uncertainty about what they want to do when they go to college, and others, if they do know, have made irrational decisions about their future careers. The purpose of the study is to learn about senior high school students' school selections and how they relate to their future job choices. It was decided to use the descriptive survey method of research for this project. The stratified random sampling method was used to determine how many samples were to be gathered from each region. The Brainard Occupational Preferences Inventory (BOPI) Survey, the questionnaire, and the job choice checklist were all employed in this study as research instruments to gather information. According to the findings, women select jobs that are a little different than their male counterparts. In general, females prefer jobs that are at least partially related to their gender, and the same is true for males. Therefore, while individuals may have an established work choice as revealed by an objective test such as the BOPI, they may choose to pursue a different career path depending on the needs of their current situation or the influence of important others, among other factors. They may also be interested in a certain career but be unable to pursue it as a result of variables such as the financial situation of the family, scholarships, and the cost of tuition and other educational expenses.

Keyword: school preferences, career choices, occupational preferences, senior high school graduates

### **Introduction**

It is a proven reality that many of our high school graduates are unsure of what they want to do when they go to college; some, if they do know, make unrealistic career decisions. As a result, they switch from one course to another, squandering their time, effort, and money in the process. In the event that they continue to take the course, they will either fail or graduate but will be unemployed, which will inevitably result in dissatisfaction and disappointment. With this, the students require assistance in developing plans that are both inventive and feasible. Consequently, if an individual is serious about landing a job after graduation, the need for a certain ability must be taken into consideration. The ability of a person, whether natural or learned, is also quite significant. In order to stay up with change, according to Bennet (2007), who wrote the book *Guidance in Groups*, "individuals must develop skills in discovering, assessing, and applying occupational knowledge in his or her adaptations throughout life." In order for the school, particularly the guidance center, which plays a critical role in aiding an individual in his or her professional decision, to be aware of the courses in demand now and in the future, they must first conduct research into the courses

now available. Another key function of the guidance professional is to assist the client in better understanding oneself or herself, particularly in terms of his or her interests.

Due to the wide range of interests among pupils, the guidance professional is supposed to treat them with the utmost consideration in order to elicit or pull out the desired consequence. Growing up brings with it an increased interest in introspection as well as the necessity of making decisions and creating plans for one's future. When it comes to assisting young ones in getting a solid start on a direct approach to self-appraisal of assets, liabilities, and relevant interests, to the study of occupational life, and to the creation of realistic educational and vocational plans, now is the time to do so. Consequently, there is a genuine need to aid high school students, particularly those who are graduating, in navigating the various vocations available in the labor market today. These exercises may help kids visualize themselves in various work environments in the future. It is one method of bringing their attention to the changing patterns that exist in the world of work. Even Nevertheless, the options of career are causing a great deal of consternation among young people, particularly when it comes to employment preferences. According to this belief, it is vital to make decisions about one's individual career, followed by a course of action that will allow one's career to become successful reality. DepED Secretary Lapus also supports this, stating that the "NCAE was established to assess the aptitudes of fourth-year high school students and to aid them in choosing an acceptable career route following graduation." It is only utilized for the purpose of making recommendations in the context of career counselling.

Today, choosing a career is still a critical life decision that has a negative impact on youth, leaving them confused and undecided about their future. A decision should be made before starting a certain career, regardless of whether or not one likes it at the time of the decision. Even the most promising aim can be tarnished by making the incorrect choice. An informed and knowledge-based decision, on the other hand, can instill confidence, which can then be followed by the exact course of action necessary to achieve one's desired professional outcome. It is impossible to overstate the significance of selecting a career path to follow. If you are a blossoming professional or skilled worker, this is an enormous decision that can either make or break you. It is possible that this is the reason why a large number of mismatches in the workplace lead to the ever-increasing number of people who are out of work.

This framework served as the foundation for the study's conceptualization. The purpose of the study was to determine which jobs students preferred as well as the reasons that influenced their decision to pursue a particular career path.

### **Statement of the Problem**

1. What is the respondent's school/university preference after graduation?
2. Is there a significant difference on the respondent's career preferences when grouped according to profile variables?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the respondent's measured and expressed career preferences?

## Methods and Design

The descriptive survey method of research was used in this investigation. The descriptive survey method, according to Pimentel (2000) of research involves an element of analysis and interpretation of the meaning or significance of what is to be described. The method was appropriate since the study aimed to determine the measured and expressed career preferences and the factors influencing their career preferences. The respondents of the study were the Senior High School Students of the University of St. Louis Tuguegarao for the School Year 2011-2012. The frequency of the respondents taken per section is shown in table 1. The number of respondents was determined through the Slovincs' Formula. The stratified random sampling was employed to determine the sample to be taken per section. The research instruments used in the study were the Brainard Occupational Preferences Inventory (BOPI) Survey, the questionnaire, and the career choice checklist. The Brainard Occupational Preferences Inventory (BOPI). This was used to determine the measured career preferences of the students. This tool yields scores in six broad occupational fields identified as commercial, mechanical, professional, esthetic, scientific, agricultural and personal service. Each field contains twenty questions which are item by indicating whether he/she Strongly Dislikes the activity (SD), Dislikes (D), Neutral about it (N), Like it (L), or Strongly Likes it (SL). These answers are rated 1,2,3,4 and 5, respectively. Answers are indicated on a separate sheet by putting a cross mark on one of the five given options per item for which the respondents were asked to do. The responses were computed based from the Brainard interpretation scheme. Below is the table of an occupation in different fields of interest based on the BOPI Manual. The Survey Questionnaire. This was used to obtain the profile of the respondents such as age, gender, highest educational attainment of the parents, occupation of the parents, parent's monthly income, and number of siblings. Further, the tool was used to obtain information on the influential factors affecting the respondent's career preferences. The items for the expressed career preferences of the respondents were taken from the course offerings of the different colleges, universities, and vocational technical schools in the country.

Career Choice Checklist. This was utilized to obtain the expressed career preferences of the respondents. Personal interviews were also conducted to ascertain the consistency of the obtained answers. After the researcher was granted the permission for the conduct of the study, the following activities were done: First, the administration of the Brainard Occupational Preference Inventory (BOPI) was administered. Test results were later interpreted to the respondents as part of their career guidance program. Second, the survey questionnaire and the career choice checklist were administered to the respondents and were collected personally by the researcher. Third, a random interview was conducted by the researcher to establish the consistency and reliability of the response of the respondents. The data that were gathered from the standardized test, survey questionnaire and career preference checklist were categorized, tabulated and was statistically treated through the following tools:

1. Frequency and Percentage. This was used to present the respondent's profile according to age, gender, highest educational attainment of the parents, occupation of the

parents, monthly income of the parents, number of siblings, and the career preferences of the respondents and the factors influencing their career preferences.

2. Weighted Mean. This was used to determine the extent of influence of the affecting course to enroll, school preference and career choice. To interpret the weighted means, the given scale was used.

Scale Range	Descriptive Interpretation
4.20 – 5.0	Very High Extent
3.40 – 4.19	High extent
2.60 – 3.39	Moderate extent
1.80 – 2.59	Low extent
1.00 – 1.79	No extent

## Discussion of Results and Findings

The respondents' school/university preference after graduation

Table 1

Frequency and percentage distribution of the respondent's school/university preference after graduation

School	Frequency	Percentage
Within Region 02		
AMA (Amable Mendoza Aguiluz) Computer College	0	0
Cagayan State University	45	23.20
MCNP/ISAP	22	11.34
St. Paul University Philippines	35	18.04
University of Cagayan Valley	9	5.00
University of Saint Louis	67	35.00
Outside Region 02		
Far Eastern University	2	1.20
Saint Louis University-Baguio	1	1.00
University of Sto. Thomas	5	3.00
University of the Philippines	3	1.58
TOTAL	194	100.00

As shown in the table, most of the respondents preferred to pursue their studies in the University of Saint Louis Tuguegarao having a frequency of 67 or 35% followed by 45 or 23.20% in CSU, and 35 or 18.04% in SPUP. The least preferred school preference is 0% AMA with 0, 2 or 1.20% Far Eastern University, and 3 or 1.58% for University of the Philippines. This shows that the respondents want to pursue their career in their own Alma Mater after graduating from high school.

**Significant difference between the respondent's career preferences when grouped according to profile variables.**

Measured career preference

Table 2

Summary table on the chi-square test; results on the Comparative analysis of the respondents' measured career preferences when grouped according to profile variables

Variables	df	Computed Value	Probability Value	Interpretation
Age	5	2.81	0.728	Not Significant
Gender	5	17.81	0.003*	Significant
Father's educational attainment	25	48.76	0.003*	Significant
Mother's educational attainment	25	18.35	0.827	Not Significant
Father's occupation	25	23.93	0.187	Not Significant
Mother's occupation	25	31.06	0.187	Not Significant
Parent's monthly income	20	10.81	0.951	Not Significant
Number of siblings	10	9.39	0.495	Not Significant

It is revealed in the table that among the variables, gender and father's educational attainment have probability values of 0.003 which is lesser at .05 level of significance. This means that the statement there is no significant difference on the respondent's career preferences (measured) is rejected. There is a significant difference in the measured career preferences of the respondents when grouped as to gender and the idea of Persell (2002) that at an early age, males and females are oriented somewhat differently. Girls tend to prefer careers that are somewhat differently. Girls tend to prefer careers that are somewhat related to their gender and so with the boys. Similarly, this is supported by the idea of Gottfredson two cognitive competence related to career development: self-concept and perceptions about occupations. During adolescence, students also have achieved an adult-level understanding of the gender type occupation. He also argued that adolescents start to eliminate occupational choices based on sex types.

For father's educational attainment, the finding is supported by Slocum (2002) in his study where he found out that the level of a man's first job is that of the father's job level and that the occupation of the father is a major factor in determining the occupational preference of their children. He also added that father is associated with a higher incidence of career.

Considering the other variables like age, mothers' educational attainment, fathers' occupation, mothers' occupation, parents' monthly income and number of siblings

Since their probability values are higher at .05 level of significance, this means that in these variables, the respondents career preference does not differ.

## 2 Expressed career preferences

Table 3

Summary table on the chi-square test, results on the comparative analysis of the respondent's expressed career preferences when grouped according to profile variables

Variables	df	Computed Value	Probability Value	Interpretation
Age	5	4.179	0.524	Not Significant
Gender	5	15.517	0.008*	Significant
Father's educational attainment	25	60.547	0.000*	Significant
Mother's educational attainment	25	31.123	0.185	Not Significant
Father's occupation	25	15.73	0.925	Not Significant
Mother's occupation	25	26.940	0.359	Not Significant
Parent's monthly income	20	16.554	0.682	Not Significant
Number of siblings	10	5.317	0.869	Not Significant

It can be seen in the table that the variables gender and father's occupational achievement had lower probability values at the .05 level of significance, with 0.008 and 0.000 for the variables gender and father's occupational attainment, respectively. There is statistical significance in all of the other variables with probability values larger than .05 level of significance. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference in the expressed career preference when individuals are grouped according to gender and educational attainment of the father. The findings are supported by a study conducted by Chang (2003) on the career preferences of third and fourth year students, which discovered that males and females differed significantly in their career patterns, but that males and females did not differ significantly in their career choices. She went on to say that girls follow different career paths than males do. Marcia Greenberger (2002) of the National Women's Law Center claimed in a statement published to the press on the thirtieth anniversary of the Title IX prohibition on sex discrimination that boys are still being directed toward traditional 'male' vocations that are more lucrative. Girls are still expected to gravitate into conventional fields such as cosmetology, childcare, and other closely related occupations. Powell and Bloom (1990), who investigated the career choices of high school students, provided additional evidence to support this. Specific vocations chosen by the lads included those in engineering, medicine, and the automobile industry. The girls selected office employment, teaching, and nursing as their professions.

When respondents are divided into groups based on their father's educational attainment, there is a statistically significant difference in their expressed career preferences. This is corroborated by a study conducted by Linostrem (1991), who discovered that the occupation of a father has an impact on his or her influence over their children's educational trajectory.

**Significant relationship between the respondent's measured and expressed career preferences**

Table 4

Summary of the chi-square test results on the relationship between the respondents measured and expressed career preferences

Variables	df	Computed Value	Probability value	Interpretation = 0.05
Measured * expressed	25	24.083	0.515	Not significant

The table demonstrates that the probability value of .515 is larger than the .05 level of significance with a sample size of 25 and that the level of significance is greater than .05. According to the solution, there is no statistically significant association between measured and declared profession preferences.

The result is that, while they may have a definite job preference as determined by an objective test such as the BOPI, they may opt to pursue another track depending on the demands of the moment or the influence of significant others, among other considerations. They may also be interested in a particular profession but be unable to follow it because of factors such as the financial position of the family, scholarships, and the expense of tuition.

Powell and Bloom (1990) conducted a study in which they analyzed the vocational choices of high school students and discovered that the factors influencing their occupational choices were the financial and socio-economic position of their families, rather than their own interests and abilities.

### **Conclusions**

The following conclusions were drawn as a result of the key findings:

1. A person's profession preference is influenced by a range of additional factors, including but not limited to the financial situation of the family, aptitude, and interests.
2. Nowadays, young people are drawn to white collar occupations because they believe that such sectors of work, particularly those involving professional careers, are regarded as noble by the general public, which they believe to be true.
3. Young people's assumptions regarding their future jobs continue to be significantly influenced by gender stereotypes.

## **Recommendations**

As a result of the facts and conclusions presented above, the following recommendations have been made.

1. In order to expand students' comprehension of the different career options available to them before making a serious decision about their future job, the Guidance Program should begin its operations as early as the first-year level.
2. Regular group study sessions and discussions with parents about their involvement in the career-decision-making of their children should be held on a regular basis, as well.
3. Activities for students to become aware of their interests, abilities, and personal qualities as they relate to job choice should be incorporated by guidance counselors, particularly those in charge of Level I to III students, as part of a comprehensive career advising program.
4. In order for the University of Saint Louis Tuguegarao High School Guidance Center to achieve an organized and functional Guidance Program, the class advisers must be heavily involved in all activities associated with guidance work, such as inviting parents to a brief conference, creating homeroom bulletins, and conducting homeroom visitations, among other activities.
5. Educational excursions and field trips should also be supported by the school administration and made available to junior and senior high school students so that they can get first-hand information and actual observations of working conditions in various enterprises and offices. It would also provide them with the opportunity to interact directly with a number of diverse work contexts.
6. Teachers should include a simulation activity for students in their lesson plans that focuses on the many job opportunities that are accessible to them.
7. Throughout the school campaign, there should be a virtual exhibition of the numerous courses that are accessible for students to choose from.

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