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Career Choice: A Case Study of College Students Shifting Career Paths

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the causes, impacts, and varying perspectives of how two years of education can alter a person's ambitions. A qualitative research design, specifically the case study approach was used in this study. It focused on why the participants enrolled in a college program that was not aligned with their SHS Strand. The responses are subsequently transcribed and themes are identified. Students whose college courses do not correspond to their Senior High School strands have questioned their previous strand selection. This is due to difficulties they encountered as a result of the misalignment. According to the general findings, one of the most important factors to consider when choosing a career is one's interest. It was also evident within the data presented that the finances and practicality of the predetermined college courses that the students chose were weighed into their decision-making. It also shows that the majority of the participants agreed that their families have an impact on their career choices. The study also discovered that doing things that are not one's passion in the first place can be difficult, but it can help people challenge their abilities. The study concludes that indeed, pre-coaching strategies and guidance provided by schools play a large factor in students' awareness of their strengths and weaknesses. Also, setting goals may make the desired changes more difficult; however, the participants rediscovered their inclination and satisfaction with what they have pursued now, which motivated them to continue.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Changes taking place in parts of the world today are affecting everyday life around the world. COVID-19 has changed people's life goals and professional ambitions (Carey et al., 2023 ; Wang et al., 2022). The virus has caused significant demographic and economic damage to large conditions (Ozili, 2021). Young people wonder what profession they will undertake and will try to find a professional identity.

However, because the rapid changes and current technological developments are affecting an individual's perception of career and occupation, these factors can cause difficulties in making decisions about their career (Kirdök & Harman, 2018). [1] As people continue to work, they focus on money, and the younger generation has been strongly affected by the current crisis since theirs. Long-term goals are formed based on their life goals (Borisova & Vasilieva, 2020). [2] The implementation of the K-12 system began in the academic year 2012-2013 wherein it covers 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 allow for mastery of concepts and skills, the development of lifelong learners, and the preparation of graduates for tertiary education, middle-level skill development, employment, and entrepreneurship (Acosta & Acosta, 2017). [3] Students encounter multiple problems with the implementation of K-12, but two problems are most commonly addressed which are lack of preparation and excessive academic load for the students. [4] Education review from the perspective of a student is an important and healthy way to improve curriculum and teaching strategies, as well as to provide all students equal treatment. Career counselling refers to a set of procedures that help people make well-informed decisions and transitions in their educational, occupational, and personal lives (Watts & Kidd, 2000). Difficulty in making professional decisions can be influenced by the abilities of individuals to solve problems; thus, this research aims to know the perspectives of Filipino College Students on the K-12 system of the Philippines and how their corresponding Senior High School strand affected their college course.

2. METHOD

The research design used in this study is qualitative, specifically the case study approach. This research is a descriptive case study design that focuses to answer the strand choice of the respondents during their SHS, course enrolment, academic performance, and reasons why the respondents' courses are not aligned with their SHS strand. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the study was conducted online. The participants are interviewed according to their day and time availability via Google Meet. By using coding, researchers were able to collect information from the data provided by the participants. Thus, thematic analysis is used as it is a method of analysing qualitative data by looking for, understanding, and presenting patterns that repeat in a series of data.

2.1. Participants of the Study

The research study sought to unveil why college students chose a different career that is not inclined to their Senior High School strand. Researchers personally selected six (6) college students residing within Sultan Kudarat, who are enrolled in universities within and outside the province. Specifically, the participants should meet the following criteria: (a) a college student residing within Sultan Kudarat and (b) in a course that is not included in the program provided by their Senior High School strand.

The number of participants is determined by the richness of the data, more than 15 cases can make analysis difficult and "unwieldy." As a result, the researchers decided to use six (6) participants to ensure enough information for this study, make it more reliable, and divide

the students according to the given academic strands evenly. Those six were sufficient as they could meet the aforementioned criteria while considering the research questions.

2.2. Research Instrument

The researchers had a list of criteria to follow to obtain the necessary data. Instruments are built by researchers and consist of two (2) parts. The first section asked for the participant's basic information to create a profile for discussion and recognize the participant's identity. The second part employed methods along with data mining using a structured interview guide (Quiño, 2020) and questions formulated by the researchers. In this way, the instrument is authorized to obtain valid responses from the students in describing the situations or issues about career shifting and knowledge preparation for college of the SHS Student.

2.3. Data Gathering Procedure

We interviewed by following the guide questions that contained information that unveiled the reasons and factors why students chose a career that was not suitable for their SHS strand.

The participants for the interview were identified using the inclusion criteria after gaining permission. The study was conducted via Google Meet or Zoom. The researchers then asked the participants to allow them to conduct a google meet record for the validation of the responses and to get the exact idea of what they had done in the interview. After the collection of data, the record was played, analysed, classified, and organized using necessary measures to determine the result.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Profession Rationalization

Though people have initial plans before entering Senior High School, yet can't deny that as the years pass by, interests change and that there are many factors affecting our choice. People are sometimes forced into something that they aren't sure what it offers in the future because unfortunately, they have to choose practicality for the sake of finding something that suits and will give the same amount of relief to their family. Also, parents influence the level of education and training of their children and the knowledge of their works and various professions. The beliefs and attitudes they must have to work. And the motivation for them to succeed. Most of this is unknowingly learned-children and teenagers pick up the attitudes of their parents and their expectations as they grow up. Impacts include parental expectations of the child's education and career.

3.2. Perturbed Ambition

In the study by Keller (2004), it was stated that parents have a significant impact on their children's professional development and decision-making. Parents want their children to be happy and successful in life, and professional choice is one aspect that promotes happiness and success. This is significant because research shows that adolescents who feel competent in making job decisions later in life make more happy choices. However, parents should also consider the side of their children for them to have no room for future conflicts and growing problems. Sometimes, others happen to see themselves in professions that they like and sometimes they don't, and it is completely valid. People experience many growing situations and taste change. In addition, general answers revealed that previous schools did not provide

pre-teaching strategies or additional guides to facilitate career choices. It was only a matter of time and they had to decide for themselves.

3.3. Niche Analysis

Children tend to have big dreams when they are told they can grow as they like. People who do not follow their childhood dreams and plans can feel twice as nervous as those who are encouraged to have big dreams. In middle age, people often have to fight career-oriented reality. At this point, the childhood fantasy of becoming a princess or president may have ended long ago. But you probably want success, recognition, or promotion in your current efforts. And while those desires may seem more achievable than teenage dreams, they may not, for some reason. The motivation and joy of living for many are nourished by their passion. One of the most important factors in choosing a career is your interests. When people are passionate about something, they always do their best and strive to learn more. As a result, self-confidence increases when choosing a subject or discipline that they like, as they do not complain about studying or working with it. According to [Ainley et al. \(2002\)](#), interests were associated with human response, persistence, and learning. Interest is said to consist of both emotional and cognitive elements that are part of people's participation in activities. The role is important to your education as well as an important factor in choosing a career.

3.4. Communal Dissension

The impact and motivation of students in their career choices. As a result, their career orientation is related to their passionate perspective when choosing a research course, as well as academic achievement or previous educational achievements by engaging in what they want to achieve practically. maybe. Many dreams were ignored because of financial instability. Sufficient money can stimulate a passion for learning, but wisdom is also an important part of an individual's proper development and is unaffected by money. Therefore, for integrated growth, both necessary and appropriate conditions must be met. Your financial plan is constrained by the income from your work, and your financial plan determines how much you need to reach your goals. And it's not just about the person who is currently learning, but about the current situation of the family. As a result, socio-economic variables play an important role in influencing student career choices.

Students with low socio-economic backgrounds chose professions with poor career prospects and little training due to budget constraints. Thus, there are many important factors to consider before deciding on a career path. Another construct item that has received a lot of attention in studies is the financial constraints that people encounter when making career decisions. The number of information people uses and the financial resources they have at their disposal have a substantial impact on how they choose a profession.

3.5. Conflicting Specialties

People set goals for a variety of reasons, which can have a significant impact on whether or not they reach their goals. Setting goals can make it difficult to make the necessary changes. Many of us score after the "unfortunate" incident. These include family quarrels, peer pressure, and financial difficulties. Your goal should prepare you for the life you want to live in the future. There is no point in striving for a goal that can lead to disappointment. When things are going well, you are optimistic, but when things get difficult, you lack the energy to keep going. Or you may find that even if you reach your goal, the shift isn't as important as you'd expect.

3.6. Recalling Judgment

Whenever you reflect on past events, you realize everything you've done in the past, whether intentionally or unintentionally, has influenced how your life is now. It's easy to celebrate the wonderful things from the past, but many people find it difficult to accept responsibility for things that didn't go as planned. It is simple to point the finger at others for what went wrong. But we should care about how many times have people acknowledged their roles. Also, they can affect the future when they hold themselves accountable. People should accept responsibility for the past and make peace with what was.

College courses not only provide the professional skills of the course you are aiming for, but also the extent to which you can apply for the career of choice. Currently, government employers in particular still prefer college graduates when looking for applicants. But if that's the plan, they'll be able to take college courses that aren't related to their track, so SHS pressure will be less. However, realistically speaking, it would be a hassle since you have to undergo "bridging" in which you will have a so-called summer class that will help you cope with the major subjects.

3.7. Gratifying Progress

Passion gives people the determination to work hard and also makes it fun to invest in. It not only motivates us to do better every day, but it also drives people to the place where they truly belong, to a place that suits them best. No matter what you do in life, passion is the key to success and happiness, as the people you work with are also encouraged by their passion to live and achieve more. There are people in the world who have all the money, but they feel unfulfilled. People can make a list of goals for themselves, and achieve them, but still find themselves dissatisfied. Someone feels this way because they haven't found and pursued a true passion in life. Unfortunately, many are reluctant to follow their passions because they are told that they will never succeed or be financially stable. Additionally, Students whose college courses are not aligned with their Senior High School strands questioned their previous strand selection. This is due to the realization and challenges they faced as a result of the misalignment. Other factors such as finances also come into play when students decide upon what career they are planning to take.

4. CONCLUSION

Most schools do not provide students with pre-coaching strategies and guides, making it difficult for students to choose careers because they are unaware of their strengths and weaknesses. The data presented also showed that the finances and practicality of the predetermined college courses that the students chose were factors in their decision-making. Another finding was that the majority of participants agreed that their families influenced their career choices. Finally, setting goals may make it more difficult to make the desired changes; however, the participants rediscovered their strengths and satisfaction, which motivated them to continue.

5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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