



Factors Affecting the Career Choices of Graduating Public Secondary Students in Ligao City Division, Ligao City, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to determine the career choices of graduating public secondary students in Ligao City Division, Ligao City, Philippines, and the factors affecting their career choices. This study identified respondents with focused variables on career choices and the factors affecting career choices. The study expanded career choices in different aspects. This study utilized a questionnaire checklist that facilitated the data-gathering through sampling. The findings revealed that out of 976 secondary students, they interested in Tourism and Culinary Arts(18%), Education and Business (17%), Engineering (16%), Science and Technology and in Medical and Health Care (9%), Arts and Design (6%), and Communication and Information Services and Technical Courses (4%). The career choices of the graduating secondary students are influenced by a family (90%), personal interest (77%), and career opportunities(57%), higher education (51%), and the school where they are presently enrolled (49%). The study concludes that the graduating secondary students are interested in the following career choices in descending order: Tourism and Culinary Arts, Education, Business, Engineering, Science and Technology, Medical and Health Care, Arts and Design, Communication and Information Services, and Technical Courses. Results of this study may serve individuals who are involved in teaching or managing secondary schools in terms of strengthening the curriculum and instructions to provide career needs of graduates.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Career choice is very essential especially when one has finished his secondary education. Making the right choice will lead a person to become a useful and productive individual whom our society needs especially in the competitive world we are living in today. Self-assessment is important to arrive at the best choice and eventually earn a career that is just fit for a person's personality and interests (Betz & Hackett, 1986).

According to Villamor (2011), Ligao City has adequate school sites scattered all over the area. There are public elementary schools augmented by several private elementary institutions. There are also public and private secondary schools. A community college subsidized by the Local Government Unit caters not only to students in the city but to the nearby municipalities as well. Private colleges can also be found within the población. There is no question then as to why the City is regarded as the City of Dreams. Through scholarships from the government, the dreams of many graduates can come true. More so the need to guide them is of primary concern of parents and teachers. This study was therefore conceptualized to identify the career choices of graduating public secondary students in the Ligao City Division and the factors affecting their career choices.

The students' interest is more intrinsic than the demographic conditions. Not one of the factors specified in the variables used significantly influences the occupational interest of the students tested. This shows that occupational interest is something personal and inherent in the students (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017).

Minor *et al.* (2009) conducted a study on the career choice patterns among Canadian medical students because there was a vast decrease in the number of students pursuing General Surgery (GS) in Canada. The reasons for this are not yet established. That is why through this study, a survey was distributed to medical students at Queen's University and the University of Manitoba, and to all Canadian GS program directors to gather information for the causes of the trend and identify possible solutions. It was found out that students pursuing GS were more likely to feel that GS for their lifestyle needs and to have met positive role models. The hardship of the training and practice, length of training, need for prestige, income, and enjoyment of procedures have nothing to do with their choice. The conclusion states that attention to student-raised concerns regarding GS programs can be used to address the current decline in applications to general surgery.

Tang (2009) investigated the applicability of Holland's career development theory in cross-cultural settings by examining the vocational interests of Chinese college students and the relationship between those interests and their career choices. The results supported Holland's typology for male students and equivalent distance among six types for female students. Personal interests, social needs, and job market are identified as the top reasons for making a career choice. Practical outcome-oriented career implementation skills are more desired than self-exploration for vocational guidance.

The study of Glynn and Kerin (2010) focused on the factors influencing medical students and junior doctors in choosing a career in surgery. They believed that identification of those factors which influence career choice will help avoid a shortfall in surgical recruitment. They aimed to determine the views of medical students and junior doctors regarding influences on their career choices so that potential discouragement to a career in surgery could be identified. Factors, which most influenced their career choice were future employment, career opportunities, and intellectual challenge. Those aspiring for a career in surgery gave more importance to prestige, while an emphasis on lifestyle during training was associated with those choosing an alternative to surgery.

Vocational Guidance is the assistance given to the individual to choose, prepare, enter and progress in an occupation (Herr, 2013). A wise choice depends on the student's progress. It is therefore important that students learn something about occupations while discovering their aptitude and individuality to be able to resolve on the best one. This act is considered as vocational exploration.

After analyzing the contents included in the related studies, it was observed that career-related factors have been the focus of the studies (Ogowego, 2010). Different variables have been cited and considered in the conduct of the studies mentioned. However, not one among them has aimed its study regarding factors affecting the career choices of graduating public secondary students in Ligao City Division, Philippines.

The purpose of the study was to determine the career choices of graduating public secondary students in Ligao City Division, Ligao City, Philippines, and the factors affecting their career choices. The descriptive survey method utilizing a questionnaire checklist facilitated the data gathering while the statistical tools used were percentage, weighted mean, and Chi-square test. The novelties of the studies are the respondents who are identified as the graduating public secondary students in Ligao City Division; the variables which are focused on career choices, such as Engineering, Education, Business, Tourism and Culinary Arts, Arts and Design, Science and Technology, Medical and Health Care, Communication and Information Services, and Technical Courses; and the factors affecting career choices along with family, personal interest, career opportunities, the school where presently enrolled, and higher education. Hence, the study is not a duplication of the researches cited but rather expanded career choices in different aspects.

2. METHOD

The descriptive survey method utilizing a questionnaire through sampling was used as the main tool in gathering the primary data needed. This study used the descriptive design in view that it is focused on the present condition of graduating public secondary students. This is the stage where most of the graduating students are at the point of deliberating as to the career that they like to take. However, some factors may affect their choices. Thus, the study would like to determine the factors that affect their career choices.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the career choices of graduating public secondary students in Ligao City Division, Philippines. The data revealed that out of 976 graduating students, 16% of the respondents wanted to take Engineering, 17% both for Education and Business while 18% were thinking to take up Tourism and Culinary Arts. Although it is popular, it could be noted that not too many are planning to take Engineering courses. This is possible considering that Engineering courses are not offered in Higher Education institutions in Ligao City. It would be too expensive for the parents to send their children to other cities that offer Engineering courses.

Respondents who chose Education as a career most probably want to maintain interrelationships between people and their physical and social environment while those who chose Business might be aspiring to be the boss and run their own business so as not to rely on employers (Minor *et al.*, 2003). The influx of high school graduates enrolling in Tourism and Culinary Arts could be seen in the colleges and universities offering these courses. This could have attracted the graduating high school students. In most cases, graduates are hired abroad which could entice the choice of career of graduating students.

Respondents aiming for Arts and Design could be good or with excellent taste in arts especially in drawing, sketching, and painting. With the viral influence of the internet, it would be easy for a graduate of Arts and Design to advertise his ideas by merely posting them on a website. For just an hour, millions may have already viewed artwork and will eventually gain possible clients or customers in a particular project (Sangsawang, 2020).

It could be noted that there are also respondents eyeing a career in Science and Technology. This is possible with the advancement of technology along this line. Medical and Health Care is also a preferred choice despite the cost of taking the courses related to this career (Querido et al., 2018).

Due to the popularity of mass media, students tend to dream of landing a job after graduating from a course in line with Communication and Information Service. Students who are good at writing, research, or public speaking can take this career path. Personalities who made it to the national or international level in broadcasting are emulated and adored by the students who inspired them to take this career (Sharif et al., 2019).

Technical courses which are also regarded as vocational courses could have been chosen by the respondents because of the short period being spent on any of the courses (Tang, 2009). Students who may take this career path can be ensured of landing a job after graduation with good compensation because of the expertise that they may acquire during their training and workshops.

Table 2 shows the different factors affecting the career choices of graduating public secondary students in the Ligao City Division. Respondents have chosen as many factors that they have identified which affected their career choices.

- (i) **Along with Family.** Ninety percent considered the family as a factor that affects their career choices. Specifically, every member of the Filipino family, in particular, is tied to an important relationship with each other. Family is an integral part of a community. Some system theorists analyzed the family as a set of roles from a socio-cultural perspective. Family factors that affect career choices include financial capability, parental influence, family values, education of parents, and influence of siblings.
- (ii) **Along with Personal Interest.** Personal interest on the chosen career is an important factor in the adolescent’s development to adulthood. This factor includes intelligence, ambition, skills, personality, and self-esteem that influenced the 77% of the respondents’ career choices. Graduating students believe that their personal interest on a certain career can be attained because they can make adjustment to carry out solution to any problem that may hinder their decisions.

Table 1. Career choices of graduating public secondary students in Ligao City Division, Philippines.

Career Choices	Number = 976	
	Frequency	Percent
1. Engineering	155	16
2. Education	164	17
3. Business	163	17
4. Tourism and Culinary Arts	176	18
5. Arts and Design	59	6
6. Science and Technology	96	9
7. Medical and Health Care	90	9
8. Communication and Information Services	37	4
9. Technical Courses	36	4

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