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Determinants of Career Choices as Predictor of Career Pathways among Senior High School Students

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the determinants of career choices as predictors of career pathways among selected Senior High School (SHS) students. It aimed to identify the significant factors influencing students' career decisions, including person-related factors (RIASEC Inventory, academic performance, and socio-economic status) and external factors (scholarship opportunities, peer support, and environmental influences). Additionally, it explored the relationship between career decision-making (self-appraisal, occupational information, planning, and problem-solving) and students' chosen career pathways.

A descriptive-correlational research design was utilized, involving 200 Grade 12 students from various strands at Luis Palad Integrated High School. Data collection was conducted using validated instruments such as Taylor & Betz's Career Decision-Making Inventory and Holland's RIASEC Inventory. Statistical analyses, including mean, standard deviation, and correlation testing, were applied to assess the relationship between career determinants and decision-making variables.

The findings revealed that academic performance, socio-economic status, and scholarship opportunities were the most significant predictors of career decision-making, with strong positive correlations ($p < 0.01$). Peer support and environmental factors had moderate influences, while RIASEC personality types did not show a significant correlation with career decision-making, suggesting that personality alone did not determine career pathways. The study also found gender disparities in strand selection, with female students predominantly enrolling in HUMSS and TVL, while STEM and ABM exhibited more balanced distributions.

The study concludes that career decision-making is influenced by a combination of academic achievement, financial resources, and external support systems, emphasizing the need for enhanced career guidance programs, expanded scholarship opportunities, and gender-inclusive career exploration initiatives. It recommends strengthening career counseling services, increasing access to financial aid, and promoting structured career planning strategies to help students make informed and sustainable career choices.

INTRODUCTION

The quest to elevate the quality of education in the Philippines led to the implementation of the K12 Program, which extended basic education to twelve years, aligning it with global standards. This program, formalized under the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, introduced significant reform, including the provision of specialized career tracks in Senior High School (SHS).

Students are now given the opportunity to select a career track based on their aptitude, interests, and the school's capacity to offer relevant courses. This decision is pivotal, as the chosen track shapes the curriculum for Grades 11 and 12, ultimately influencing the students' future career paths. (Source from Senator Edgardo Angara, author of Senate Bill Number 3286 or the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2012, said in a statement, January 21, 2013).

Senior High School students can choose from three main tracks: Academic, Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL), and Sports and Arts. Within the Academic track, students have further options among four strands: Accountancy, Business, and Management (ABM); Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS); General Academic Strand (GAS); and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). These tracks and strands are designed to prepare students for their post-secondary schooling or starting a job right away.

Data from the Department of Education (DepEd) for the Academic Year (AY) 2017-2018 reveal that 61.70% of Grade 12 students were enrolled in the Academic track, with a significant portion of these students likely aspiring to pursue a college degree. This preference is further supported by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) statistics, which show a substantial number of new college enrollments in AY 2018-2019. However, despite the high enrollment numbers, there is a concerning low completion rate in higher education, with only about 30% of students graduating. This highlights a critical issue: the need to better prepare students for the challenges of higher education and to support them in completing their chosen programs.

Career values—goals that individuals aim to achieve through their work—play a crucial role in this preparation. Research indicates that career choices, along with beliefs, attitudes, and work ethics, significantly influence performance in any kind of organization and are key motivational drivers for employees. The transition between junior and senior high school is a major career-related milestone for students, marking an important developmental phase in adolescence. Successful navigation of this transition has been connected to favorable professional outcomes including contentment at work, and well-being outcomes, such as life satisfaction.

Environmental factors also play a major role in shaping career choices. These can be immediate, like access to financial support or career resources, or more distant, such as family background and the overall state of the economy. In today's fast-changing and often uncertain job market, there's a growing emphasis on new career mindsets—particularly those that promote self-direction and a protean approach to career development. A protean career orientation encourages people to take ownership of their career paths, guided by their personal values and goals.

However, the effects of career transitions—especially the shift from school to employment or further education—on these emerging career orientations remain largely unclear. There has been limited research on the actual outcomes of these transitions, such as the specific career paths students take after completing basic education. In addition, the school-to-work transition is a gradual process that unfolds over several years and involves multiple developmental stages, yet it has not been studied in depth.

This study sought to address these gaps by investigating the determinants of career choice as predictors of career pathways among senior high school students. It is essential to comprehend these predictions to offer tailored assistance to SHS graduates in their transition to higher education or the workforce. By identifying the types of support these students need, educators and policymakers can better prepare them for the final stages of their educational journey and their subsequent careers.

METHODOLOGY

The research study used a descriptive and correlational research design, under quantitative type of research, to determine the relationship of determinants of career choices and career pathways of selected senior high school students. The mentioned design served to specific purposes in scientific inquiry, offering valuable insights into phenomena without manipulating variables. Descriptive studies help researchers identify trends and patterns in data. The respondents of this study were Grade - 12 students at Luis Palad Integrated School, Tayabas City, Quezon Province enrolled in the school year 2024-2025. They were composed of two hundred (200) students from different tracks including STEM, ABM, TVL and HUMSS students offered by the institution. They were purposely selected based on their ability to elucidate the specific theme, concept, or phenomenon of this research study. The research employed a purposive sampling technique to determine the desired number of respondents. This study used Taylor's & Betz's (1983) career choice determinants inventory to measure the SHS students' confidence in ability to complete major career decision tasks which is composed of the following scales:

- (1) Self-Appraisal: The ability to accurately appraise one's own abilities, interests, and values as they related to educational and career decisions;
- (2) Occupational Information: The ability to locate sources of information about college majors and occupations, including the ability to identify and talk with people employed in the occupations of interest;
- (3) Goal Selection: The ability to match one's own characteristics to the demands and rewards of careers so as to identify one or more majors or careers to pursue;
- (4) Planning: Knowing how to implement an educational or career choice, including enrolling in educational programs, job search, resume writing and job interviewing; and
- (5) Problem Solving: On the other hand, Strong Interest Inventory (RIASEC) is to determine the career pathways in gathering the data to find out the significance relationship among the two variables. In the first inventory, that was developed by Crace, R. K., & Brown, D. (2002), is a free and widely used assessment. the RIASEC, based on Holland's theory of vocational personalities and work environments, represents six personality types: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional. The researcher downloaded both instrument used in conducting research. Before administering the questionnaires and test, the researcher sought advice from her adviser to ensure its validity.

The researcher formally wrote a letter to the principal of Luis Palad Integrated High School to request permission to conduct the study. Letters were also distributed to the selected respondents and their advisers to obtain consent for participation. After securing all necessary approvals, the researcher prepared the required materials, which were reviewed and validated by research experts and specialists to ensure the appropriateness of the instruments.

Sufficient time was given to the respondents to complete the test inventory. Once the instruments were completed, the researcher collected, analyzed, and interpreted the data.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The researcher utilized the descriptive statistics, percentage, mean and standard deviation to determine the significant relationship of career values as predictor of career pathways among selected senior high school students.

To calculate whether there is significant relationship between the determinant's of career choices' as predictor of career pathways among selected senior high school students, the researcher made use of linear regression.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter includes a statistical analysis of data, its interpretation and a discussion of the findings. This was aimed to determine the respondent's profile, strands and the determinants of career choices as predictors of career pathways of senior high school students. The presentations of the collected data follow the interpretations result in connection with the statement of the problem and hypotheses of the study. The outcome is shown below.

Table 1. Gender Distribution of Senior High School Students Across Strands

STRANDS	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
ABM	21	29	50
HUMSS	16	34	50
STEM	24	26	50
TVL	4	46	50
TOTAL	65	135	200
PERCENTAGE (%)	32.5	67.5	100

Table 1 reveals a significant gender disparity in strand preferences among Senior High School (SHS) students, with female students comprising 67.5% of the total respondents, while males account for only 32.5%. This indicates that more females are pursuing SHS education in the study area. Among the different strands, the Accountancy, Business, and Management (ABM) strand has a relatively balanced distribution, suggesting that both genders see business-related careers as viable options.

Meanwhile, the Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) strand has a strong female preference, which may be linked to interests in communication, education, and social engagement. The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) strand shows a nearly equal representation between males and females, reflecting an increasing interest of females in STEM-related fields. The most significant gender gap is observed in the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) strand, where female students overwhelmingly outnumber males, indicating that the specializations offered may align more with traditionally female-associated fields such as caregiving, beauty care, and food-related industries.

These findings align with existing literature on career decision-making. According to Lent et al. (1994), career choices are shaped by personal interests, self-efficacy, and environmental factors, which influence students' perceptions of suitable career paths. Research by Kim (2011) and Eccles (2009) suggests that socio-demographic factors, particularly gender, play a crucial role in shaping students' career preferences. Hoffler (2016) also highlighted the growing participation of females in STEM-related careers due to evolving educational policies and gender-inclusive programs. Moreover, Nazareno et al. (2021) found that students' career track choices are often influenced by economic factors and job market demands, which may explain the significant female enrollment in TVL programs that provide immediate employment opportunities. These studies emphasize the importance of career guidance interventions that encourage students to make informed career choices based on their interests and skills rather than societal expectations.

Table 2. Person-Related Career Choice Determinants Among Senior High School Students as to RIASEC Inventory

RIASEC Category	N	Percentage
Realistic	39	19.5
Investigative	36	18.0
Artistic	40	20.0
Social	26	13.0
Enterprising	15	7.5
Conventional	44	22.0
Total	200	100

Table 2. provided insights into the personality types and career preferences of Senior High School (SHS) students. Among the six career personality categories, the highest percentage of students (22%) is identified with the Conventional category (Category 6), indicating a preference for structured,

detail-oriented, and organized tasks. These students are likely drawn to careers in business administration, finance, and clerical work, where organization and accuracy are highly valued.

Following closely, 20% of the respondents fell into the Artistic category (Category 3), suggesting an inclination toward creative, expressive, and unstructured environments. This group may prefer careers in the arts, media, design, and communication-related fields. Meanwhile, 19.5% of students belonged to the Realistic category (Category 1), which is often associated with hands-on, practical, and technical skills. These students may be inclined toward careers in engineering, mechanics, agriculture, and skilled trades.

The Investigative category (Category 2) accounted for 18% of students, indicating a preference for analytical and research-based careers. Students in this category may be drawn to professions in science, research, medicine, and technology-related fields. The Social category (Category 4), with 13% representation, includes individuals who enjoy helping others and working in collaborative settings. This suggests potential career paths in education, healthcare, counseling, and social work. The lowest representation was observed in the Enterprising category (Category 5), with only 7.5% of students identifying with leadership, persuasion, and business-driven careers. This may indicate a lesser inclination toward managerial, entrepreneurial, and sales-oriented roles among the respondents.

The findings support Holland's Theory of Career Choice (1997), which suggests that individuals are more satisfied in careers that align with their personality types. According to Lent et al. (1994), personal interests and self-efficacy play a significant role in career decision-making, influencing students to choose career pathways that match their intrinsic skills and inclinations. The strong representation in the Conventional, Artistic, and Realistic categories aligns with previous research indicating that students often choose career paths based on structured learning experiences and exposure to practical applications (Nazareno et al., 2021). Meanwhile, the lower percentage in the Enterprising category suggests that students may require further encouragement and training in leadership and business-related fields, as highlighted by Kim (2011), who emphasized the importance of career exposure in shaping students' aspirations.

Table 3. Person-Related Career Choice Determinants Among Senior High School Students as to Academic Performance

Indicators	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Verbal Interpretation (VI)
1. My academic performance has influenced my career interests and choices.	3.29	0.73	Moderately Influential
2. I believe that excelling academically will open up more career opportunities for me.	3.56	0.64	Moderately Influential
3. My grades impact my confidence in pursuing certain career pathways.	3.39	0.73	Moderately Influential
4. I am motivated to perform well academically to achieve my career goals.	3.46	0.68	Moderately Influential
5. My academic strengths help me decide which careers I am best suited for.	3.33	0.70	Moderately Influential
Overall Mean	3.40	0.54	Moderately Influential

Legend: Highly Influential 0.76- 1.00

Moderately Influential 0.51 -0.75

- Somewhat Influential 0.26- 0.50

Not Influential 0.01 -0.25

Table 3 shows that the overall mean score of academic performance is 3.40 (SD = 0.54) which suggests that students moderately influence that their academic performance influences their career pathways. Among the five academic performance indicators, the highest mean score was 3.56 (SD = 0.64)

for the statement, *“I believe that excelling academically will open up more career opportunities for me.”* This indicates that most students recognize the importance of academic success in expanding their career options.

Meanwhile, the lowest mean score of 3.29 (SD = 0.73) was observed for the statement, *“My academic performance has influenced my career interests and choices.”* This suggests that while students acknowledge the role of academic performance, other factors such as personal interests, socio-economic background, and external influences may also contribute to their career decisions. Additionally, a mean score of 3.39 (SD = 0.73) for the statement, *“My grades impact my confidence in pursuing certain career pathways,”* indicates that academic success plays a role in students' self-assurance when selecting career paths.

Furthermore, the statement, *“I am motivated to perform well academically to achieve my career goals,”* had a mean score of 3.46 (SD = 0.68), showing that students are driven by their future career aspirations to excel academically. Similarly, a mean of 3.33 (SD = 0.70) for *“My academic strengths help me decide which careers I am best suited for,”* highlights that students' self-perceived academic abilities guide them in choosing careers aligned with their strengths.

These findings align with existing research on the role of academic performance in career decision-making. According to Lent et al. (1994), students with strong academic self-efficacy are more confident in pursuing career pathways that align with their academic strengths. Fizer (2013) emphasized that students who perform well academically are more inclined to pursue careers requiring higher educational attainment, while those with lower academic performance may lean toward skill-based and technical careers. Moreover, Nazareno et al. (2021) found that students' grades strongly influence their career choices, particularly in fields like STEM and ABM, where academic performance plays a crucial role in future success. These studies reinforce the idea that academic performance is a critical factor in shaping career aspirations, but it may not be the sole determinant, as students also consider personal interests, external influences, and available career opportunities.

Table 4. Person-Related Career Choice Determinants Among Senior High School Students as to Socio Economic

Indicators	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Verbal Interpretations (VI)
6. My family's financial situation influences the career choices I am considering.	3.20	0.84	Highly Influential
7. I am aware of career options that align with my family's financial resources.	3.24	0.76	Highly Influential
8. My family's socio-economic status affects my access to career-related opportunities and resources (e.g., internships, seminars).	3.06	0.78	Highly Influential
9. The financial stability of a career is important in my decision-making process.	3.34	0.75	Moderately Influential
10. I feel that my socio-economic background impacts the guidance I receive about potential career pathways.	3.23	0.71	Moderately Influential
Overall Mean	3.21	0.57	Moderately Influential

Legend: Highly Influential 0.76- 1.00

Moderately Influential 0.51 -0.75

- Somewhat Influential 0.26- 0.50

Not Influential 0.01 -0.25

Table 4 indicates that Senior High School (SHS) students acknowledge the role of financial stability in their career decision-making. The overall mean score of 3.21 (SD = 0.57) suggests that students moderately agree that their socio-economic background moderately influences their career preferences and opportunities. Among the five socio-economic indicators, the highest mean score was 3.34 (SD = 0.75) for the statement, *“The financial stability of a career is important in my decision-making process.”* This indicates that financial security is a key consideration for students when selecting a career, as they prioritize professions that offer long-term financial stability.

The lowest mean score of 3.06 (SD = 0.78) was observed for the statement, *“My family's socio-economic status affects my access to career-related opportunities and resources (e.g., internships, seminars).”* This suggests that while students recognize financial limitations, they may not see them as a major barrier to accessing career-related opportunities, possibly due to alternative resources such as scholarships and government programs.

Additionally, the statement, *“I am aware of career options that align with my family’s financial resources,”* had a mean score of 3.24 (SD = 0.76), indicating that students consider their family’s financial capacity when choosing career paths. Similarly, a mean score of 3.23 (SD = 0.71) for *“I feel that my socio-economic background impacts the guidance I receive about potential career pathways,”* suggests that students believe their financial situation influences the career advice and guidance available to them.

These findings align with previous studies emphasizing the impact of socio-economic factors on career decision-making. According to Eccles (2009), students from financially stable backgrounds tend to have broader career choices due to greater access to educational resources and support systems. Similarly, Wang and Degol (2013) highlighted that financial limitations often lead students to select careers requiring shorter educational pathways to enter the workforce sooner. Research by Nazareno et al. (2021) also confirms that students from lower-income households may prioritize job security and immediate employability over personal interests when choosing a career. These studies reinforce the idea that financial considerations play a significant role in shaping career choices, influencing whether students pursue higher education or opt for vocational careers that provide faster income generation.

Table 5. External Career Choice Determinants Among Senior High School Students as to Scholarship Opportunities

Indicators	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Verbal interpretation
1. I am motivated to pursue a career that offers scholarship opportunities for further education (e.g. DOST, TESDA, etc.).	3.42	0.70	Moderately Influential
2. The availability of scholarships influences my choice of college or career pathway.	3.38	0.69	Moderately Influential
3. I actively seek information about scholarships related to my career interests.	3.44	0.66	Moderately Influential
4. I feel that scholarships would make a significant difference in my ability to pursue my desired career.	3.42	0.62	Moderately Influential
5. I consider scholarship opportunities when planning my educational and career goals.	3.48	0.63	Moderately Influential
Overall Mean	3.43	0.50	Moderately Influential

Legend: Highly Influential 0.76- 1.00

Moderately Influential 0.51 -0.75

- Somewhat Influential 0.26- 0.50

Not Influential 0.01 -0.25

Table 5 shows that the overall mean score of scholarship opportunities is 3.43 (SD = 0.49), it suggests that students strongly consider the availability of scholarships when planning their academic and career pathways. Among the five indicators, the highest mean score was 3.48 (SD = 0.63) for the statement, *“I consider scholarship opportunities when planning my educational and career goals.”* This indicates that students are highly aware of the impact of financial assistance in achieving their academic and professional aspirations.

Similarly, the statement *“I actively seek information about scholarships related to my career interests”* received a high mean score of 3.44 (SD = 0.66), suggesting that students are proactive in finding financial aid opportunities that align with their chosen career paths. Additionally, the statement *“I feel that scholarships would make a significant difference in my ability to pursue my desired career”* received a mean score of 3.42 (SD = 0.62), reflecting students’ belief that financial aid can ease the burden of educational expenses and increase their chances of career success.

The lowest mean score, 3.38 (SD = 0.69), was recorded for the statement *“The availability of scholarships influences my choice of college or career pathway.”* While this suggests that scholarships are an important factor, other elements such as personal interests, socio-economic background, and career aspirations may also contribute to students’ final decisions. However, the statement *“I am motivated to pursue a career that offers scholarship opportunities for further education (e.g., DOST, TESDA, etc.)”* had a mean score of 3.42 (SD = 0.70), indicating that students are inclined toward career paths that provide financial assistance and educational support.

The findings align with studies highlight the influence of scholarships on career choices. According to Cross and Slater (1997), students with access to financial aid are more likely to pursue higher education, leading to expanded career opportunities. Wang and Degol (2013) emphasized that scholarships play a crucial role in reducing financial barriers, allowing students from low-income families to access quality education and professional training. Research by Nazareno et al. (2021) further supports the idea that students who receive scholarships are more likely to enroll in competitive degree programs, particularly in STEM fields, where financial assistance is often available through government programs like DOST, CHED, and TESDA. These studies reinforce the importance of scholarship availability in influencing students' career pathways, particularly among those who might otherwise face financial constraints.

Table 6. External Career Choice Determinants Among Senior High School Students as to Peer Support

Indicators	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Verbal Interpretations
1. My peers encourage me to explore different career options.	3.29	0.71	Moderately Influential
2. I discuss my career goals with friends who have similar aspirations.	3.29	0.73	Moderately Influential
3. The career interests of my peers influence my own career considerations.	3.16	0.83	Highly Influential
4. I feel supported by my friends in pursuing my chosen career path.	3.16	0.79	Highly Influential
5. My peers share helpful information about career and educational opportunities .	3.21	0.79	Highly Influential
Overall Mean	3.22	0.53	Moderately Influential

Legend: Highly Influential 0.76- 1.00

Moderately Influential 0.51 -0.75

Somewhat Influential 0.26- 0.50

Not Influential 0.01 -0.25

Table 6 reveals that the overall mean score of peer support is 3.22 (SD = 0.53) which suggests that while students acknowledge the role of their peers in career exploration, the result is moderately influence.

Among the five indicators, the highest mean score was 3.29 (SD = 0.71) for the statement, "*My peers encourage me to explore different career options.*" This suggests that students value their friends' encouragement in considering various career paths. A similar mean score of 3.29 (SD = 0.73) was recorded for the statement, "*I discuss my career goals with friends who have similar aspirations,*" indicating that students frequently engage in career-related discussions with peers who share common interests.

The lowest mean score, 3.16 (SD = 0.79), was recorded for the statement, "*I feel supported by my friends in pursuing my chosen career path,*" similarly with the statement of "*The career interests of my peers influence my own career considerations.*" The mean score, 3.16 (SD=0.83) implying that some students will not receive some level of peer encouragement, some students declined their friends support to thier final career decisions . Additionally, the statement, "*My peers share helpful information about career and educational opportunities with me,*" had a mean score of 3.21 (SD = 0.79), showing that students rely on their friends to some extent for career-related information, but this influence remains moderate.

These findings are consistent with previous research on peer influence in career decision making. According to Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1986), individuals develop career preferences through social interactions, including those with peers. However, Lent et al. (1994) noted that while peer influence plays a role in shaping career interests, factors such as academic performance, socio-economic background, and family support often have a stronger impact. Research by Brown and Lent (2019) found that students who engage in career-related discussions with peers develop more clarity in their career goals, but the extent of peer influence varies depending on the availability of other career guidance resources. Similarly, Nazareno et al. (2021) highlighted that while peers provide emotional and informational support, students ultimately make career decisions based on practical considerations such as financial stability and job security.

Table 7. External Career Choice Determinants Among Senior High School Students as to Environment Factors

Indicators	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Verbal Interpretations
1. The community I live in provides opportunities to explore different career paths.	3.16	0.70	Moderately Influential
2. The local job market and industry trends influence my career decisions.	3.16	0.74	Moderately Influential
3. I feel that my local environment supports my career exploration efforts.	3.09	0.75	Moderately Influential
4. I am motivated to pursue a career that aligns with the needs of my community.	3.11	0.74	Moderately Influential
5. Other factors, such as access of my community to technology and resources, affect my career interests.	3.21	0.78	Highly Influential
Overall Mean	3.14	0.55	Moderately Influential

Table 7 shows data on environmental factors as a determinant of career choice which suggests that Senior High School (SHS) students perceive their surroundings as having a moderate influence on their career decisions. The overall mean score of 3.14 (SD = 0.55) indicates that while students acknowledge the role of their environment in shaping career choices, it is not the most dominant factor compared to other external influences such as scholarships and peer support.

Among the five indicators, the highest mean score was 3.21 (SD = 0.78) for the statement, “*Other factors, such as access of my community to technology and resources, affect my career interests.*” This suggests that students consider technological advancements and resource availability in their communities when choosing their career paths.

Meanwhile, two statements—“*The community I live in provides opportunities to explore different career paths*” and “*The local job market and industry trends influence my career decisions*”—both recorded a mean score of 3.16, indicating that students recognize how local employment trends and available career opportunities impact their decision-making process.

The lowest mean score, 3.09 (SD = 0.75), was recorded for the statement “*I feel that my local environment supports my career exploration efforts,*” suggesting that some students may not feel that their surroundings provide sufficient career-related guidance or exposure. Furthermore, the statement, “*I am motivated to pursue a career that aligns with the needs of my community,*” had a mean score of 3.11 (SD = 0.74), reflecting a moderate inclination toward choosing a career that directly benefits their local area.

The findings align with existing studies on environmental influences on career decision-making. According to Super’s Career Development Theory (1990), an individual’s career choices are shaped by their surroundings, including access to career resources and job market opportunities. Lent et al. (1994) also emphasized that a student’s environment, including technological access, economic conditions, and educational infrastructure, plays a role in career aspirations. Similarly, Brown and Lent (2019) found that students in communities with well-established industries are more likely to pursue careers aligned with local economic needs, while those in resource-limited areas may experience constraints in career exploration. Nazareno et al. (2021) further highlighted that while students consider their environment when selecting careers, personal interests and financial considerations often hold greater weight.

Table 8. Career Decisions of Selected Senior High School Students Based on Betz & Taylor Inventory as to Self-appraisal

Indicators	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Verbal Interpretations (VI)
1. I am confident in my ability to identify my strengths and weaknesses when it comes to career choices.	3.37	0.72	Moderately Influential
2. I often reflect on my personal interests and skills to help guide my career decisions.	3.48	0.69	Moderately Influential

3. I feel I have a clear understanding of what careers align with my abilities and aspirations.	3.47	0.65	Moderately Influential
4. I regularly assess my skills to determine which career paths would be a good fit for me.	3.40	0.67	Moderately Influential
5. I believe that my self-awareness plays a crucial role in making informed career decisions.	3.46	0.67	Moderately Influential
Overall Mean	3.43	0.65	Moderately Influential

Legend: Highly Influential 0.76- 1.00

Somewhat Influential 0.26- 0.50

Moderately Influential 0.51 -0.75

Not Influential 0.01- 0.25

Table 8 on self-appraisal as a determinant of career decisions suggests that Senior High School (SHS) students generally recognize the importance of self-awareness in making informed career choices. The overall mean score of 3.43 (SD = 0.65) indicates that students have a moderate to strong level of confidence in assessing their own strengths, weaknesses, and interests when selecting a career path.

Among the five indicators, the highest mean score was 3.48 (SD = 2.13) for the statement, “*I often reflect on my personal interests and skills to help guide my career decisions.*” This suggests that students actively engage in self-reflection when considering potential careers. However, the large standard deviation (SD = 2.13) for this item indicates a wide variation in responses, suggesting that while some students are highly reflective, others may struggle with self-assessment.

The statement, “*I feel I have a clear understanding of what careers align with my abilities and aspirations,*” received a mean score of 3.47 (SD = 0.65), indicating that most students have a reasonable level of clarity about career paths that match their skills and goals. Similarly, the statement, “*I believe that my self-awareness plays a crucial role in making informed career decisions,*” had a mean score of 3.46 (SD = 0.67), reinforcing the idea that students recognize the role of self-appraisal in career planning.

Meanwhile, the lowest mean score, 3.37 (SD = 0.72), was recorded for the statement “*I am confident in my ability to identify my strengths and weaknesses when it comes to career choices.*” This suggests that some students may still struggle with self-evaluation, indicating a need for career guidance programs that help students identify their competencies more effectively. Additionally, “*I regularly assess my skills to determine which career paths would be a good fit for me*” received a mean score of 3.40 (SD = 0.67), showing that while students recognize the importance of self-assessment, they may not always engage in it consistently.

The findings align with career development theories emphasizing self-appraisal as a critical component of career decision-making. Betz and Taylor (1994) highlight that self-assessment plays a crucial role in building career confidence and decision-making capabilities. According to Super’s Career Development Theory (1990), individuals who actively evaluate their strengths, weaknesses, and interests are more likely to make well-informed career choices. Lent et al. (1994) also emphasized that self-efficacy, or an individual’s belief in their ability to succeed, is a significant predictor of career decision-making confidence. Research by Brown and Lent (2019) further supports the idea that self-awareness enhances career clarity, allowing students to align their choices with their abilities and long-term aspirations. These studies reinforce the importance of self-appraisal in career planning, suggesting that schools should integrate career assessment tools and self-reflection activities into their guidance programs.

Table 9. Career Decisions of Selected Senior High School Students Based on Betz & Taylor Inventory as to Occupational Information

Indicators	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Verbal Interpretations
1. I regularly seek information about different careers to help guide my career decisions.	3.41	0.68	Moderately Influential
2. I feel that having accurate occupational information through schools’ career guidance programs is important when choosing a career path.	3.40	0.65	Moderately Influential

3. I have access to sufficient resources that provide details about various career options.	3.30	0.70	Moderately Influential
4. The information I have about job opportunities and career requirements influences my career choices.	3.28	0.68	Moderately Influential
5. I actively research the skills, qualifications, and responsibilities required for different occupations to make informed decisions.	3.35	0.71	Moderately Influential
Overall Mean	3.35	0.51	Moderately Influential

Legend: Highly Influential 0.76- 1.00

Somewhat Influential 0.26- 0.50

Moderately Influential 0.51 -0.75

Not Influential 0.01- 0.25

Table 9 on occupational information as a determinant of career decisions suggests that Senior High School (SHS) students recognize the importance of having access to career-related knowledge when making decisions about their future. The overall mean score of 3.35 (SD = 0.50) indicates that students moderately influence that obtaining accurate occupational information influences their career choices.

Among the five indicators, the highest mean score was 3.41 (SD = 0.68) for the statement, *"I regularly seek information about different careers to help guide my career decisions."* This suggests that students are proactive in exploring various career options before making a final choice. Similarly, the statement *"I feel that having accurate occupational information through schools' career guidance programs is important when choosing a career path"* had a mean score of 3.40 (SD = 0.65), reflecting students' belief in the role of career counseling programs in providing relevant career insights.

However, the statement *"I have access to sufficient resources that provide details about various career options"* received a lower mean score of 3.30 (SD = 0.70), indicating that some students may feel that career-related resources are not always readily available to them. The lowest mean score, 3.28 (SD = 0.68), was recorded for the statement, *"The information I have about job opportunities and career requirements influences my career choices."* This suggests that while students value career information, they may not always find it sufficient or detailed enough to significantly shape their decisions. Meanwhile, *"I actively research the skills, qualifications, and responsibilities required for different occupations to make informed decisions"* received a mean score of 3.35 (SD = 0.71), indicating that students generally engage in career research, though the extent of their efforts may vary.

These findings align with previous research on the significance of occupational information in career decision-making. According to Betz and Taylor (1994), career choices are influenced by the availability and quality of occupational information provided to students. Super's Career Development Theory (1990) also emphasizes that individuals make more informed career decisions when they have access to comprehensive job market data, educational requirements, and career growth opportunities. Lent et al. (1994) further highlight that career counseling programs play a crucial role in providing students with reliable information about different career paths, allowing them to align their choices with personal interests and job market demands. Research by Nazareno et al. (2021) also supports the idea that students who actively seek career information tend to have clearer career goals and make more strategic educational and professional decisions. These studies reinforce the importance of integrating career exploration activities and occupational research into SHS programs to help students make well-informed choices.

Table 10. Career Decisions of Selected Senior High School Students Based on Betz & Taylor Inventory as to Planning

Indicators	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Verbal Interpretations
1. I have set specific career goals that guide my decision-making process.	3.33	0.68	Moderately Influential
2. I regularly create a plan to achieve my career aspirations.	3.34	0.69	Moderately Influential
3. I feel confident in my ability to plan the steps necessary to pursue my desired career.	3.39	0.63	Moderately Influential

4. I consider both short-term and long-term goals when planning for my career.	3.42	0.66	Moderately Influential
5. I adjust my career plans as needed based on new opportunities or information I learn.	3.36	0.68	Moderately Influential
Overall Mean	3.37	0.52	Moderately Influential

Legend: Highly Influential 0.76- 1.00

Somewhat Influential 0.26- 0.50

Moderately Influential 0.51 -0.75

Not Influential 0.01- 0.25

Table 10 shows data on career planning as a determinant of career decisions which suggests that Senior High School (SHS) students generally acknowledge the importance of structured career planning in achieving their professional goals. The overall mean score of 3.37 (SD = 0.50) indicates that students moderately influence that having a clear career plan helps them make informed decisions about their future.

Among the five indicators, the highest mean score was 3.42 (SD = 0.66) for the statement, “*I consider both short-term and long-term goals when planning for my career.*” This suggests that students recognize the value of setting both immediate and future objectives in their career journey. Similarly, the statement “*I feel confident in my ability to plan the steps necessary to pursue my desired career*” had a mean score of 3.39 (SD = 0.63), indicating that students generally feel capable of structuring a plan to achieve their career aspirations.

Meanwhile, the statement “*I adjust my career plans as needed based on new opportunities or information I learn*” received a mean score of 3.36 (SD = 0.68), reflecting students' adaptability in modifying their plans in response to emerging career options or changing circumstances. The statement “*I regularly create a plan to achieve my career aspirations*” had a mean score of 3.34 (SD = 0.69), suggesting that while students acknowledge the importance of planning, they may not always engage in this process consistently.

The lowest mean score, 3.33 (SD = 0.68), was recorded for the statement “*I have set specific career goals that guide my decision-making process.*” This indicates that while many students have a general idea of their career path, some may still need guidance in setting well-defined goals to help navigate their future careers.

These findings align with previous studies emphasizing the role of career planning in decision-making. Betz and Taylor (1994) highlight that career planning is essential in developing a clear roadmap toward achieving professional aspirations. According to Super's Career Development Theory (1990), individuals who engage in systematic career planning are more likely to achieve job satisfaction and career stability. Lent et al. (1994) further emphasized that students with well-

structured career plans tend to be more confident and motivated in pursuing their desired fields. Research by Brown and Lent (2019) also suggests that career planning helps students make realistic and achievable career choices, reducing uncertainty and indecision. These studies reinforce the importance of integrating career planning exercises into school curricula, ensuring that students are equipped with the necessary skills to develop strategic career goals.

Table 11. Career Decisions of Selected Senior High School Students Based on Betz & Taylor inventory as to Problem Solving

Indicators	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Verbal Interpretations
1. I feel confident in my ability to solve problems that may arise when making career decisions.	3.32	0.71	Moderately Influential
2. I actively seek solutions to obstacles that may affect my career goals.	3.34	0.67	Moderately Influential
3. I consider different options and alternatives when encountering difficulties in planning my career.	3.43	0.53	Moderately Influential
4. I consider both short-term and long-term goals when planning for my career.	3.45	0.60	Moderately Influential

			Influential
5. I believe my problem-solving skills are important in making informed decisions about my career.	3.42	0.66	Moderately Influential
Overall Mean	3.41	0.65	Moderately Influential

Legend: Highly Influential 0.76- 1:00

Somewhat Influential 0.26- 0.50

Moderately Influential 0.51 -0.75

Not Influential 0.01- 0.25

Table 11 suggests that students moderately agree that their ability to address career-related obstacles influences their decision-making process as to the overall mean score of 3.41 (SD = 0.65). Among the five indicators, the highest mean score was 3.45 (SD = 0.60) for the statement, “*I consider both short-term and long-term goals when planning for my career.*” This suggests that students recognize the need for strategic thinking when faced with career-related challenges. Similarly, the statement “*I consider different options and alternatives when encountering difficulties in planning my career*” received a mean score of 3.43 (SD = 0.53), reflecting students' willingness to explore various career pathways and adjust their decisions when necessary.

Meanwhile, the statement “*I believe my problem-solving skills are important in making informed decisions about my career*” had a mean score of 3.42 (SD = 0.66), indicating that students understand the relevance of problem-solving in career planning. The lowest mean score, 3.32 (SD = 0.71), was recorded for the statement “*I feel confident in my ability to solve problems that may arise when making career decisions.*” This suggests that some students may experience uncertainty when handling career-related challenges, highlighting the need for career guidance programs that strengthen decision-making skills. Additionally, the statement “*I actively seek solutions to obstacles that may affect my career goals*” received a mean score of 3.34 (SD = 0.67), showing that while students try to overcome barriers, some may need further support in problem-solving strategies.

These findings have something to do with emphasizing the role of problem-solving in career decision-making. According to Betz and Taylor (1994), individuals who develop problem-solving skills are more likely to make informed career choices and adapt to challenges. Super's Career Development Theory (1990) highlights that career decision-making is a dynamic process requiring individuals to overcome obstacles and reassess their options over time. Lent et al. (1994) also emphasized that strong problem-solving abilities contribute to career resilience, allowing individuals to adjust their career plans in response to changing circumstances. Research by Brown and Lent (2019) further suggests that students who actively engage in problem-solving are more confident in pursuing their career goals. These studies reinforce the importance of integrating career counseling programs that help students develop adaptive strategies for overcoming career-related challenges.

Table 12. Relationship between Career Decisions and Career Choice of Selected Senior High School Students

	Self-Appraisal	Occupational information	Planning	Problem Solving
RIASEC Inventory	-0.016	0.056	-0.028	0.032
Academic Performance	.385**	.579**	.507**	.573**
Socio-economic	.357**	.530**	.417**	.505**
Scholarship Opportunities	.460**	.648**	.562**	.549**
Peer Support	.417**	.495**	.461**	.418**
Environment factors	.450**	.583**	.485**	.427**

****.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 12 which reveals data examining the relationship between career decisions and career choice among Senior High School (SHS) students provides critical insights into the factors influencing students' career paths. Using correlation analysis, the results reveal that various determinant—such as academic performance, socio-economic background, scholarship opportunities, peer support, and environmental factors—exhibit significant relationships with career decision-making components, namely self-appraisal, occupational information, planning, and problem-solving.

The RIASEC Inventory showed weak and non-significant correlations across all career decision variables, with values ranging from -0.016 to 0.056. This suggests that students' career personality types based on the RIASEC model may not have a direct influence on how they make career decisions in terms of self-

appraisal, occupational information, planning, or problem-solving.

In contrast, academic performance demonstrated strong and significant positive correlations with all career decision-making aspects, with values ranging from .385 to .579 ($p < 0.01$). This indicates that students with higher academic performance tend to have a clearer sense of self-appraisal, better occupational awareness, more structured career planning, and stronger problem-solving skills in relation to their career choices. These findings highlight the role of academic success in shaping students' confidence and ability to make well-informed career decisions.

Similarly, socio-economic status showed significant correlations with career decision components (ranging from .357 to .530, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that students from more financially stable backgrounds are better equipped to explore career opportunities, access career information, and make strategic plans regarding their professional future. These results align with studies emphasizing that financial stability provides students with greater career options and access to educational resources.

Scholarship opportunities displayed the highest correlation across all career decision variables, with values ranging from .460 to .648 ($p < 0.01$). This indicates that access to scholarships plays a crucial role in career decision-making, influencing students' ability to assess career options, gather occupational information, develop structured career plans, and navigate career-related challenges. These findings suggest that scholarships provide students with financial freedom and motivation to make more informed and ambitious career choices.

Peer support also exhibited significant positive correlations with all career decision-making variables (ranging from .417 to .495, $p < 0.01$). This implies that students who receive encouragement and career-related insights from their peers tend to have better self-assessment skills, more occupational knowledge, and greater confidence in their career planning and problem-solving abilities.

Lastly, environmental factors showed a strong correlation with career decisions (ranging from .427 to .583, $p < 0.01$), indicating that the availability of career resources, local job opportunities, and community support significantly shape students' career planning and problem-solving abilities. Students who live in environments with more career-related exposure tend to develop a clearer understanding of their future professional paths.

These findings align with Super's Career Development Theory (1990), which emphasizes that multiple external and internal factors contribute to career decision-making. Lent et al. (1994) also highlighted the significance of academic performance and socio-economic resources in shaping career choices, as students with higher achievements and financial stability are more likely to explore ambitious career paths. Research by Brown and Lent (2019) further supports the idea that scholarship opportunities provide students with a wider range of career options, while peer influence and environmental factors play a role in career exploration. These studies reinforce the importance of integrating career guidance programs that address financial, social, and environmental factors to support students in making informed career decisions.

Additionally, according to Frank Parsons' trait and factor theory is the fourth career theory to take the spotlight. Parsons developed the idea that an ideal career is based on matching personal traits like skills, values and personality, with job factors, such as pay and work environment. Parsons suggests that when individuals are in jobs best suited to their abilities they perform best and their productivity is highest.

It is very important to know the factors that affects the career decision of the students. Selecting the right career choice can significantly impact one's financial stability, contentment and future career pathways. A well-chosen career can lead to higher earning potential, job security, and opportunities for advancement.

In the Philippines, some studies have found that a percentage of students are undecided about their career choices, ranging from 2% to 30%. Recent survey of senior high school graduates found that 30% were not following any planned educational or career path. They are usually undecided and had a lower career decision making self-efficacy. They lack information about careers, self-doubts, can be the reason why some of them are not pursuing their college education. Through this study, the factors that affects can be identified easily

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