
Readiness of Grade 9 and 10 Students of San Felipe Neri Catholic School in Choosing their Strand for Senior High School

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DOI: 10.47760/cognizance.2023.v03i06.012

Abstract:

The decision-making of the grade 9 and 10 students remains unaltered without being affected by the influence of others. Using a quantitative method approach, the research revealed the top four findings of the readiness of Grade 9 and 10 students of San Felipe Neri Catholic School in choosing their strand for senior high school. They are (1) peer influence, (2) course-related, (3) personal interest, and (4) skills related to the preferred program. The results of the study show that the first findings that ranked the highest are course-related, and peer influence ranked the least. The overall readiness of the students in choosing their strand is 3.92, with a standard deviation of 0.12. The result also explained that they can make their own decisions according to their own capacities and skills. The action plan of the researchers is to introduced the targets and goals to prepare the students for decision-making about their strand. And also to have a plan to help the students make their thoughtful choices regarding their education and career path by taking into consideration their skills and interests as well as seeking possibilities that can be offered to them and recommending actions to the students to have a clear understanding, have a realistic plan, monitor their progress, and lastly, support and encourage the students.

Introduction

Students in Grade 9 and 10 can choose their strand for two years of learning at the senior high level before attending college. It contains numerous subjects that are assigned to their preferred track and are covered by multiple strands. Through a range of teaching strategies, specialized subjects, and practical learning, this educational strategy helps students progress. Some topics were essences of courses taken at the college level, and this serves as an introduction to aid students in being prepared. Every strand has its own individuality of teaching; they have different major subjects that are provided, and these were introduced as "specialized" subjects since they are offered and focused on a certain area of study that directly helps the students reach their preferred strand. The high school years are a critical period for students. Decision-making is important, including the choice of profession; it is one of the basic developmental tasks for students. However, rapid changes happen and factors affect the student's perceptions regarding their career, and these factors can cause difficulties in making decisions for their preparation for senior year (Kirdök & Harman, 2018).

Each student makes a decision about their future career and the wisest choice to take. Some students are completely certain of the course they want to take, while others are not (Kaneez & Medha, 2018). If a student is careless with their career and wanders aimlessly, they may not achieve their desired career objective and succeed in their career. Therefore, career planning is crucial to helping students develop successful careers by helping them choose the right fields and take the necessary steps (Siddiky & Akter, 2021). Choosing a strand for senior high school is one of the challenges that grade 10 students are facing. They consider the factors affecting their decision when choosing their preferred strand. According to Moneva & Malbas (2019), choosing a career is crucial. Exploring the student's field of interest will increase their skill level and help them prepare for the right career track. These factors play a crucial role in determining the right career that suits them. Upcoming senior high school students consider the factors that can affect their decision, such as their socio-demographic profile, socio-economic status, parents, job opportunities, academic performance, and personal interests. Barriers such as financial status and average grade quota restrictions are possible factors that can affect the student's decision-making. This might lead to confusion and doubts that may cause the student to be undecided in choosing their strand. To find out the students' preferred strand and the factors' level of influence on the senior high school strand preferences.

According to the Asian Development Bank and Department of Education (2019), students in the SHS year undertake a core curriculum and choose specializations from one of four tracks, including academic, technical vocational and livelihood, sports, or arts and design. By selecting these paths, you will have two more years of learning before graduating from high school. When it comes to finances and career planning, the students and their families must make further considerations. It applies to understanding the decision-making processes used by different household kinds along with students, as well as the main influencing factors.

Opportunities such as scholarships, financial aid from numerous networks for academic interests, and financially stable families influence how a student chooses their future path. In order to create methods that may help the students make decisions about career options, it is critical to recognize the factors that may influence their decisions. A student's life and society as a whole can affect their choice of career (Nazareno *et al.*, 2021). Although it is not mandatory, choosing a track or strand related to the student's target degree program in college will help them develop the skills and experience needed for their future courses or disciplines. Students may have already picked a career path in order to maximize the skills and experience they get from high school to college, which may help them excel in their chosen field. Several factors have been linked to students' career choices. Most of these characteristics have been shown to have varied degrees of influence when deciding between distinct SHS tracks. Knowing the elements that influence students' professional route selections can help them develop ways to make informed decisions. The data show that students recognize the value of SHS education in preparing them for higher education. Higher education institutions can be of great aid in providing information on the content and requirements of college courses, not only for students but also for parents, so that students are well-guided in their career decisions. (Philippine Journal of Science, 2021)

The researchers would like to know how ready the Grade 9 and 10 students of San Felipe Neri Catholic School are to choose their desired strand in senior high school based on their characteristics and capabilities. Moreover, the researchers also want to know the extent to which the Grade 9 and 10 students choose the right strand for them as regards their interests, peer influence, course-related interests, or skills related.

The Research Objectives and the Specific Problem

The study titled "Readiness of Grade 9 and 10 students of San Felipe Neri Catholic School in Choosing their Strand for Senior High School" aims to understand the readiness of the students in choosing their desired strand in senior high school based on the characteristics of students. Also it will measure the extent to which the student's personal factors influencing their choice of strand have an impact on their surroundings, family, and friends. Lastly, to present the factors influencing the preferences of the students in choosing their preferred strand in senior high school.

Specifically, it will answer the following questions:

1. What are the characteristics of the students in terms of:
 - 1.1. Academic Interest/Most Preferred
 - 1.2. Academic Interest/Second Most Preferred
 - 1.3. Financial Status/Family Income
2. What are the characteristics of the students in terms of:
 - 2.1. Peer Influence
 - 2.2. Course Related
 - 2.3. Personal Interest
 - 2.4. Skills Related to Preferred Program
- 3.
4. What output can be crafted from the results of the study?

Methodology

This study is entitled "Readiness of Grade 9 and 10 Students of San Felipe Neri Catholic School in Choosing their Strand for Senior High School" aims to measure the extent to which the student's personal factors influencing their choice of strand have an impact on their surroundings, family, and friends. A quantitative study, in which the researchers are collecting and analyzing data, can be used to find correlations, averages, and even predictions to test the relationship between the demographic profile and its variables (Bhandari, 2020).

Specifically, this study will use descriptive methodology because it describes the characteristics of the population or phenomenon studied. This methodology focuses more on the "what" of the research subject than the "why" of the research subject (Siedlecki, 2020). The study will also utilize correlational methodology to investigate the relationships between variables without requiring the researcher to control or change any of them. It represents the strength or direction of the connections between two (or more) variables (Bhandari, 2022). Furthermore, it will attempt to establish a significant relationship between independent and dependent variables.

Lastly, the researchers collected the data using the survey method, where Grade 9 and 10 students of San Felipe Neri Catholic School are the respondents and was ask via a Google Form questionnaire about their readiness to choose their strand for senior high school, taking into consideration their skills and capabilities as well as personal factors that influence their choice of strand and have an impact on their surroundings.

Results and Discussions

Table 1: Frequency Distribution for Academic Interest or Most Preferred Subjects

Academic Interest/Most Preferred	Frequency	Percentage
Arts & Humanities	38	25.68%
English Language and Literature	17	11.49%
Foreign Language	9	6.08%
History	4	2.70%
Mathematics and Science	40	27.03%
Philosophical Readings	2	1.35%
Physical Education and Health	19	12.84%
Social Sciences	19	12.84%
Grand Total	148	100.00%

As for respondents' demographic profile, the total number of respondents is 148 where the Grade 9 and 10 students in San Felipe Neri Catholic School represented the population. Table 1 shows the frequency distribution

table for academic interest, or the most preferred subjects, of the respondents. The majority of the respondents prefer Mathematics and Science, with a total frequency of 40, or 27.03%. It is followed by responses that relate to Art and Humanities with a frequency of 38, or 25.68%. Next, respondents both choose Physical Education and Health and Social Sciences with a frequency of 12.84%. Then comes the English Language and Literature with a frequency of 11.49%. On the other hand, the frequency of Foreign Language is 6.08%. Next is followed by History, which has a frequency of 2.70%. Lastly, the Philosophical Readings, which counts as the lowest preferred subject, has a frequency of 1.35%.

Since the majority of the respondents prefers the subject Mathematics and Science, we can infer that most of the respondents decided to pursue the strand that contains both subjects. According to Kaleva, Pursiainen, Hakola *et al.* (2019) Many students chose advanced mathematics believing in its usefulness for their future studies or careers. Hence the Students chooses the mathematics subjects because this is the majorities' most dominant subject because they know that they can use their skills such as problem solving, analytical thinking, and etc in some subjects especially in Academic Track such as (STEM) Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics, (ABM) Accountancy and Business Management, and (HUMSS) Humanities and Social Sciences where problem solving skills, critical and analytical thinking skills is needed and in (TVL) Technical Vocational and Livelihood that requires problem solving and conversion of measurement skills.

Table 2: Frequency Distribution for Academic Interest or Second Most Preferred Subjects

Academic Interest/Second Most Preferred	Frequency	Percentage
Arts & Humanities	20	13.51%
English Language and Literature	23	15.54%
Foreign Language	15	10.14%
History	12	8.11%
Mathematics and Science	21	14.19%
Philosophical Readings	10	6.76%
Physical Education and Health	29	19.59%
Social Sciences	18	12.16%
Grand Total	148	100.00%

Table 2 shows the frequency distribution table for academic interest or second most preferred subjects, of the respondents. The Majority of the respondents prefer Physical Education and Health, with a total of frequency of 29, or 19.59%. It is followed by responses that relate to the English Language and Literature with a frequency of 23, or 15.4%. Next, Mathematics and Science with a frequency of 21, or 14.19%, followed by Arts and Humanities with a frequency of 20, or 13.51%. Then comes the Social Sciences with a frequency of 18, or 12.16%. On the other hand, the frequency of Foreign Language is 10.14%. Next followed by history, which has a frequency of 8.11%. Lastly, the Philosophical Readings, which counts as the lowest preferred subject, has a frequency of 6.76%.

We can infer from the table that most of the students prefer physical education and health in academic interest or second most preferred subjects. According to Hansen (2021), students are taught to develop skills and empower themselves to live an active and healthy lifestyle, including physical, social, mental, and emotional health, through participating in various kinds of physical activities. Additionally, it is where the students develop and use their teamwork, communication, creativity, and critical thinking skills. Therefore, the students choose to focus on the disciplines which concentrate on the development of physical skills as well as overall healthy lifestyles rather than the other types of subjects.

Table 3: Frequency Distribution for Financial Status or Family Income

Financial Status/Family Income	Frequency	Percentage
1,000 - 12,000	14	9.46%
12,001 - 25,000	27	18.24%
25,001 - 37,500	36	24.32%
37,501-50,000	24	16.22%
50,001 and more	47	31.76%
Grand Total	148	100.00%

Table 3 shows the frequency distribution for Financial Status or Family Income of the respondents. The majority of the respondents with the total income of 50, 001 and more with the frequency of 47 or 31.76%. Followed by the respondents who have the total Family Income of 25, 001 - 37, 500 has the frequency of 36 or 24.32%. And then, the respondents who have a Family Income of 12, 001 - 25, 000 got the frequency of 27 or 18.24%. Lastly, respondents who choose the total Family Income of 1, 000 - 12, 000 which has the frequency of 14 or 9.46%.

Based on the table above, we can see that the majority of the respondents are the 47 contributors with 50, 001 and more Family Income. We can interpret that most of the respondents have the capability to pursue their chosen strand or track in San Felipe Neri Catholic School. Most of the respondents can afford the miscellaneous fees in regards to their chosen path in Senior High School. However, according to the study of Daud et al (2018), students may face financial problems as they step up to higher education as expenses in public and private educational institutions rise, students in higher education demand more money to meet the cost of study and living at universities. Hence, there are still students who will face financial problems despite having an average family income and it will not be easy for them to cover up their daily expenses in their studies and life.

Using a researcher – made survey, with an eight – scale points, the following results were reported:

Table 4: Level of Readiness of students in Choosing their Strand for Senior High School

Readiness of students in Choosing their Strand	Average	Standard Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Peer Influence	2.56	0.24	Disagree
Course Related	4.74	0.26	Agree
Personal Interest	4.69	0.50	Agree
Skills Related to Preferred Program	3.68	0.37	Slightly Agree
Overall Rating	3.92	0.12	Slightly Agree

The table shows that the students got an overall rating average of 3.92 or Slightly Agree. It means that the students can actually decide what strand they will take in senior high school. With an overall standard deviation of 0.12, as collected from all scores per survey statement, it means that the students are very the same with each other.

The first variable that ranked highest is the course related. It got an average of 4.74 or Agree. With a standard deviation of 0.26, it shows that the rating of the students are suitable for the strand they were going to take based on the course related they will choose for college. From this study, it shows the highest rated statement that the students in grade 9 and 10 think this strand will provide them with more opportunities in their future courses (average = 4.98). This means that the incoming senior high school students knows the correct strand they're going to take, that will help them improve their skills and capabilities for the track they will choose, because they are aware

of their skills and the courses that they can handle. According to Martin (2010) after examining their limitations, students may already predict whether or not they will be eligible for that particular course. It is very important for the students to make a wise decision in order to succeed no matter how big or small. These have a significant influence on our lives. Also, it shows the highest rated statement that the students in grade 9 and 10 think that this strand is connected to their future courses in college (average = 4.89). This means that when the students choose a preferred strand, studying will be more enjoyable because the strands were developed specifically to meet their interests or in future courses. Additionally, it improves their knowledge and skills as well as introducing students to their preferred strand while getting ready for college. According to Magdaro (2020), in choosing a strand it's not easy because some students based their decision-making on their passion or on practicality. Moreover, these activities may include possible career paths in chosen strand for related courses, students' career and motivation, and their career aptitude said by Rafanan, et al. (2020).

The second variable that ranked highest is personal interest. It got an average of 4.69 or Agree. With a standard deviation of 0.50, it shows that the rating of the students have their own interest and dream when it comes to choosing their strand. From the survey, it shows the highest rated statement that the students in grade 9 and 10 that it is their own choice which strand they will take (average = 5.18). This means that not all students depends on their peers, teachers, and family's choice whether what strand to take for Senior High School, there are still some students who chooses their preferred strand. According to Magdaro (2020) there are still some students who can make personal judgments on what strand they want to take for senior high school, it requires to be passionate individual who has broad knowledge on what they want for their future. Also, it shows that the second highest rated statement is that the students in grade 9 and 10 select this strand since it caught their interest when it comes to concept-based learning (average = 4.82). This means that the students are very much interested in choosing their future strand in Senior High School because the concepts might help them to improve their interest in their chosen strand in Senior High School. According to Shin (2018) Project-based learning is an instructional technique which has been proven to be effective because it allows students to play an active role in their own learning process. By participating in a project-based learning model, students are able to construct their own knowledge and reflect upon their learning projects, resulting in increased motivation and self-efficacy.

The third variable that ranked highest is the skills related to preferred program. It got an average of 3.68 or Slightly Agree. With a standard deviation of 0.37, it shows that the rating of the students relates to their own strengths and weaknesses when it comes to subject related. From the survey, it shows that the grade 9 and 10 students acquired the skills when it comes to technology and creative writing as it shows that both of these have the highest rated statement (average = 3.99). This means that the students are excellent in technology and creative writing. The students that have the excellence in creative writing can focus more on writing essays, speeches, blogs, fictions, poetry, and other types of writing that can enhance their skills in creative writing. On the other hand, students who acquired the technology skills can focus on programming, java script, web developing and other subject matter. According to Bradley (2020), creative writing is a motivation for the students to increase their writing in English and expand their collaboration skills by using the 'Choose Your Own Adventure' (COYA) which can improve students' motivation. Meanwhile, when it comes to students who acquires the skills in technology have factors that includes communication, learning, and empowerment as students appreciate how they interact with others in real time by using technologies such as computers, according to Goldin and Katz (2018). They also mention that connecting with others is made possible by the internet enabling real-time communication. The learners were empowered in a technology surrounding, as they were secluded from teachers and were less scared of relating to others. Learners believed that computers enables them to have control over their learning by promoting independence Goldin & Katz (2018). Also from the survey, it shows the second highest rated statement that the students in grade 9 and 10 excel at critical thinking (average = 3.95). This means that the students are good when it comes to critical thinking skills, that focuses more on reasoning and intrusive investigation. According to Lai (2011), the Partnership for 21st Century Skills found that the teachers identified critical thinking as one of the learnings and a new method that is necessary to assist and prepare the students for college and the workplace. Moreover, the teachers are aware of the value of critical thinking skills as a learning outcome for the student.

The last variable that ranked highest is the peer influence. It got an average of 2.56 or Disagree. With a standard deviation of 0.24, it shows the rating of the students that they make their own decisions about which strand they will pursue without the influence of others. From the survey it shows the highest rated statement that the students in grade 9 and 10 that their friends have the same preferences with them (average = 2.75). This means that the students' choices are not the same as their friends', so they will select their own preferences. On the other hand, according to Montejo (2020) the students' decisions can be influenced by other students. They tend to find themselves studying because they have friends to go with them, or they make new friends to go with them. Their friends encourage and influence them regarding their career choices. They look forward to a path that will lead them to a brighter future. From the survey it shows the second highest rated statement that the students in grade 9 and 10 that they are influenced by social media (average = 2.66). This means that the students' decision on which strand they wanted to choose was not influenced by social media. In contrast to Paul (2020) study, states that more individuals are choosing careers in the 21st century as an outcome of their dependence on mass media, which has a significant influence on how they make their own decisions about their careers. Young people often use it for looking up more information regarding various careers that are greatly influenced by the media.

Summary and Conclusion

This study, titled "Readiness of Grade 9 and 10 Students of San Felipe Neri Catholic School in Choosing Their Strand for Senior High School," aims to assess the readiness of the students in pursuing their chosen strand for senior high school. The results reveal that they can choose their strand based on their future college courses, and not all the students base their choice on the opinions of others. In addition to their skills, their decisions are based on the skills in which they excel. Based on the results, the researchers can conclude that having the ability to select the appropriate strand for the students in their senior year is crucial because they need to know the extent of their readiness based on their skills and capabilities. However, there may be a lot of different suggestions from other people that can affect their decision-making and lead them to a confusing state whether they will consider the suggestion or not, but it is better if they choose their desired strand so that they can freely enjoy their senior year without any pressure from others. Furthermore, this study shows that the students can make their choices when it comes to decision-making for their senior high school year, and it is intended for the students who are currently in the midst of choosing the right path, as they need to be wise and sure in choosing the right strand for them.

Recommendations

The researchers found the following actions worth recommending:

1. In choosing a strand for senior high school, it is better to know if your skills and capabilities fit in with your chosen strand and you have enough knowledge about what this strand is all about. If there are suggestions from your family or friends, let yourself decide whether you will consider their suggestions or not.
2. The researchers also suggest having a thorough discussion between the students and the parents about this matter and let the parents decide if they can support their child financially.
3. They may take their time to think about their own strengths and goals so that their choices will help them accomplish the things they like to do while maintaining their own interest and contentment. By taking those actions, students will feel more assured in their capacity to decide the best track for them.

Acknowledgement

The researchers are forever grateful to the support extended by the RCAMES Cluster 3 Schools headed by Rev. Fr. Mark C. Munda, PhD(School Director); Rev. Fr. Leo Angelo Ignacio, PhD (Former Assistant School Director), Rev. Fr. Paul Enrique Gungon IV (School Assistant Director), Dr. Henry Davalos (Principal, Co – author) and to the whole Academic Council (Subject and Office Coordinators) who contributed a lot in the development, progress and accomplishment of the whole research process. To our esteemed and industrious faculty members who shared their time in answering the survey, thank you and lots of love!

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