

## **Factors Affecting Career Preferences of Indigenous People Students in Secondary Schools of North Cotabato, Philippines**

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**Abstract:** *Students' career success can be attained if proper guidance is given in choosing the right course in college, suited to their personality, ability and intellect considering their abilities, interest, values and goal as vital foundation of the career development process. This study determines the influencing factors on career preferences and their relationship. Series of interviews using a semi-structure questionnaire were done in different secondary schools of North Cotabato, Philippines. Mean and weighted mean were utilized to determine the factors and career preferences of the student-respondents. Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis were used to test the hypothesis of the study. Notable results include (1) students agree that they believe in what they can do to be successful in their chosen career; (2) parents can influence the student which course to enroll in college; (3) respondents strongly agreed to be in a school that gives value and respect to every culture; (4) high school students would like to pursue their career in a university where they can avail a special scholarship; (5) community as a factor is considered by the respondents to have influence on their career preference; (6) high school students agree that opportunity like organizations that consider balance between workers and organizational rewards; and (7) respect for family is one of the most influential factor that gave weight to students' career preference. It is therefore concluded that factors such as school, scholarship, community and opportunity have bearing on student's career preference.*

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### **I. Introduction**

Career preference is of utmost importance since every student needs to choose the field of specialization he /she intends to take up in a college or university. In the process of career choice students have to determine their abilities and skills. They need to be flexible and open minded because their choice of course will have impact in a short run and in their future.

Students' career success can be attained if proper guidance is given in choosing the right course in college, suited to their personality, ability and intellect considering their abilities, interest, values and goal as vital foundation of the career development process. Career plan based on the curriculum can be guide to take in college (Reyes, 2010).

Misfit of graduates is one of the considered reasons why the Philippines has high unemployment and underemployment rate. The reasons could either be the acquired degree of graduates' misfit the demand of the present economy, or the graduates do not possess the characteristics required by the industries in need. This could be due to the wrong choice of course or degree by most of the college students brought about by unguarded decision making. The course chosen that is not fitted to the students may lead to their inability to qualify to the competencies needed by the companies. This is because their ability is not suited with the course they have taken, thus will not unleash their maximum potentials (Bautista, 2000). Added to the wrong choice of course, most of the secondary schools do not have accurate information about occupational opportunities to guide the students in choosing appropriate course they will pursue in college or university.

Thus, this study determines the influencing factors on career preferences and their relationship. The result is significant in planning and providing good framework in the decision-making process of students who will select a degree program in tertiary level based on their preference.

### **II. Materials and Methods**

This study used descriptive correlational research design. It is descriptive–correlational because it is concerned with the description, collecting and processing data, recording analysis and interpretation to provide the general characteristics of the respondents and other reliable information for a reliable result of the data. It is

correlational in nature because the study attempted to estimate the extent to which the different variables are related and influence each other.

The respondents of the study were the Grade 10 Junior High School Indigenous People (IP) students in Municipality of Arakan, Antipas and President Roxas, Cotabato (Table 1).

Table 1. Respondents of the Study

Name of School	No. of Respondents
Greenfield Junior High School	35
Camutan High School	35
Marciano Daham Junior High School	10
Antipas National High School	20
Ilustre High School	19
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

In quantitative, complete enumeration was employed to determine the Grade 10 Junior High School Indigenous People (IP) student-respondents of the study. Then, purposive sampling technique was used in qualitative research for the interpretation and selection of informants which cases for the most use of limited resources (Patton, 2002).

The instrument used to collect the data was a Career Choice Survey Questionnaire. The questionnaire was validated with Cronbach’s reliability test and gained an alpha value of 0.914 with 20 respondents or 20 % of the total sample of the study.

Mean and weighted mean were utilized to determine the factors and career preferences of the student-respondents. To test the hypotheses of the study, Pearson correlation coefficient was employed for significant relationship between the factors and career preferences, while, multiple linear regression analysis was used for the significant influence of the factors on the career preferences of the Indigenous People (IP) students

### III. Results & Discussion

#### Personality

Table 2 reflects the factors influencing career preferences of IPs students in terms of personality. The students agree that they believe in what they can do to be successful in their chosen career which registers the highest mean (4.37). On the other hand, the lowest mean (4.07) is on students who consider their physical appearance in choosing a career. All statements were agreed. This implies that high school students believe in themselves in what they can do. Moreover, the weighted mean is 4.09 which is interpreted agree. This means that personality is such as intelligence, interest, abilities and physical appearance are often considered important factors in career preference of high school IP students.

Table 2. Factors influencing students’ career preference in terms of **personality**.

Statements	Mean	Description
1 I consider my line of interest, skills and abilities in choosing my career	4.07	Agree
2 I believe in what I can do to be successful in my chosen.	4.37	Agree
3 I am hardworking and do a task confidently.	4.10	Agree
4 I consider my physical appearance in choosing a career	3.60	Agree
5 My self-knowledge gives me a better perspective on what career path I will undertake.	4.33	Agree
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>4.09</b>	<b>Agree</b>

This implies that personality has to be made impressive to be more successful in life. Therefore, personality as prerequisite to career success has to be developed and enhanced. The findings conform to what Bolles (2011) claims that personality has a momentous role on the career preferences of students that made them attain in various ways. Anderson (2000) matches careers with abilities and having a career plan includes evaluation of one’s personality and communication with others is another trait that is dependent on personality. Likewise, the confidence of students can determine how far they will go with their education. As it is said that students who believe in themselves have higher confidence and are more likely to go for what they want instead of settling for something that is comfortable (Mihycon 2009). Further, La (2009) believes that personal factors may have an influence on career choice that includes the entire cluster of one’s biological and psychological

attributes as well as behavioral and physical features. Another aspect of personality that can affect career preferences is attitude towards work and teams (Knoll, 2009). He said that people’s attitudes is helpful to consider when choosing a career. To him, attitudes have been organized into consistent modes of thinking, feeling and reacting to evaluate what a person wants to be considering career choice.

**Parents**

Table 3 reveals the influence of parents on students’ career preference. In terms of the influence of parents on career preference, the statement, “they listen to their parents’ ideas, advice and information in the career they would pursue,” marks 4.13, which is the highest mean. While the lowest mean is on “parent, want them to take a course similar to their idolized person,” obtained a mean of 2.83, which is described as moderately agree. All the statements indicated agree. This implies that parents can influence the student which course to enroll in college. It could further be implied that while parents are important, it is not the most important issue when defining career preference to the student – respondents. This is not to say that people, places and things surrounding as they grow up do not affect their outlook on career, rather there are other factors than parents that students feel are more important.

**Table 3.** Factors influencing students’ career preference in terms of **parents**.

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
1 I listen to my parent’s idea, advice and information on the career that I pursue.	4.13	Agree
2 My parents’ encouragement helped me to choose the career where I should be.	3.87	Agree
3 My parents want me to pursue career that is financially secured, rewarding and more practical.	3.83	Agree
4 My parents encourage me to take a course/degree that does not entail much expenses.	3.90	Agree
5 My parents want me to take a career similar to their idolized person with high earning power.	2.83	Moderately Agree
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.71</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Moreover, the weighted mean that is 3.71 which is interpreted as agree is consistent to the findings of McQuerry, (2006) that parents have an influence on what career paths their children will pursue. Further, she suggested that parent may urge a child into a vocation similar to their own, or to one that has demonstrated high earning power parents may intentionally or unintentionally push a child toward a particular path. Still other parents apply pressure to encourage their children to strive for particular high profile career in order to reach high. Furthermore, Maru (2012) agrees that parents play a decisive influential role in career choice. Parent involvement is manifested by giving advice and information on the type of jobs or career their children could pursue considering the financial capability of parents.

**School**

The influencing factor in terms of school is reflected in Table 4, which the respondents strongly agreed to be in a school that gives value and respect to every culture which registers 4.77 as the highest mean. The lowest mark (4.33) is on the statement that they prefer a school with teaching quality, library and facilities. In addition, IP students would choose to enroll in colleges that offer scholarships/grants (4.63).

**Table 4.** Factors influencing students’ career preference in terms of **school**.

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
1 I prefer to pursue my career in a school/college/ University that offers scholarship and aid opportunities for I.Ps.	4.63	Strongly Agree
2 I would enroll in an accredited public school/college/university and with good reputation.	4.40	Agree
3 Before choosing a college/university, I consider campus safety.	4.60	Strongly Agree
4 I prefer a school with teaching quality, library and facilities.	4.33	Agree
5 The location of the school/college/ university and its surroundings is important to consider.	4.50	Strongly Agree
6 I would choose a school that give value and respect to every culture.	4.77	Strongly Agree
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>4.54</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>

Moreover, the weighted mean of 4.54, would mean that the college is highly regarded not only to provide quality education but an institution that has high regard to students and has good reputation that is consistent to the statement of Maringe (2006) that the reputation of a university or college may influence career choice in several ways such as college/university status (whether public or private), rank and achievements. Tavares (2011) revealed that the family cultural and economic capital influenced not only the probability of entering higher education, but also student's choices of programs and types of institution.

### Scholarship

Table 5 presents the influence of scholarship on the student's career preference. In terms of scholarship, high school students would like to pursue their career in a university where they can avail a special scholarship aside from tuition fees which registers the highest mean (4.47). While the statement that obtained a mean of 3.40 indicates that they would choose a school that offers loan to students. The overall result (4.10) is agree. This implies that the respondents regarded scholarship to help them pursue their career preference.

**Table 5.** Factors influencing students' career preference in terms of **scholarship**.

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
1 I will pursue my career in a public university because the tuition fee is lower than the private university.	4.40	Agree
2 Financial aid is my considerable reason in choosing a college or university where to pursue my career.	4.27	Agree
3 I choose a school that offers loan to students.	3.40	Moderately Agree
4 I choose to enroll in a public college/university that offer grant in aid to student.	3.97	Agree
5 I like to pursue my career in a university where I can avail a special scholarship aside from tuition fees.	4.47	Agree
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>4.10</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Moreover, the weighted mean of 4.10 implies that high school students consider scholarship to help them in pursuing their course in college. The impact of financial aid or financial packages that includes scholarship and grants was examined thoroughly by Kim (2004). This implies that the choice of school is important, however, it is not the most important issue when defining school choice to the student respondents. They perceived that scholarships/grant-in-aid could potential factor in pursuing to higher education. Financial aid is considerable factor that influences students' choice of a university/college.

### Community

Table 6 presents the data on factors influencing student's career preference in terms of community. It could be noted that students agreed to the statement "to work in progressive community with available occupational employment" that obtained the highest mean (4.47). The lowest mean (4.27) falls on the statement, "consider working in a community where companies offer promising income." This means that community as a factor is considered by the respondents to have influence on their career preference.

Moreover, the weighted mean that is 4.37 means that community is a factor that influences students in their career choice. They prefer to work in a community that is progressive, offers personal growth and improvement of their skills, and economic growth. The result implies that the students are aware what opportunities are present in the community and which one they would choose. Other factors that very much influenced students' career preference in the community aspects include current labor industry or the organization, the availability of the employment and the personal growth opportunities, and the improvement of their skills.

**Table 6.** Factors influencing students' career preference in terms of **community**.

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
1 I like to work in a community that fosters economic growth and job skills.	4.43	Agree
2 I prefer to work in progressive community with available occupational employment.	4.47	Agree

3	I consider working in a community where I can have personal growth opportunity.	4.27	Agree
4	I prefer to work in a community where companies offer promising income.	4.27	Agree
5	Working in the city gives me the chance for job satisfaction and the facilitation of improvement of my skills.	4.43	Agree
<b>Weighted Mean</b>		<b>4.37</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Raei (2018) reiterates that community variables refer to economic growth opportunities and job skills which may not only influence initial career preferences but also detect future job exploration of an individual. Other factors such as the changing economic circumstance in a specific industry or organization, the availability of occupational employment and the personal growth opportunities and the facilitation of improvement in an individual’s job skills may also be influential factor considered when making career plans. Furthermore, Amundson et al., (2005) reported that career preferences are influenced by local market labor conditions such as the type of industry found in a community. Porfeli (2008) earlier found that a high school student’s future work can also be assisted by the community where he had grown up. Adolescent’s experiences are important as it is a part of a larger scale of activities they participate in outside school hours. Industries in the community have the potential to shape the individual’s work habits, attributes, and their occupational interest.

**Opportunity**

Table 7 reveals the factors that may influence high school student career preference. The high school students agree that opportunity like organizations that consider balance between workers and organizational rewards which registers the highest mean of 4.40 described as agree. On the statement “students will always look for a working environment which tallies 3.90 that is described agree. All statements registered agree. This implies that opportunity is one factor that helps guide high school students decide the career they prefer most. Moreover, the overall mean is 4.27. This means that opportunity is another factor that high school students consider in their career preferences.

It implies that the students are aware what opportunities are available and which among these opportunities that fit their skills and abilities they would apply. There are other opportunities that influenced students’ career preference on the opportunity aspects access to Senior High School, available industries in the community that offer employment, influential relatives in the government and private companies.

**Table 7.** Factors influencing students’ career preference in terms of **opportunity**.

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
1 I favor occupations where there are bigger career opportunities.	4.30	Agree
2 I like those organizations that consider balance between workers and organizational rewards.	4.40	Agree
3 Decrease in technological and medical jobs capture my attention in considering which career to pursue.	3.90	Agree
4 I will choose a career that is in demand in big companies.	3.93	Agree
5 I will always look for a working environment which will satisfy my psychological needs.	4.27	Agree
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>4.16</b>	<b>Agree</b>

According to Liaw et al. (2017) says that individuals favor occupation where there is a bigger likelihood of career opportunities and could rather avoid positions in which opportunities are limited or on decline. They illustrated projected summary of jobs that show the greatest growth, and jobs that show the greatest decline in 2004. The jobs in home health care (56%), medicine (52.1%) and computers software engineering (48.1%) are expected to grow more rapidly, as opposed to the blank picture painted for jobs that were once viewed as traditional but are declining steadily. This includes jobs that involve physical orientation of machines such as textile machine operators with a (56.2%) decline. This industrial and manufacturing industries fewer people are needed as they are being replaced by computers assisted equipment’s. Brice (2002) highlights that in the past few years, there has been a decline in the number of students choosing primary care careers (e.g family practice and general internal medicine) in America as more students are opting for plastic surgery and emergency medicine. Career opportunity could reduce the number of changing the preference early in one’s life. Garcey (2005) noted that excellent detailed plan for career guidance to help and teach young students to set career goals and plan, requires a total community efforts through educators, government and business. In



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