Factors Influencing Grade 10 Students' Decision Regarding the Selection of Their Senior High School Academic Strand

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ABSTRACT

Selecting a suitable track is critical for a student who has yet to decide what academic strand to follow in his/her senior high school year. The main goal of the study was to look at how personal interest, family influence, job opportunities, financial condition, and peer pressure affected grade 10 decisions when choosing an academic strand in order to better prepare them for senior high school coursework. The researcher employed the descriptive and inferential research design to investigate the objectives and generate a new understanding of the data collected. The study involved one hundred seventeen (117) grade 10 students enrolled at Saint John Berchman High School Incorporated during SY 2022-2023. Additionally, the researcher employed an online survey questionnaire as a primary tool to gather and compile information based on the five factors, using a 4-point Likert scale for each indication and examining the samples' responses. The result showed that there is a significant difference between the friends/peers influence factor when group by sex and age. Moreover, there is no significant difference between the five factors when group by the grade 10 students' chosen strands.

Keywords: personal interest, family influence, job opportunities, financial condition, friends/peers influence, academic strand

INTRODUCTION

The K–12 Basic Education Program in the Philippines includes an overview of Senior High School (SHS), which is the latter two years of a new six-year secondary education system. Instead of just promoting readiness for post-secondary education, the SHS Curriculum intends to prepare students for their higher education or employment (Uy and Martinez, 2019).

Students' abilities will improve as a result of the government's implementation of the K–12 curriculum, and they will become more capable of understanding and coping with new courses. The curriculum has been enhanced to better meet the local needs of students, enabling them to select a specialization that best complements their interests (Rio *et al.*, 2022).

Students in Junior High School (JHS) Grade 10 will follow a uniform curriculum and be given an option of seven academic strands in their SHS year level: Accountancy, Business, and Management (ABM) Strand; Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Strand; Humanities and Social Science (HUMSS) Strand; General Academic Strand (GAS); Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) Track; Arts and Design Track; and Sports Track.

Making a decision when choosing an academic strand to consider a variety of factors. In the study of Galowich and Bers (2002), the majority of college students have a course that their parents have selected for them to enroll in because they discovered the course to be uninteresting, and the majority of them tend to receive poorer grades. If a student's chosen academic strand does not support their desired progress, it has many consequences for them. Some students who don't want to take the course tend to not take it seriously, and their only intention is just to graduate.

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Some factors have an impact on junior high school students' decisions regarding their chosen academic strands. This study intends to determine the factors affecting grade 10 students at Saint John Berchmans High School Incorporated in choosing an academic strand based on the survey data that were provided to them. Choosing an academic strand shouldn't be taken for granted. In this scenario, the study will conclude what factors students may want to consider while selecting a course. Additionally, the junior high school students saw that their decisions were influenced by their interests, peer pressure, family influence, financial condition, and opportunities for future employment.

This study was conducted at Saint John Berchmans High School Incorporated (SJBHSI) in Cordon, Isabela. The research looked at how personal interest, family influence, job opportunities, financial condition, and peer pressure affected junior high school students' decisions when choosing an academic strand in their SHS year. It also aims to examine if there is a significant difference between the mean score of the factors affecting students' decisions when choosing their academic strand when grouped by age, sex, and their chosen academic strand.

Conceptual Framework

Students must take the time to consider their selections because a course can have a significant impact on job seekers' employment chances. For JHS students, it is crucial to think about numerous options that will influence your decisions regarding what academic strand to take in your senior high school year. A path can significantly impact your future and plays a significant role in whom you will become.

Personal Interest

Personal interest reflects the student's interest in their selected careers (Liaw *et al.*, 2017). According to Holland's Theory of Career Typology (1966), people pick careers that best suit their personalities and interests. Parents, educators, friends, and life experiences influence your preferences. Interest is a key factor when it comes to inspiring individuals to carry out the good deeds they enjoy.

Family Influence

Family influences on their children's decision when choosing academic strand are significant. In this situation, parents are crucial because they exert enormous pressure on their children's professional decisions through a variety of means, such as direct inheritance and the requirement of an apprenticeship or role model.

Job Opportunities

Job opportunity refers to any existing position that is open and unfilled by a qualified candidate. Rising employment rates and rising consumer spending capacity are indeed related to the country's economic growth. Students are drawn to certain fields as a result. They perceive huge potential in their progress in life and a reliable income. This finding is consistent with other studies that demonstrate how students select the most pertinent academic strand because they want a stable job with a high salary (Fizer, 2013).

Financial Condition

Financial Condition means the financial resources needed to perform the contract. Some students come from households with minimal financial resources and lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Students may often encounter this difficulty if they are aware of how expensive their education is (Vallente *et al.*, 2016).

Friends or Peers Influence

The impact that friends or peers have over students is referred to as "friends/peer influence." This factor influences students' decision-making while selecting an academic strand since it's crucial to feel included in a group. When a student consults a classmate or peers for all of his or her decisions, there are various outcomes. Sometimes, classmates or friends can influence your choice.

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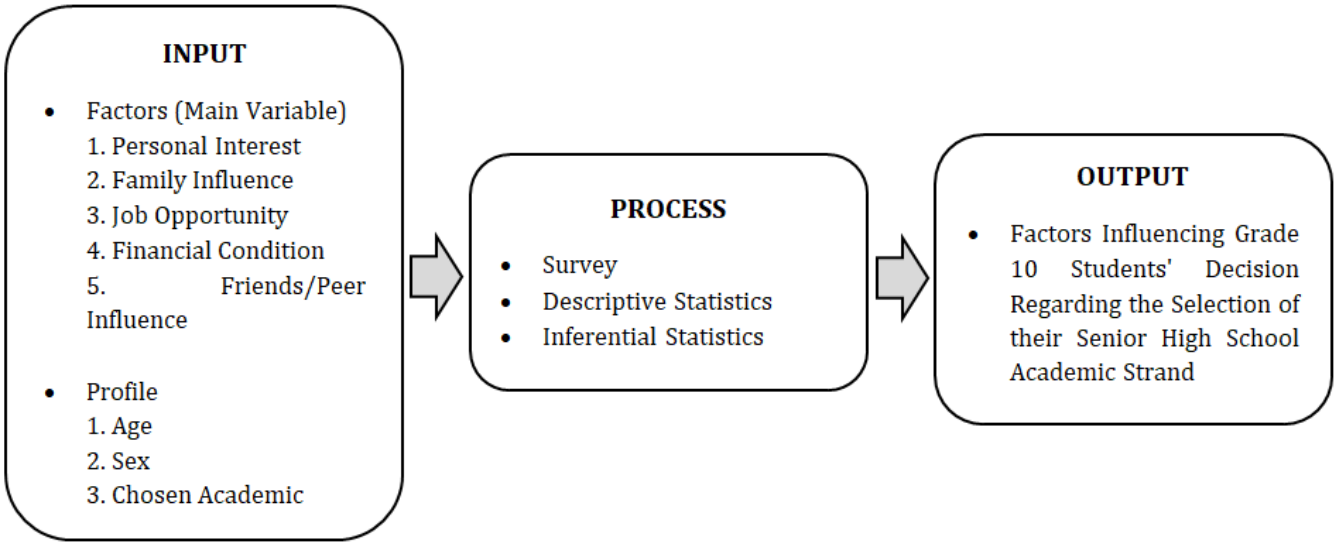

Figure 1. Research Paradigm of the Study

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to determine the different factors influencing Grade 10 students' decision in choosing an academic strand. Specifically, this study will answer the following:

1. What strand is most chosen by the Grade 10 students?

2. What factor has the greatest influence on the Grade 10 students in selecting an academic strand?

2a. Personal Interest

2b. Family Influence

2c. Job Opportunities

2d. Financial Condition

2e. Friends/Peer Influence

3. Is there a significant difference between the mean score of the different factors when grouped by

3a. Sex?

3b. Age?

3c. Chosen strand?

Statement of Hypotheses

To answer 3rd question, hypotheses were set as:

H_0- There is no significant difference between the mean score of the different factors when grouped by sex, age, and the chosen strand.

H_1: There is a significant difference between the mean score of personal interest when grouped by sex, age, and the chosen strand.

H_2: There is a significant difference between the mean score of family influence when grouped by sex, age, and the chosen strand.

H_3: There is a significant difference between the mean score of job opportunity when grouped by sex, age, and the chosen strand.

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H_4: There is a significant difference between the mean score of financial condition when grouped by sex, age, and the chosen strand.

H_5: There is a significant difference between the mean score of friends/peers influence when grouped by sex, age, and the chosen strand.

Significance of the Study

Multiple fields can benefit from this study. First, the study's findings will be helpful to students, their parents, and junior high school counselors by giving them information on the senior high school academic strand selection process. The results may be a useful tool for self-discovery by offering a framework for evaluating suitable academic strand selections. The findings of this study should guide the students in selecting the most appropriate and suitable academic strand for them.

JHS students - This research assists students who will be entering senior high school in identifying the factors to be considered while choosing an academic strand. They must consider their passions, innate talents, and capacities. They will be able to make better decisions as a result of this study.

Guidance Counselors - The junior and senior high school guidance counselors will benefit from this study as well. The best way to ensure a student's career success is to provide them with appropriate assistance when choosing an academic strand that is compatible with their intelligence, abilities, and personality. By combining career plans with the curriculum, it is possible to support students in making an informed choice about the academic strand they should enroll in. Additionally, it should be essential that every high school student leaves with a better career plan from their guidance counselor.

Parents or Guardians - This study will be beneficial to all parents and guardians who play a significant role in their children's career development and decision-making. Parents want their children to be happy and successful in life, and one aspect that affects happiness and success is the choice of employment. Students are more confident in their capacity to investigate jobs and select an academic strand that would be engaging and exciting when they feel their parents' love and support.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study focuses on the factors influencing grade 10 students' decisions regarding the selection of their academic strand. This study was conducted at Saint John Berchmans High School Incorporated (SJBHSI), a private school in Cordon, Isabela. The respondents are the. grade 10 students in SJBHSI enrolled during 2022-2023. Rio's (2022) questionnaire on factors influencing the preferences of grade 10 students in choosing their preferred senior high school track, was used to collect the data. 117 students took the questionnaire out of 189 students. The study was limited to only five academic strands: STEM; ABM; HUMSS; GAS; and TVL.

Definitions of Terms

Academic Strands –refers to a specialization given to incoming senior high school students. There are several academic strands: STEM; ABM; HUMSS; GAS; and TVL.

Factors - refers to the situation, person, condition, or element(s) that causes a given effect; examples include family history, academic background, references from others, and educational aspirations. These are a few of the elements that could have an impact on students' decision to choose an academic strand.

METHODS

Participants

Enrollees of SJBHSI was used primarily as the participant in the study. Convenient non-random sampling was used to choose the respondents. The participants in this study were male and female grade 10 students, aged 14

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to 17, who were enrolled during SY 2022–2023. Out of 189 students, there are 117 students willingly took the questionnaire.

Research Instrument

Rio's (2022) questionnaire on factors influencing the preferences of grade 10 students in choosing their preferred senior high school track, was used to collect the data. There are three sections to the online questionnaire. The explanation, goal, significance of the study, and general directions are provided in Part 1. The respondents' demographic profile, such as their age and gender, is included in Part 2. The third section of the poll is made up of the five factors that have been identified as influencing students' decisions when choosing an academic strand: Personal Interest, Family Influence, Job Opportunities, Financial Conditions, and Friends/Peers' Influence.

Procedure

An identical survey questionnaire was distributed to the selected participants via a Google Form link. Both the researcher and the voluntary participants strictly followed the procedures to ensure clarity and high-quality responses aligned with the research objectives. The principal of SJBHSI was formally notified about the data collection process conducted through Google Forms. Upon approval, the researcher proceeded with the survey administration. No classes were interrupted during the gathering of data.

Data Analysis

Treatment of the Data

Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) version 23 was utilized to analyze the data inferentially and descriptively. The inferential statistics were used to examine if there is a significant difference between the mean score of the different factors when grouped by age, sex, and chosen academic strand, whereas the descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze, interpret, and classify the factors influencing the grade 10 students' decision when choosing an academic strand.

Scoring Procedure

The researchers utilized the method, which assigns a qualitative equivalent to each numerical or quantitative score. The rating and its qualitative equivalent are as follows:

Table 1. Guide for Interpretation

Score	Mean	Qualitative Description	Qualitative Statement
4	3.50-4.00	Strongly Agree	Very Influencing
3	2.50-3.49	Agree	Moderately Influencing
2	1.50-2.49	Disagree	Less Influencing
1	1.00-1.49	Strongly Disagree	Not Influencing

Normality Test

Before comparing the factors and the profile variables of the respondents if they are significantly different, the researcher ensured that all the assumptions needed for the sample t-test and ANOVA were met. The preliminary tests were shown in Appendix II, III, and IV.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Section 1: Profile of the Respondents

Sex of the Respondents

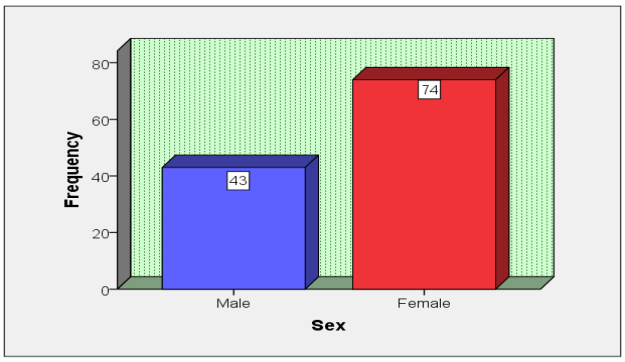

Figure 2. Frequency Count of Sex of the Respondents

Figure 2 shows the number of male and female Grade 10 students of SJBHSI. The majority of the respondents were female students. There are 74 female students and 43 male students who willingly took the questionnaire.

Age of the Respondents

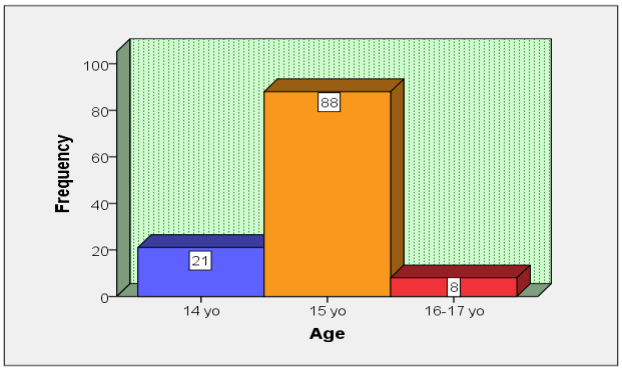

Figure 3. Frequency Count of Age of the Respondents

Figure 3 presents the frequency count of the age of the respondents. Out of 117 respondents, there are 99 respondents aged 15 years old. The frequency of respondents ages 14 years old is 21 and the frequency of respondents ages form 16-17 years old is 8.

Chosen Academic Strand of the Respondents

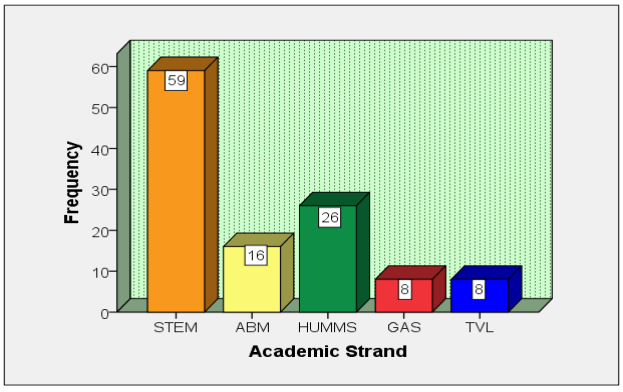

Figure 4. Frequency Count of the Chosen Academic Strand of the Respondents

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Figure 4 revealed the chosen academic strand of the grade 10 students. The majority of the respondents chose STEM Strand (50.4%) as their specialization in their senior high school year. There are 26 respondents who selected HUMSS Strand, 16 respondents who chose ABM Strand, 8 respondents who picked GAS Strand, and 8 respondents who chose TVL Strand as their academic strand in their senior high school.

Section 2: Factors Influencing Grade 10 Students' Decision Regarding the Selection of their Academic Strand Using Descriptive Statistics

Summary of Factors That Influence Student's Decision in Choosing an Academic Track

Table 2 displays the mean, standard deviation, and qualitative description of each factor that influences on student's decision in choosing an academic track

Personal interest, family influence, financial condition, and job opportunities have a moderate influence on the Grade 10 students when choosing an academic strand. Personal Factor has the highest mean which means that among the four aforementioned factors, personal interest has been the first factor to be included when choosing an academic strand with a mean of 3.32 and a standard deviation of 0.506. After considering their interest, the respondents included job opportunities. This factor has a mean of 3.21 and a standard deviation of 0.539. The next factor with the highest mean of 2.79 and standard deviation of 0.554 is the financial condition factor. And lastly, family influence has a mean of 2.53 and a standard deviation of 0.623. The respondents agreed that these factors have a moderate influence on them.

Friends and peers were less influential to the respondents with a mean of 2.11 and a standard deviation of 0.538.

Table 2. Frequency and Percent Distribution of the Five Factors Influencing Grade 10 Students in Choosing their Academic Strand

Factors	Qualitative Description	Frequency	Percent
Personal Interest Mean: 3.32 (Moderately Influencing) SD: 0.506	Not Influencing	0	0%
	Less Influencing	2	1.7%
	Moderately Influencing	75	64.1%
	Very Influencing	40	34.2%
Family Influence Mean: 2.53 (Moderately Influencing) SD: 0.623	Not Influencing	3	2.6%
	Less Influencing	54	46.2%
	Moderately Influencing	55	47.0%
	Very Influencing	5	4.3%
Financial Condition Mean: 2.79 (Moderately Influencing) SD: 0.554	Not Influencing	0	0%
	Less Influencing	33	28.2%
	Moderately Influencing	76	65.0%
	Very Influencing	8	6.8%
Job Opportunities Mean: 3.21	Not Influencing	0	0%
	Less Influencing	7	6.0%

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(Moderately Influencing) SD: 0.539	Moderately Influencing	78	66.7%
	Very Influencing	32	27.4%
Friends/Peers Influence Mean: 2.11 (Less Influencing) SD: 0.538	Not Influencing	10	8.5%
	Less Influencing	85	72.6%
	Moderately Influencing	21	17.9%
	Very Influencing	1	0.9%

Factors That Influence Student's Decision in Choosing an Academic Track

Table 3 shows the mean, standard deviation, and qualitative description of each item of the five factors influencing grade 10 students in choosing their academic strand.

As shown in Table 3, personal interest has a moderate influence on students' decisions in choosing an academic strand. The statements included in the personal interest are all about their interest, skills, and freedom when choosing an academic strand. It can be concluded that grade 10 students choose their academic strand based on their desire (statement 1) and their skills and interest (statement 4). This supports the claim made by Nyamwange's (2016) study that earlier exposure to a profession is essential for igniting and sustaining interest in that subject. This is due to the fact that past knowledge prepares a person for the requirements of obtaining and choosing a career, which explains in part why the overall mean for this aspect is perceived as an extreme one when deciding on a preference for a senior high school strand.

In terms of family influence, this factor has a moderate influence on the respondents except for statement 3. Their parents did not force the respondents to enroll in a specific strand. However, the respondents consider their parent's careers when choosing an academic strand (Statement 1). The study of Tillman (2015) shows that those who are negatively influenced by their parents are less likely to choose the same career field as their parents.

The financial condition has a moderate influence also to the respondents when choosing a strand. Respondents choose an academic strand with a monetary benefit to them (Statement 3). Respondents also consider their parents when choosing an academic strand (Statement 4). Parents' income significantly affects the decision of students when choosing their senior high school academic strand (Dahie *et al.*, 2016).

Respondents were moderately influenced by job opportunities. They consider the future work environment (Statement 4) and the stability of the work (Statement 3) related to the academic strand they will pick. This means that students choose a senior high school strand based on the job opportunities available since they consider it important.

Lastly, friend's and peer's influence has less influence on the grade 10 student when choosing an academic strand for the senior high school year. Most of the respondents still consider their close friends when choosing a strand (Statement 4). When it comes to a student's decision in choosing an academic strand, the circle of peers has zero influence (Olamide & Olawaiye, 2013).

Table 3. Mean, Standard Deviation, and Qualitative Description of each item of the Five Factors Influencing Grade 10 Students in Choosing their Academic Strand

Factors	Statement	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description
Personal Interest	1. I choose based on my desire.	3.39	0.491	Moderately Influencing
	2. I consider my aptitudes and capabilities in	3.27	0.532	Moderately Influencing

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	choosing a strand.			
	3. I choose out of my freedom.	3.24	0.638	Moderately Influencing
	4. My personality and habits are suited to the strand I choose.	3.22	0.617	Moderately Influencing
	5. I choose the track that fits my skills and interest.	3.37	0.553	Moderately Influencing
Family Influence	1. I consider my parents' career in choosing my senior high school strand.	2.87	0.737	Moderately Influencing
	2. I choose the strand based on my parents' preferences.	2.51	0.715	Moderately Influencing
	3. My parents pushed me to enroll in the specific strand.	2.15	0.582	Less Influencing
	4. I chose the strand out of my parents' influence.	2.57	0.686	Moderately Influencing
	5. My parents advised me to choose this strand.	2.57	0.758	Moderately Influencing
Financial Condition	1. I choose this strand based on my parents' income.	2.75	0.681	Moderately Influencing
	2. I choose the strand based on tuition cost.	2.66	0.604	Moderately Influencing
	3. I prefer the strand based on its scholarship opportunities.	2.9	0.648	Moderately Influencing
	4. I choose the strand that would not cause financial stress for my parents.	2.86	0.606	Moderately Influencing
	5. I choose the strand that would not stress my present work	2.81	0.629	Moderately Influencing
Job Opportunities	1. I choose this strand based on its demand.	3.07	0.666	Moderately Influencing
	2. I choose a strand based on salary expectations.	3.07	0.716	Moderately Influencing
	3. I prefer a strand based on its employability and stability.	3.24	0.536	Moderately Influencing
	4. I choose a strand based on its future work environment.	3.34	0.56	Moderately Influencing
	5. I choose a strand based on its availability in the news and job market.	3.09	0.61	Moderately Influencing
Friends/Peers Influence	1. I was influenced by my classmates.	2.14	0.647	Less Influencing
	2. I am afraid to be left out by my friends.	2.09	0.616	Less Influencing
	3. My friend's decision is my decision as well.	1.98	0.508	Less Influencing

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	4. I talked to my friend before choosing a strand.	2.39	0.682	Less Influencing
	5. My peer group and I shared the same preferences.	2.33	0.67	Less Influencing

Section 3: Factors Influencing Grade 10 Students' Decision Regarding the Selection of their Academic Strand Using Inferential Statistics

Significant Difference between the Mean Score of each Factor when Group By Sex

Table 4 shows the independent-sample t-test result on significant differences in the mean score of each factor when grouped by sex.

Table 4 illustrates that the influence of friends and peers has a significant difference in the grade 10 student's decision when choosing their academic strand when grouped by sex (p=0.007). This meant that male students (m=2.34, sd=0.487) are significantly higher than female students (m=2.10, sd=0.455). This further means that male students tend to be more influenced by their friends or peers when choosing their academic strand. This result agreed with the findings of Obiyo and Eze (2015) that peer groups are significant to the career choice of students. Additionally, girls are more likely to be affected by their classmates when choosing a strand since they depend on them (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017).

As shown also in table 4, there were no significant differences between their personal interest (p=0.147), family influence (p=0.324), financial condition (p=0.386), and job opportunities (p=0.517) when grouped by sex. This indicates that the influence of the four mentioned factors on the students is the same regardless of their sex.

Table 4. Independent-Sample T-Test Result on Significant Difference in the Mean Score of each Factor when Grouped by Sex

Factors	Sex	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p-value
Personal Interest	Male	43	3.38	0.490	1.466	76.29	0.147
	Female	74	3.25	0.412			
Family Influence	Male	43	2.47	0.589	-0.990	115	0.324
	Female	74	2.57	0.474			
Financial Condition	Male	43	2.85	0.531	0.870	115	0.386
	Female	74	2.76	0.464			
Job Opportunities	Male	43	3.20	0.527	0.650	115	0.517
	Female	74	3.14	0.482			
Friends/Peers Influence	Male	43	2.34	0.487	2.727	115	0.007**
	Female	74	2.10	0.455			

* Significant at the 0.05 level of significance

** Significant at the 0.01 level of significance

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Significant Difference between the Mean Score of each Factor when Group By Age

Table 5 shows the ANOVA result on significant differences in the mean score of each factor when grouped by age.

Table 5 showed that there existed a significant difference between the influence of friends/peers and the decision of the grade 10 student when grouped by age (p=0.002) which implied that students ages 16-17 years old (m=2.60, sd=0.595) significantly higher than student ages 14 (m=1.94, sd=0.530) and 15 years old (m=2.21, sd=0.428). This also means that students ages 16-17 years old are more influenced by their friends and peers than students aged 14 and 15 years old. The study of Steinberg and Monahan (2007) also revealed that friends' and peers' influence was one of the significant factors. They also added that peer influences increase linearly as they grow.

Their personal interest (p=0.661), family influence (p=0.968), financial condition (p=0.093), and job opportunities (p=0.692) are not significantly different from the grade 10 decision in choosing an academic strand when grouped by age. This implies that the influence of the four mentioned factors on the students is the same regardless of their age.

Table 5. ANOVA Result on Significant Difference in the Mean Score of each Factor when Grouped by Age

Factors	Age	N	Mean	SD	F	df	p-value
Personal Interest	14 years old	21	3.32	0.417	0.415	2	0.661
	15 years old	88	3.28	0.445			
	16-17 years old	8	3.43	0.539			
Family Influence	14 years old	21	2.52	0.496	0.033	2	0.968
	15 years old	88	2.54	0.504			
	16-17 years old	8	2.50	0.771			
Financial Condition	14 years old	21	2.59	0.471	2.429	2	0.093
	15 years old	88	2.83	0.470			
	16-17 years old	8	2.93	0.650			
Job Opportunities	14 years old	21	3.12	0.538	0.370	2	0.692
	15 years old	88	3.16	0.488			
	16-17 years old	8	3.30	0.535			
Friends/Peers Influence	14 years old	21	1.94	0.530	6.325	2	0.002**
	15 years old	88	2.21	0.428			
	16-17 years old	8	2.60	0.595			

* Significant at the 0.05 level of significance

** Significant at the 0.01 level of significance

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Significant Difference between the Mean Score of each Factor when Group by Strand

Table 6 shows the independent-sample t-test result on significant differences in the mean score of each factor when grouped by strand. For this table, the strands were categorized into two which are STEM and NON-STEM (ABM, HUMMS, GAS, and TVL).

As shown in Table 6, the results revealed that all of the five factors: Personal Interest (p=0.664); Family Influence (p=0.796); Financial Condition (p=0.680); Job Opportunities (p=0.906); and Friends/Peers Influence (p=0.998), has no significant difference when group by strand. This indicates that the influence of all factors on the students is the same regardless of their chosen strand.

Table 6. Independent-Sample T-Test Result on Significant Difference in the Mean Score of each Factor when Grouped by Strand

Factors	Strand	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p-value
Personal Interest	STEM	58	3.32	0.471	0.435	115	0.664
	NON-STEM	59	3.28	0.420			
Family Influence	STEM	58	2.52	0.502	-0.260	115	0.796
	NON-STEM	59	2.55	0.539			
Financial Condition	STEM	58	2.81	0.484	0.414	115	0.680
	NON-STEM	59	2.78	0.497			
Job Opportunities	STEM	58	3.16	0.395	-0.119	101.922	0.906
	NON-STEM	59	3.17	0.585			
Friends/Peers Influence	STEM	58	2.19	0.529	-0.002	115	0.998
	NON-STEM	59	2.19	0.431			

* Significant at the 0.05 level of significance

** Significant at the 0.01 level of significance

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study was conducted in order to determine the factors influencing the decision of Grade 10 students when choosing their senior high school academic strand. The factors involved in this study were personal interest, family influence, financial condition, job opportunities, and friends/peers' influence.

Summary of Findings

1. There are 59 students out of 117 students chose the STEM strand as their senior high school academic strand. There are 26 students who chose HUMSS, 16 students who chose ABM Strand, 8 students who chose GAS Strand, and 8 students who chose TVL Strand.

2. Based on the mean, the personal interest factor has the greatest influence on the Grade 10 students in selecting an academic strand (m=3.32). Followed by the job opportunities factor with a mean of 3.21. Then by

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financial condition factor with a mean of 2.79. Lastly the financial influence factor with a mean of 2.53. The four aforementioned factors moderately influence the decision of Grade 10 students in choosing an academic strand. Friends and peers influence has less influence on the grade 10 students of SJBHSI (m=2.11).

3. There is a significant difference between the mean score of friends/peers influence factor when grouped by sex and age (p=0.007 and p=0.002, respectively). But there is no significant difference between the mean score of the different factors when grouped by strand.

Conclusions

The majority of students prefer to take the STEM strand. This is followed by HUMSS, ABM, and, lastly, GAS and TVL. In terms of the factors' level of influence, the personal interest factor gained the highest level of influence, followed by job opportunities, financial condition, parent's influence, and friends/peer's influence. In terms of significant differences between the factors and sex, friends/peers influence affect students' decision in choosing a strand for senior high school. The same factor was influenced by the grade 10 students in selecting their academic strand when grouped by age. There is no significant difference between the students' chosen strand and the factors affecting it.

Recommendations

The following are the suggestions based on the study's findings and analysis of the data obtained:

1. For the Grade 10 students - Students should make their decision on their talent, skill, and ability when selecting a senior high school academic strand. Students must be aware of their career goals. Students should consider guidance from a knowledgeable source that is either reasonable or applicable to their circumstances. Students must have the opportunity to do self-evaluation and job inquiry in order to form informed judgments. Before enrolling in a chosen track, students should research the benefits and opportunities it offers. `

2. For the SJBHSI - Students should undergo orientation at the school to increase their literacy and capacity to prevent future bridging. Students who are having trouble selecting an academic strand should be identified by the counseling office, and assistance should be offered. In order to lessen the negative effects of peer pressure in the classroom, teachers and parents should be open to preventative measures. And lastly, the school is required to offer a counseling service for students who are experiencing financial issues.

3. For the parents - For their children's senior high school preparation, parents should set aside funds for their children's education and parents should encourage their kids' interests and passions.

4. For the government – The government should increase the number of scholarship programs available for students in need.

5. For future researchers - They must consider the other two strands not included in this paper: Arts and Design Track; and Sports Track. Aside from the grade 10 student's sex, age, and chosen, academic strand, the researcher can add more profile variables added in the inferential problem like academic grade. Future studies might explore qualitative insights (e.g., student interviews) to add depth to the reasons behind their academic strand choices.

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APPENDIX

Appendix I

The Questionnaire

Factors Influencing Grade 10 Students' Decision Regarding the Selection of their Senior High School Academic Strand

Dear Respondent,

I am inviting you to participate in this research by completing the following survey. This research aims to determine the factors influencing the Grade 10 students' choice of an academic strand. The following questionnaire will require approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. Thank you for taking your time thein assisting me with this research. The data collected will remain confidential and used solely for academic purposes.

Sincerely,

Reñel M. Sabanal

Researcher

Name: _____

Sex: _____

Age: _____

Preferred Academic Strand *

- ○ Technical-Vocational and Livelihood (TVL)
- ○ Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS)
- ○ Accountancy and Business Management (ABM)
- ○ General Academic Strand (GAS)
- ○ Science, Technical Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)

DIRECTIONS

This form consists of statements on the following five factors: Personal Interest, Family Influence, Job Opportunities, Financial Condition, and Friends/Peer Influence. These five factors can reflect the influence in choosing your preferred academic strand in your senior high school. There are no correct or incorrect responses. Read each statement carefully. Please think about how you feel about each statement.

Legends: SA – Strongly Agree

A – Agree

D – Disagree

SD – Strongly Disagree

Personal Interest	SA	A	D	SD
1. I choose based on my desire.				
2. I consider my aptitudes and capabilities in choosing an strand.				
3. I choose out of my freedom				
4. My personality and habits are suited to the strand I choose.				
5. I choose the track that fits my skills and interest.				

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Family Influence	4	3	2	1
1. I consider my parents' career in choosing my senior high school strand.				
2. I choose the strand based on my parents' preferences.				
3. My parents pushed me to enroll in the specific strand.				
4. I chose the strand out of my parents' influence.				
5. My parents advised me to choose this strand.				

Financial Condition	4	3	2	1
1. I choose this strand based on my parents' income.				
2. I choose the strand based on tuition cost.				
3. I prefer the strand based on its scholarship opportunities.				
4. I choose the strand that would not caused financial stress for my parents.				
5. I choose the strand that would not stress my present work				

Job Opportunities	4	3	2	1
1. I choose this strand based on its demand.				
2. I choose a strand based on salary expectation.				
3. I prefer a strand based on its employability and stability.				
4. I choose a strand based on its future work environment.				
5. I choose a strand based on its availability in the news and job market.				

Friends/Peer Influence	4	3	2	1
1. I was influenced by my classmates.				
2. I am afraid to be left out by my friends.				
3. My friend's decision is my decision as well.				
4. I talked to my friend before choosing a strand.				
5. My peer group and I shared the same preferences.				

Appendix II

Problem 3a Procedure

Problem: Is there a significant difference between the mean score of the different factors when grouped by sex?

Objective: to compare the mean score of the different factor of male and female Grade 10 students

Step 1: State Ho and Ha

Ho: There is no difference between the mean score of the different factors when grouped according to their sex.

Ha: There is a significant difference between the mean score of the different factors when grouped according to their sex.

Step 2: $\alpha = 0.05$

Step 3: Possible Test (T-test for independent samples / Mann-Whitney U test)

Preliminary analysis:

1. The purpose is to compare means of two independent groups (Male and female group)
2. By C.L.T, the data is normally distributed (n>30)

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With the preliminary test, the appropriate test for the data is **t-test for independent samples**.

Step 4: Generate the result

Group Statistics

	Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PIMEAN	Male	43	3.3814	.48954	.07465
	Female	74	3.2514	.41223	.04792
FIMEAN	Male	43	2.4744	.58882	.08979
	Female	74	2.5730	.47436	.05514
FCMEAN	Male	43	2.8465	.53065	.08092
	Female	74	2.7649	.46388	.05393
JOMEAN	Male	43	3.2000	.52735	.08042
	Female	74	3.1378	.48192	.05602
FPIMEAN	Male	43	2.3442	.48663	.07421
	Female	74	2.1000	.45541	.05294

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
PIMEAN	Equal variances assume	Less than 0.05	.005	1.534	115	.128	.13004	.08476		.29794
	Equal variances not assumed			1.466	76.290	.147	.13004	.08871		.30671
FIMEAN	Equal variances assu	More than 0.05	.100	-.990	115	.324	-.09855	.09954		.09861
	Equal variances not assumed			-.935	73.627	.353	-.09855	.10537		.11143
FCMEAN	Equal variances assu	More than 0.05	.361	.870	115	.386	.08165	.09383		.26751
	Equal variances not assumed			.840	78.658	.404	.08165	.09725		.27522
JOMEAN	Equal variances assu	More than 0.05	.527	.650	115	.517	.06216	.09568		.25169
	Equal variances not assumed			.634	81.599	.528	.06216	.09801		.25715
FPIMEAN	Equal variances assu	More than 0.05	.160	2.727	115	.007	.24419	.08956		.42159
	Equal variances not assumed			2.679	83.225	.009	.24419	.09116		.42549

Ho

Ho

Ho

Ho

H_1

Based on Lavene's Test

Based on p-value

Step 5: Decision

- Personal Interest - **Accept the null hypothesis**. There is no significant difference between the mean score of personal interest factor when group by sex
- Family Influence - **Accept the null hypothesis**. There is no significant difference between the mean score of family influence factor when group by sex
- Financial Condition - **Accept the null hypothesis**. There is no significant difference between the mean score of financial condition factor when group by sex
- Job Opportunity - **Accept the null hypothesis**. There is no significant difference between the mean score of job opportunity factor when group by sex
- Friends/peers Influence - **Reject the null hypothesis**. There is a significant difference between the mean score of friends/peers influence factor when group by sex

Step 6: Interpretation

Table 1 shows the independent-sample t-test result on significant differences in the mean score of each factor when grouped by sex.

Table 1 illustrates that the influence of friends and peers has a significant difference in the grade 10 student's decision when choosing their academic strand when grouped by sex (p=0.007). This meant that male students (m=2.34, sd=0.487) are significantly higher than female students (m=2.10, sd=0.455). This further means that

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male students tend to be more influenced by their friends or peers when choosing their academic strand. This result agreed with the findings of Obiyo and Eze (2015) that peer groups are significant to the career choice of students. Additionally, girls are more likely to be affected by their classmates when choosing a strand since they depend on them (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017).

As shown also in table 1, there were no significant differences between their personal interest (p=0.147), family influence (p=0.324), financial condition (p=0.386), and job opportunities (p=0.517) when grouped by sex. This indicates that the influence of the four mentioned factors on the students is the same regardless of their sex.

Table 1. Independent-Sample T-Test Result on Significant Difference in the Mean Score of each Factor when Grouped by Sex

Factors	Sex	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p-value
Personal Interest	Male	43	3.38	0.490	1.466	76.29	0.147
	Female	74	3.25	0.412			
Family Influence	Male	43	2.47	0.589	-0.990	115	0.324
	Female	74	2.57	0.474			
Financial Condition	Male	43	2.85	0.531	0.870	115	0.386
	Female	74	2.76	0.464			
Job Opportunities	Male	43	3.20	0.527	0.650	115	0.517
	Female	74	3.14	0.482			
Friends/Peers Influence	Male	43	2.34	0.487	2.727	115	0.007**
	Female	74	2.10	0.455			

* Significant at the 0.05 level of significance

** Significant at the 0.01 level of significance

Appendix III

Problem 3b Procedure

Problem: Is there a significant difference between the mean score of the different factors when grouped by age?

Objective: to compare the mean score of the different factor of Grade 10 student's age

Step 1: State Ho and Ha

Ho: There is no difference between the mean score of the different factors when grouped according to their age.

Ha: There is a significant difference between the mean score of the different factors when grouped according to their age.

Step 2: $\alpha = 0.05$

Step 3: Possible Test (One-way ANOVA / Kruskal Wallis)

Preliminary analysis:

1. The purpose is to compare three or more independent samples (Age of the respondents)

2. By C.L.T, the data is normally distributed

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With the preliminary test, the appropriate test for the data is **One-way ANOVA**.

Descriptives

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
PIMEAN	14 yo	21	3.3238	.41702	.09100	3.1340	3.5136	3.00	4.00
	15 yo	88	3.2818	.44529	.04747	3.1875	3.3762	2.40	4.00
	16-17 yo	8	3.4250	.53918	.19063	2.9742	3.8758	2.60	4.00
	Total	117	3.2991	.44460	.04110	3.2177	3.3806	2.40	4.00
FIMEAN	14 yo	21	2.5238	.49589	.10821	2.2981	2.7495	1.80	3.60
	15 yo	88	2.5432	.50464	.05380	2.4363	2.6501	1.20	4.00
	16-17 yo	8	2.5000	.77090	.27255	1.8555	3.1445	1.00	3.40
	Total	117	2.5368	.51905	.04799	2.4417	2.6318	1.00	4.00
FCMEAN	14 yo	21	2.5905	.47107	.10280	2.3760	2.8049	2.00	3.40
	15 yo	88	2.8318	.46966	.05007	2.7323	2.9313	1.60	4.00
	16-17 yo	8	2.9250	.64973	.22971	2.3818	3.4682	2.00	3.80
	Total	117	2.7949	.48881	.04519	2.7054	2.8844	1.60	4.00
JOMEAN	14 yo	21	3.1238	.53843	.11749	2.8787	3.3689	2.00	4.00
	15 yo	88	3.1568	.48844	.05207	3.0533	3.2603	2.00	4.00
	16-17 yo	8	3.3000	.53452	.18898	2.8531	3.7469	2.40	4.00
	Total	117	3.1607	.49775	.04602	3.0695	3.2518	2.00	4.00
FPIMEAN	14 yo	21	1.9429	.52969	.11559	1.7017	2.1840	1.00	3.00
	15 yo	88	2.2114	.42816	.04564	2.1206	2.3021	1.00	3.20
	16-17 yo	8	2.6000	.59522	.21044	2.1024	3.0976	2.00	3.60
	Total	117	2.1897	.47983	.04436	2.1019	2.2776	1.00	3.60

Step 4: Generate the result

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
PIMEAN	.987	2	114	.376
FIMEAN	1.145	2	114	.322
FCMEAN	.586	2	114	.558
JOMEAN	.193	2	114	.825
FPIMEAN	1.791	2	114	.172

The p-values are greater than 0.05, then use ANOVA

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
PIMEAN	Between Groups	.166	2	.083	.415	.661	
	Within Groups	22.764	114	.200			Ho
	Total	22.930	116				
FIMEAN	Between Groups	.018	2	.009	.033	.968	
	Within Groups	31.234	114	.274			Ho
	Total	31.252	116				
FCMEAN	Between Groups	1.133	2	.566	2.429	.093	
	Within Groups	26.584	114	.233			Ho
	Total	27.717	116				
JOMEAN	Between Groups	.185	2	.093	.370	.692	
	Within Groups	28.554	114	.250			Ho
	Total	28.739	116				
FPIMEAN	Between Groups	2.668	2	1.334	6.325	.002	
	Within Groups	24.040	114	.211			H_1
	Total	26.708	116				

Step 5: Decision

- Personal Interest - **Accept the null hypothesis**. There is no significant difference between the mean score of personal interest factor when group by age

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- Family Influence - **Accept the null hypothesis**. There is no significant difference between the mean score of family influence factor when group by age
- Financial Condition - **Accept the null hypothesis**. There is no significant difference between the mean score of financial condition factor when group by age
- Job Opportunity - **Accept the null hypothesis**. There is no significant difference between the mean score of job opportunity factor when group by age
- Friends/peers Influence - **Reject the null hypothesis**. There is a significant difference between the mean score of friends/peers influence factor when group by age

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: FPIMEAN

LSD

(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
14 yo	15 yo	-.26851*	.11153	.018	-.4894	-.0476
	16-17 yo	-.65714*	.19079	.001	-1.0351	-.2792
15 yo	14 yo	.26851*	.11153	.018	.0476	.4894
	16-17 yo	-.38864*	.16958	.024	-.7246	-.0527
16-17 yo	14 yo	.65714*	.19079	.001	.2792	1.0351
	15 yo	.38864*	.16958	.024	.0527	.7246

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Step 6: Post hoc comparison test for friends /peers influence factor

Step 7: Interpretation

Table 2. ANOVA Result on Significant Difference in the Mean Score of each Factor when Grouped by Age

Factors	Age	N	Mean	SD	F	df	p-value
Personal Interest	14 years old	21	3.32	0.417	0.415	2	0.661
	15 years old	88	3.28	0.445			
	16-17 years old	8	3.43	0.539			
Family Influence	14 years old	21	2.52	0.496	0.033	2	0.968
	15 years old	88	2.54	0.504			
	16-17 years old	8	2.50	0.771			
Financial Condition	14 years old	21	2.59	0.471	2.429	2	0.093
	15 years old	88	2.83	0.470			
	16-17 years old	8	2.93	0.650			
Job Opportunities	14 years old	21	3.12	0.538	0.370	2	0.692
	15 years old	88	3.16	0.488			
	16-17 years old	8	3.30	0.535			
Friends/Peers Influence	14 years old	21	1.94	0.530	6.325	2	0.002**
	15 years old	88	2.21	0.428			
	16-17 years old	8	2.60	0.595			

* Significant at the 0.05 level of significance

** Significant at the 0.01 level of significance

Table 2 shows the ANOVA result on significant differences in the mean score of each factor when grouped by age.

Table 2 showed that there existed a significant difference between the influence of friends/peers and the decision of the grade 10 student when grouped by age (p=0.002) which implied that students ages 16-17 years

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old (m=2.60, sd=0.595) significantly higher than student ages 14 (m=1.94, sd=0.530) and 15 years old (m=2.21, sd=0.428). This also means that students ages 16-17 years old are more influenced by their friends and peers than students aged 14 and 15 years old. The study of Steinberg and Monahan (2007) also revealed that friends' and peers' influence was one of the significant factors. They also added that peer influences increase linearly as they grow.

Their personal interest (p=0.661), family influence (p=0.968), financial condition (p=0.093), and job opportunities (p=0.692) are not significantly different from the grade 10 decision in choosing an academic strand when grouped by age. This implies that the influence of the four mentioned factors on the students is the same regardless of their age.

Appendix IV

Problem 3c Procedure

Problem: Is there a significant difference between the mean score of the different factors when grouped by strand?

Objective: to compare the mean score of the different factor and the chosen strand of the grade 10 students

Step 1: State Ho and Ha

Ho: There is no difference between the mean score of the different factors when grouped by their chosen strand.

Ha: There is a significant difference between the mean score of the different factors when grouped strand.

Step 2: $\alpha = 0.05$

Step 3: Possible Test (T-test for independent samples / Mann-Whitney U test)

Preliminary analysis:

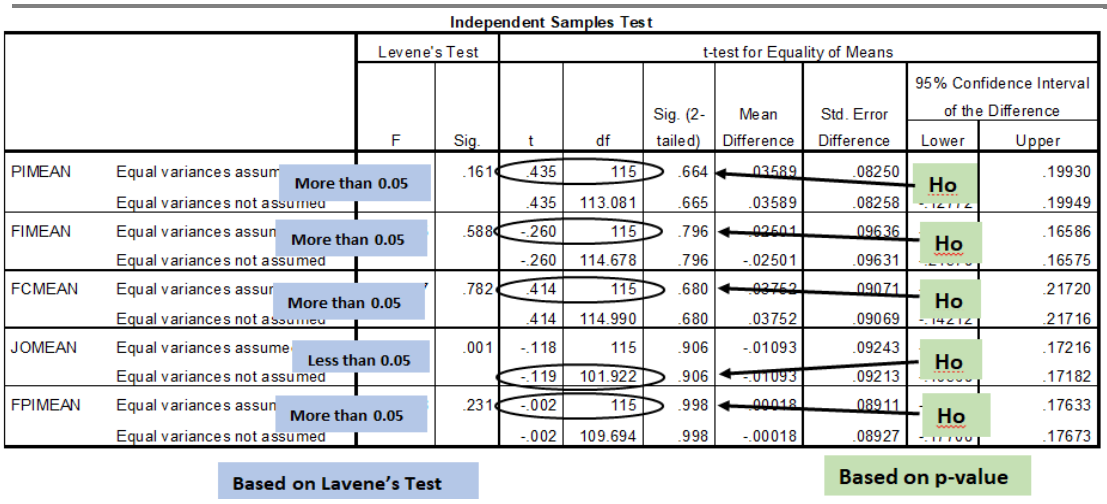
1. The purpose is to compare means of two independent groups (STEM and NONSTEM)
2. By C.L.T, the data is normally distributed (n>30)

With the preliminary test, the appropriate test for the data is **t-test for independent samples**.

Step 4: Generate the result

Group Statistics

	Stem or Non-Stem	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PIMEAN	NONSTEM	58	3.3172	.47096	.06184
	STEM	59	3.2814	.42038	.05473
FIMEAN	NONSTEM	58	2.5241	.50238	.06597
	STEM	59	2.5492	.53896	.07017
FCMEAN	NONSTEM	58	2.8138	.48393	.06354
	STEM	59	2.7763	.49700	.06470
JOMEAN	NONSTEM	58	3.1552	.39478	.05184
	STEM	59	3.1661	.58505	.07617
FPIMEAN	NONSTEM	58	2.1897	.52905	.06947
	STEM	59	2.1898	.43059	.05606



Step 5: Decision

- Personal Interest - **Accept the null hypothesis**. There is no significant difference between the mean score of personal interest factor when group by sex
- Family Influence - **Accept the null hypothesis**. There is no significant difference between the mean score of family influence factor when group by sex
- Financial Condition - **Accept the null hypothesis**. There is no significant difference between the mean score of financial condition factor when group by sex
- Job Opportunity - **Accept the null hypothesis**. There is no significant difference between the mean score of job opportunity factor when group by sex
- Friends/peers Influence - **Accept the null hypothesis**. There is no significant difference between the mean score of friends/peers influence factor when group by sex

Step 6: Interpretation

Table 3 shows the independent-sample t-test result on significant differences in the mean score of each factor when grouped by strand. For this table, the strands were categorized into two which are STEM and NON-STEM (ABM, HUMMS, GAS, and TVL).

As shown in Table 3, the results revealed that all of the five factors: Personal Interest (p=0.664); Family Influence (p=0.796); Financial Condition (p=0.680); Job Opportunities (p=0.906); and Friends/Peers Influence (p=0.998), has no significant difference when group by strand. This indicates that the influence of all factors on the students is the same regardless of their chosen strand.

Table 3. Independent-Sample T-Test Result on Significant Difference in the Mean Score of each Factor when Grouped by Strand

Factors	Strand	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p-value
Personal Interest	STEM	58	3.32	0.471	0.435	115	0.664
	NON-STEM	59	3.28	0.420			
Family Influence	STEM	58	2.52	0.502	-0.260	115	0.796
	NON-STEM	59	2.55	0.539			
Financial Condition	STEM	58	2.81	0.484	0.414	115	0.680
	NON-STEM	59	2.78	0.497			
Job Opportunities	STEM	58	3.16	0.395	-0.119	101.922	0.906
	NON-STEM	59	3.17	0.585			
Friends/Peers Influence	STEM	58	2.19	0.529	-0.002	115	0.998
	NON-STEM	59	2.19	0.431			

* Significant at the 0.05 level of significance

** Significant at the 0.01 level of significance