

# Flipping a New Page: Unfurling Career Choice Decision-Making Process of Senior High School Students

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**Abstract.** This study explored and sought to unfurl senior high school student's career choices and decision-making process factors that affect senior high school student's career choices and decision-making processes. The researcher narrowed down the highlights and lowlights of the existing issues in decision-making processes and the challenges that come along the way, and I used phenomenology. Instead, it comprises intricately intertwined complexities and factors that require thorough consideration. This brought us to the focus of the current undertaking. Through a qualitative phenomenological study, the researcher was able to gather the unique and first-hand narratives of the participants about the challenges, coping mechanisms, and insights about career choice decision-making. The study participants were ten (10) senior high school students from a secondary school located in Davao Occidental. Emerging themes from the extracted interview statements revealed the challenges experienced by the students: economic profile, academic ability, and parental influence. On the other hand, the coping mechanism includes consulting the career guidance counselor and exploring various career opportunities. Lastly, the insights were career planning and exploring career options. Navigating career decisions can be challenging. Hence, it was essential to consider one's skills, passions, and long-term goals. Embracing adaptability and a growth mindset can empower individuals to navigate uncertainties and seize opportunities.

## KEY WORDS

1. career choice 2. economic profile 3. academic ability 4. parental  
influence

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## 1. Introduction

In today's context, students are bombarded with options about their future. Some offer loud opinions about it, but at the end of the day, the final word is up to them. Conversely, following a proper decision-making process empowers students to make informed career choices by equipping them with the means to assess their interests, appraise external influences, weigh financial implications, seek reliable information, and establish meaningful objectives. With the help of these strategies, learners may successfully discuss the wide range of factors that may impact their job choices, ultimately leading to decisions that align with their individual abilities, values, and goals. Every person's life has a critical turning point at which they must decide on their job route. Childhood is when goals and dreams frequently take the lead, reflecting the wide range of interests children hope to pursue. However, when these children enter puberty,

the decision of their future employment route becomes more and more critical. Choosing a career is even more important for adolescents since they might not have access to all the information necessary to make a decision that aligns with their talents, skills, and personality qualities (Abomah, Tagoe, 2021). Globally, a study was conducted by Lee et al. (2022), and it investigated the relationship between career decision-making self-efficacy, career preparation behavior, and career decision difficulties among South Korean college students. The findings revealed that higher career decision-making self-efficacy was associated with more proactive career preparation behaviors, while career decision difficulties negatively impacted self-efficacy. The study suggested that career programs should help students independently set career goals and actively search for career information. Meanwhile, in the case of South Africa, Abe and Chikoko (2020). They explored the factors influencing the career decisions of STEM students at a South African university. The study highlighted the significant role of familial influence and personal interest in shaping career paths, emphasizing the need for educators to consider these factors when supporting students in their career planning. Another study cited by Lee et al. (2022) focused on high school student's career decision-making. The study conducted in Turkey found that students with an internal locus of control experienced fewer career decision-making difficulties than those with an external locus of control. This suggests that fostering a sense of control over their future can help students navigate career choices more effectively. On the other hand, the complexity of the educational system in the Philippines presents students with unique difficulties when they select careers. These difficulties include restricted access to in-depth knowledge about a variety of vocations, specific barriers that can deter motivation, and a limited grasp of their own interests and skills.

These elements frequently cause students to feel hesitant and confused, which ultimately affects their ability to make wise and appropriate career choices (Plaza, 2023). Similarly, Carrico et. al (2019) opined that the process of making career choices in the Philippines has become increasingly challenging due to the sheer multitude of available career paths, the ever-evolving job market and economy, the apprehension of making erroneous decisions, and the potential dissatisfaction that may result from entering the wrong profession. In order to give these students the abilities and knowledge required to plan for their future in the workplace, it is crucial that factors impacting students' career choices in Senior High Schools (SHS) are evaluated. In the local scene, Bonayog (2019) conducted a recent study titled "Factors Affecting Career Decision Making and Level of Interest of Grade 10 Students" in Davao City. This research aimed to identify the factors influencing the career choices and interests of Grade 10 students. The study found that personal and family factors also played a crucial role in shaping students' career decisions. In Davao Occidental, senior high school students are facing the same dilemma. As they walk their path to their desired careers, many factors affect their decision-making process in choosing what profession to take after graduation. With much pressure put on their shoulders to choose the right track, they are having trouble with what to do or choose. Some students even give up and choose not to pursue their dreams at all for personal reasons. It is in this context that this study was conceptualized. I sought to uncover the factors that affect the decision-making process of senior high school students. The study's findings provided valuable insights into educational management, adding to the current pool of knowledge regarding students' experiences in choosing a suitable career path for them and what factors affected their choice. The researcher hopes that this study will benefit the identified sectors of

the academy. This includes educational leaders, school heads, teachers, guidance counselors, other stakeholders, and future researchers. The educational leaders can benefit from the findings of this study as it can offer them a substantial contribution in terms of the factors that influence the students' career choices. It might also help the school heads or principals glimpse how the students plan and think about their future careers. This study can be a basis for possible curricular redirection and program development of the school. The study can serve as a reference for future teacher development programs

that lead to better student preparation for college. The findings may have implications for student's career choices and provide insights that may help guide them. Finally, the internal and external stakeholders may provide better support and assistance to guide and help the students decide and plan their future careers. This would also be helpful as an additional contribution to future researchers as their references in the field of career choices and decision-making processes. It can offer them a substantial contribution to their academic arsenal.

*1.1. Purpose of the Study*—This study aims to investigate and comprehend the factors that influence senior high school students' career choices in the Don Marcelino District in Davao Occidental. It aims to look extensively into the elements that significantly influence the career preferences of this particular group of people and examine how senior high school students make decisions as they move through this crucial period of their schooling.

*1.2. Research Questions*—This study sought to unfurl senior high school students' career choice decision-making process. This study was conducted, and the researcher sought to answer the following questions:

- (1) What challenges affect the career decision-making of senior high school students?
- (2) How do they cope with the challenges of their career decision-making?
- (3) What moral values can be drawn from the findings of the study?

*1.3. Definition of Terms*—For a more comprehensive understanding, the following terms were described operationally. Career Choice refers to choosing a career path that may involve choices regarding education and training

for a given career (IGI Global, 2023). Decision-making refers to making choices by identifying a problem, gathering information, and assessing alternative resolutions (University of Massachusetts, 2023).

*1.4. Significant of the Study*—This study intends to provide valuable insights into the challenges, motivations, and influences that impact senior high school students' career decisions. The findings of this research not only contribute to a more profound understanding of the dynamics at play in career selection among

this demographic but offer practical implications for educational institutions, career counselors, and policymakers. The ultimate goal of this research was to encourage the creation of focused interventions and support systems that enable senior high school students to make educated career decisions that align with their capabilities and ambitions.

*1.5. Theoretical Lens*—

The theoretical underpinning of the study was anchored in John Holland's Theory of Career Choice (1997). The Theory of Career Choice postulated that careers are determined by an interaction: personality and the environment. Therefore, it maintains that in choosing a career, people prefer jobs where they can be around others who are like them. Holland's theory is centred on the notion that most people fit into one of six personality types such as realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional. As applied in the context of the present study, the theory of career choice explains the underlying reasons why people choose a specific career. It stipulates that individuals choose careers and work environments that best fit their values, needs, and personality. Looking back into the focus of the study, the researcher endeavoured to unfurl the challenges affecting the students' career choice, and Holland's theory presented that one's personality and environment contribute greatly to one's decision-making, hence the theory is utilized to encapsulate the study's focus. The Theory of Career Choice was also utilized in order to better understand the career choice decision-making process of senior high school students, their personality types, as well as what part of their environment has the greatest contribution to their decision-making process. The study was further reinforced by Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad, and Herma's Career Development Theory (1951, as cited in Savickas and Lent, 1994). The theory proposes that there is a development path that leads to career choice. Starting in pre-teen and ending in young adulthood, individuals pass through three stages: fantasy, tentative, and realistic. Beginning in the preteen years and continuing through high school, the young person further defines their interests in, capacity for, and values of an occupational choice. The cumulative effect of the process is the transition process in which the adolescent begins the career choice process and recognizes the consequences and responsibility of that choice. In the context of the study, the identified participants are senior high school students who fall under the realistic stage. They are at the culmination part of their career development; hence they are expected to have an idea or a plan on what path they'll take as they enter the employment world or pursue higher education. The theory was a perfect fit for this study as it highlights the study's participants and their career development.

## 2. Methodology

This chapter effectively addresses the specific objectives of the study by outlining the systematic procedures and methodologies used in phenomenological research. It also explains the selected research design and the roles I played as the researcher throughout the study's implementation. Moreover, it offers thorough insights into the research subjects, clarifying their procedures and selection standards. The chapter concludes by exploring the techniques used for data collection, analysis, and strategies used to uphold ethical standards during the research.

*2.1. Philosophical Assumptions*—A study's philosophical and qualitative presumptions are vital in steering the investigation. Four fundamental assumptions—ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological—form the bedrock for comprehending qualitative research. These assumptions establish the groundwork for the research design and inform the researcher's approach to the study. A paradigm is a broad framework or perspective that guides and shapes how researchers approach their studies, formulate

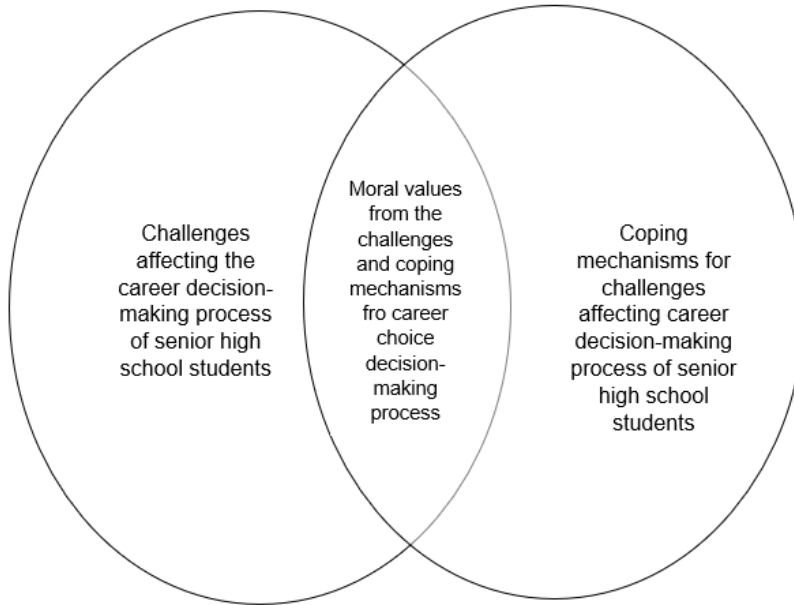


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

research questions, gather data, analyze findings, and interpret results. It encompasses a set of beliefs, assumptions, methodologies, and theoretical foundations that influence how researchers conceptualize and conduct their research (Zukauskas et al., 2019). In this research, the paradigm guided the choice of methodology, methods, and techniques, shaping the overall research process and ensuring coherence in the study. **Ontology.** This section of the study focuses on the relationship between the problem and reality. Creswell (2013) asserts that the research participants' perceptions of reality are varied and subjective. This study recognizes the complexity and diversity of the realities faced by senior high school students in their career choice decision-making process. Every student's story adds to a diverse yet collective understanding of their experiences. It is my sole responsibility to use theme analysis to capture these various realities and provide a thorough picture of the challenges, coping mechanisms, and moral values for career choice decision-making. **Epistemology.** Epistemology deals with the nature of knowledge and the relationship between the knower and the

known. According to Guba and Lincoln, as referenced by Creswell (2013), the researcher made an effort to reduce the gap between them and the participants based on the epistemological premise. By engaging directly with the participants, I became an "insider," facilitating a more authentic and nuanced collection of data. This approach supports the gathering of firsthand experiences, challenges, coping mechanisms, and moral values, which are critical in exploring the subjective realities of the participants. **Axiology.** It concerns the influence and importance of my values as a researcher in this study. According to Creswell (2013), acknowledging and openly discussing the researcher's values that shape the study is crucial. The values which influence how data are interpreted and presented are explicitly acknowledged in the research process. As a researcher, I handled each participant's narrative with care and integrity, and I always have the utmost respect for the information they provide. This commitment guarantees that the experiences of the students are communicated truthfully, mirroring both their individual and research values. **Methodology.** According to Crotty (2020), this is "the

strategy, plan of action, process, or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and linking the choice and use of the methods to the desired outcomes.” Its objectives are to explain, assess, and defend procedures (Wellington, 2019). This study explored the challenges and coping mechanisms of students in their career choice decision-making process using a qualitative methodology. In order to support the ontological and epistemological tenets, certain techniques like focus groups and interviews are employed, enabling a thorough and sympathetic examination of participants’ stories. These techniques were chosen because they can successfully convey the complexity and depth

2.2. *Qualitative Assumptions*—Using a phenomenological research methodology, my goal was to explore the career choice decision-making of senior high school students in Davao Occidental. My objective was to gather information about their challenges and coping mechanisms in relation to the phenomenon I studied. Utilizing phenomenology as my guiding qualitative framework, I sought to uncover the essence and significance of the roles played by these individuals, emphasizing their unique viewpoints and the intricate details of their experiences. As the study’s qualitative researcher, I supported a level of investigation that goes beyond cursory observations. My research aims to inves-

2.3. *Design and Procedure*—Determining the precise approach used in a study is crucial in order to customize the best research design, data collection strategy, and data analysis approach to the study’s objectives. I used a qualitative research design in this investigation. Hammersley (2013) states that studies characterized by verbal rather than statistical analysis are appropriate for qualitative research. Since I studied the chal-

of the participants’ experiences. Rhetoric. In research, rhetoric is the skillful and convincing use of language, communication strategies, and presentation tactics to effectively communicate concepts, claims, and conclusions in order to sway the audience’s opinion and comprehension of the study (Beqiri, 2019). I utilized an engaging and respectful narrative style that honors the voices of the participants while effectively communicating the significance of the findings. This method not only makes the research easier to read but also guarantees that the interpretations are strong and based on the experiences of the participants.

tigate the experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms of participants in relation to the phenomenon. I emphasize the significance of understanding the complexities of the human experience in light of the various perspectives that are shaped by unique contexts, backgrounds, and personal histories (Neubauer et al., 2019). My study strongly emphasizes in-depth interviews, reflective dialogues, and the analysis of participants’ narratives to capture the profound and complex nature of career choice decision-making. I hope to contribute a thorough and contextually rich understanding of the challenges, coping mechanisms, and moral values of career choice decision-making while upholding phenomenological principles.

lenges, coping mechanisms, and moral values from the perspective of senior high school students pertaining to the career choice decision-making process, the qualitative design is the most appropriate. This means that rather than establishing or refuting theories, I describe and elaborate on this phenomenon. There are, however, specialized methods used in qualitative research, including grounded theory, narrative,

case studies, phenomenology, and ethnography. Using a qualitative phenomenological research design, I explored the lived experiences of the participants in this particular setting. I selected this approach because, according to Asper's (2009) work, the scientific side of phenomenological research focuses on communicating the viewpoints of the subjects and the importance of their experiences, then applying scientific concepts to analysed these perspectives. Furthermore, according to Creswell (2018), a phenomenological study is a method of inquiry

*2.4. Research Participants*—Qualitative analyses typically require a smaller sample size than quantitative analyses. Qualitative sample sizes should be large enough to obtain feedback for most or all perceptions. Obtaining most or all the perceptions leads to the attainment of saturation. Saturation occurs when adding more participants to the study does not result in additional perspectives or information. Glaser and Strauss (2019) recommend the concept of saturation for achieving an appropriate sample size in qualitative studies. For phenomenological studies, Creswell (1998) recommends 5 to twenty-five. There are no specific rules when determining the appropriate sample size in qualitative research. Qualitative sample size may best be determined by the time allotted, resources available, and study objectives (Patton, 2002). The participants in this study consisted of ten (10) senior high school students

*2.5. Ethical Considerations*—Ethical considerations are crucial because they relate to the moral principles and guidelines that govern my conduct as a researcher. These principles ensure that I carry out my investigations responsibly, treating participants with respect and striving to generate reliable and precise information. To protect participants, maintain scientific integrity,

that describes the complex and collective experiences of the participants with respect to a particular phenomenon. A key idea in phenomenology is to reduce one's interpretations of a particular phenomenon to a description that can be applied to all situations. Therefore, my goal was to identify a phenomenon that revolves around the participants' experience in the career choice decision-making process. I collected the information from people who have direct experience with this phenomenon in order to create detailed and accurate descriptions.

from the school within the Don Marcelino District of Davao Occidental. Five (5) participants for the In-Depth Interview and another five (5) participants for the Focus Group Discussion. Dividing the participants equally, allowed the possibility of more varied and diverse answers and responses. The participants were selected based on specific criteria: they are currently enrolled at schools with Don Marcelino District in Davao Occidental, currently enrolled as a senior high school student, still undecided about their future career plans, and willing to participate in the study. I utilized the purposive sampling design, which is also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling. The participants were chosen based on the criteria or purpose of the study (Creswell, 2013). The selection of the participants was purposefully done to ensure that the findings would be authentic (Marshall, 1996).

and foster trust within the research community, I adhere to established ethical standards in my research practices (Resnik, 2020). Social value. This concerns the potential benefits and favorable outcomes that research can bring to society, like addressing problems or improving people's quality of life. I evaluate the societal value of my study by acknowledging its potential im-

pact and importance for the larger community. This ensures that resources are directed toward research that has the potential to create significant advantages for society. Informed Consent. This involves obtaining a participant's voluntary agreement to participate in a research study after they and their parents or guardians have been provided with sufficient information about the study's purpose, methods, potential drawbacks, and benefits. In this research involving students, it was my responsibility to ensure that both the participants and their parents or guardians fully understood the study and their rights. This dual layer of explanation allowed them to make an informed decision about participation, thereby preserving the students' autonomy and dignity and ensuring parental consent. Vulnerability. The vulnerability of research participants, especially students, pertains to their increased risk of experiencing harm, exploitation, or coercion due to factors such as age, cognitive ability, or socioeconomic status. As a researcher, it is crucial for me to acknowledge and consider the potential vulnerability of these young participants and take appropriate measures to protect them. This involves providing additional safeguards and support, such as obtaining informed consent from both the students and their parents or guardians, ensuring confidentiality, and carefully explaining their rights and the study's procedures in a way they can understand. Additionally, I modified research methods to minimize potential adverse effects, ensuring that the well-being of these students is prioritized throughout the study. Risks, benefits, and safety. In research, it is essential to carefully evaluate the potential risks and benefits associated with participation in a study, as well as to implement measures that safeguard the well-being of participants. These elements involve assessing the potential disadvantages and advantages of participating in a study, along with establishing strategies to ensure the welfare of participants. In this investigation, as the researcher, I

meticulously assess and balance these factors, ensuring that the potential benefits outweigh the risks. I put adequate precautions in place to minimize harm while optimizing the safety of participants, particularly considering the vulnerabilities of student participants. This comprehensive approach is crucial to maintaining ethical standards and protecting the participants throughout the research process. Privacy and confidentiality. Privacy and confidentiality in research are about safeguarding participants' personal information and ensuring their identity remains confidential unless they explicitly consent to disclosure. In the context of this study, I am responsible for implementing appropriate protocols to secure participants' data and maintain confidentiality. This includes anonymizing data, securely storing information, and limiting access to authorized personnel only. These measures are crucial to protect the privacy of student participants and uphold the integrity of the research process. Justice relates to the equitable allocation of the advantages and disadvantages resulting from research across various segments of society. In this study, I ensure that my research is inclusive, avoiding the exploitation or exclusion of vulnerable groups. Additionally, I strive to make the research's benefits accessible to all who could benefit from it. This approach promotes fairness and equity throughout the research process, ensuring that no group bears an undue burden or is left out of the potential gains from the findings. Transparency. Transparency in research encompasses maintaining integrity at every phase of the study, from its conception and execution to the reporting of results. In this study, I offer clear and truthful information regarding my research methodologies and outcomes. Furthermore, I am receptive to examination and feedback. Transparency acts as a catalyst for trust, credibility, and accountability, not only within the research community but also among the general public. This commitment to openness ensures that the pro-



cess and results of my research are accessible and understandable to all stakeholders involved. The qualification of a researcher. The qualification of a researcher relates to one's academic background, professional experience, and proficiency in a particular area of study, ensuring that one possesses the requisite abilities and knowledge to conduct the research competently. In this investigation, I hold suitable qualifications that showcase my capability to conduct research, analyze data, and interpret the results. My expertise and training provide the foundation necessary to approach this study with a rigorous scientific method and critical analytical skills, ensuring the integrity and validity of the findings. The adequacy of facilities. This addresses the presence and suitability of the essential resources, tools, and infrastructure required to execute a study efficiently and securely. In this research, I guarantee access to appropriate facilities for conducting the investigation. This access facilitates the creation of credible and consistent findings and mitigates potential risks to study participants. Having the right facilities ensures that the data collection and analysis processes are conducted under conditions that uphold the highest standards of research integrity

*2.6. Role of the Researcher*—As an unbiased research facilitator and promoter, I am responsible for ensuring that the research process is conducted fairly, objectively, and without personal bias, prejudice, or influence from outside sources. I create an environment that encourages the open and honest exploration of ideas and promotes fairness in data collection and analysis. This commitment to impartiality helps to uphold the integrity of the research process and ensures that the findings are reliable, and representative of the true phenomena being studied. As an expert in qualitative methods, I am familiar with various qualitative research techniques, such as interviews, focus groups,

and safety. Community involvement. This encompasses the dynamic involvement and active engagement of community members, stakeholders, or the intended study population throughout the research journey, from initial planning to sharing research outcomes. In this study, I engage the community to guarantee the study's relevance, acceptability, and potential impact. Additionally, this involvement fosters trust and cooperation between me and the community. Engaging with the community not only helps to tailor the research to be more effective and meaningful but also enhances the overall quality and applicability of the results. Plagiarism and fabrication. Researchers should strictly follow principles of academic honesty and integrity. This entails giving proper credit to the work of others, presenting original contributions, and verifying the accuracy and authenticity of data. In this study, I employ tools like plagiarism detectors and maintain thorough documentation of my research procedures to ensure that my work is devoid of plagiarism and that all data and discoveries are authentic and reliable. By upholding these principles, I enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the research community.

and participant observation. I possess the skills and knowledge necessary to design, conduct, and analyze qualitative studies, ensuring that the research question is satisfactorily addressed and that the results are legitimate and dependable. My expertise in these methods allows me to deeply explore complex social phenomena and capture the nuanced experiences of participants, contributing to the validity and reliability of the research findings. As a data collector and keeper, I gather information from various sources such as interviews or observations, and I ensure accurate and secure storage of this information. I follow ethical guidelines, safeguard participants' privacy, and ensure that data is

structured and available for later examination and understanding. This careful management of data helps maintain the integrity of the research process and supports the production of credible, reliable findings that can be reviewed and utilized by others in the academic community. As a data analyst, I analyze the gathered data to discover trends, patterns, and valuable perspectives in accordance with the research query. I utilize meticulous qualitative data analysis methods like coding and thematic analysis to extract significant findings and enrich the knowledge base within my discipline. This approach allows me to deeply understand the data, providing insights that are not only relevant but also contribute significantly to the field, enhancing

scholarly discussions and practical applications related to the study topic. Finally, as an organizer and presenter of data, I am tasked with synthesizing and communicating the research findings concisely and coherently. This entails skillfully conveying the study's objectives, approaches, outcomes, and ramifications through written documents, presentations, or alternative means of transmitting information. I ensure that the research results are easily accessible and comprehensible to the designated audience. This approach helps to maximize the impact of the findings, ensuring they are not only shared but also understood and utilized by others in ways that can further knowledge and influence practice in the field.

*2.7. Data Collection*—This study employed a systematic data collection procedure. Several steps were taken to adhere to the proper data collection procedure, which ensured the accuracy and objectivity of the data collection. The following is the step-by-step process of gathering the data needed. Securing endorsement from the Dean of Graduate School, the Schools Division Superintendent, and the School Principal. To initiate the data collection process, I secure endorsements from key stakeholders including the Dean of the Graduate School at Rizal Memorial Colleges, the Schools Division Superintendent, the School Principal, and the parents of the participants. This process involves submitting formal letters outlining the research objectives and methodology, accompanied by any supporting documents. This crucial step is scheduled to take place within the third week of October 2023 ensuring that all necessary permissions are in place before proceeding with the collection of data. This proactive approach not only facilitates compliance with ethical standards but also fosters a cooperative environment among all parties involved. Asking permission from the

Schools Division Superintendent. Upon receiving the endorsement, I request permission from the school's division superintendent. This requires submitting a formal letter detailing the research proposal and its significance to the educational community. Along with the letter, I attached Chapters 1 and 2 of my dissertation and the research instrument, clearly explaining the study's objectives and the process of participant identification. Moreover, I waited for the response from the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) before proceeding with the data collection. This step was undertaken during the first week of January 2024 ensuring that all necessary approvals are in place to conduct the research ethically and effectively. Asking for permission from the school heads. Once permission was granted, I sought approval from the school heads of the selected institutions. This step involves submitting formal request letters to each school head, outlining the research's purpose and the expected data collection timeframe. I asked for permission to conduct the study from the first week of February 2024 to the last week of the same month. Obtaining consent from the participants and their parents.

With the school heads' approval, I asked for consent from the research participants, who are students, through informed consent forms that were also provided to their parents or guardians. These forms clearly explain the research purpose, participant rights, and confidentiality measures. This dual-layered consent process ensures that both students and their parents or guardians are fully informed and agree to participate. Asking for consent from both the participants and their parents or guardians was done in February 2024. Conducting the interview. Upon securing consent from all participants, I scheduled and conducted the interviews using

a structured or semi-structured interview guide to ensure consistency and reliability in data collection. The interviews took place in the first two weeks of March 2024. Transcribing the interviewees' responses. Following the interview sessions, I meticulously transcribed the interviewees' remarks, taking diligent account of non-verbal cues and contextually relevant details. This procedure used audio recordings and field notes to comprehensively capture the breadth of participants' reactions. The transcription of interviewee responses was scheduled for March 2024.

2.8. *Data Analysis*—After collecting the data, I embarked on data coding and thematic content analysis. This involves methodically structuring the transcribed data into categories, subcategories, and themes from the interview dialogues. By discerning patterns and connections within the data, I formulated conclusions and gleaned insights directly related to the research objectives. This process allows me to interpret the data effectively, ensuring that the findings accurately reflect the experiences and perspectives of the participants. In this study, I employed Creswell's Thematic Analysis approach, which is particularly suited for encompassing a range of perspectives and portrayals in participants' feedback. Adopting thematic analysis authenticates the portrayal of individual components and facilitates the categorization of identified patterns within the provided responses. Thematic analysis is a qualitative research technique used to recognize, scrutinize, and interpret patterns or themes present within qualitative data in textual, visual, or other formats. As a qualitative research approach, thematic analysis allows researchers to systematically arrange and dissect complex data sets. It involves searching for overarching themes that encapsulate the narratives embedded within the

data. This process necessitates the identification of themes through meticulous examination and repeated review of transcribed data (Dawadi, 2020). This methodical approach helps ensure that the analysis is both comprehensive and reflective of the data collected, providing deep insights into the study's objectives. Therefore, I used Creswell's Thematic Analysis in my research, which necessitated extensive theming and transcript interpretation. According to Caulfield (2020), there are multiple essential phases in Creswell's Thematic Analysis, including familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and labeling themes, and writing up. I become fully immersed in the intricacies and subtleties of the content as I become acquainted with the data to begin this process. After that, I start categorizing the data using semantic richness to group different informational components. I create themes that encapsulate the main ideas of the data using these codes. After that, these themes are examined and improved upon to make sure they appropriately depict the dataset. Every theme has a definition and name that elucidates the fundamental ideas. The last step entails combining the themes and insights into a cohesive article that clearly conveys the study's conclu-

sions. This methodical approach guarantees a comprehensive examination and enhances the comprehension of the information.

*2.9. Framework of Analysis*—The analytical framework in phenomenological research is a methodical and structured approach to data analysis, interpretation, and presentation. In this research study, I used Colaizzi’s method to analyze data from the interviews and discussions with the participants regarding their challenges and coping mechanisms regarding the career choice decision-making process. According to Morrow et al. (2021), Colaizzi’s (1978) method features a distinctive seven-step process that offers a rigorous analysis, closely adhering to the data at each stage. This method culminates in a concise yet comprehensive description of the phenomenon under study, which is validated by the participants who experienced it. The effectiveness of this approach relies on rich first-person accounts of experiences, which can be collected through various means. Although face-to-face interviews are common, data can also be gathered from written narratives, blogs, research diaries, online interviews, and other forms. This method enables researchers to uncover emergent themes and explore the intricate relationships between them (Wirihana et al., 2019).

*Data Familiarization.* By reading and rereading the transcripts several times, I aim to fully understand the meanings conveyed by the participants and gain a global sense of the phenomenon being studied. This thorough review process is crucial for fully grasping the nuances of participants’ statements, enabling a deeper analysis of their experiences.

*Identifying Significant Statements.* I carefully identify every statement in the narratives that is directly related to the phenomenon I am studying. In order to identify and highlight phrases and descriptions that shed light on the particular experiences under study, a thorough examination of the gathered data—such as written narratives or transcripts of interviews—must be conducted. This step is essential to ensuring that my analysis stays on topic and provides a strong basis for future thematic development.

*Formulating Meanings.* After carefully examining the important statements, I determine meanings that are pertinent to the phenomenon. Although Colaizzi admits that complete bracketing is never truly possible, I have to reflexively “bracket” my own presuppositions to stick closely to the phenomenon as experienced. To guarantee that the analysis stays rooted in the participants’ real experiences, this process entails putting aside my own interpretations as much as is practical.

*Clustering Themes.* I ensure a rigorous analysis that remains true to the participants’ experiences by grouping the identified meanings into themes that are shared by all accounts. Throughout this process, presuppositions must be bracketed, especially to avoid any possible influence from existing theories. By letting the themes naturally arise from the data rather than being influenced by outside forces, this preserves the integrity of the analysis.

*Developing an exhaustive description.* I incorporate every theme generated in the previous step into a comprehensive and all-encompassing description of the phenomenon that I write. By identifying common themes from the participant accounts, this thorough description seeks to convey the essence and complexity of the phenomenon. By taking this step, it is ensured that the final representation presents a comprehensive perspective of the experiences that each participant has had.

*Producing the fundamental structure.* I break down the lengthy explanation into a succinct statement that highlights the key elements that I believe are crucial to understanding the phenomenon’s structure. This succinct synthesis effectively and concisely communicates the

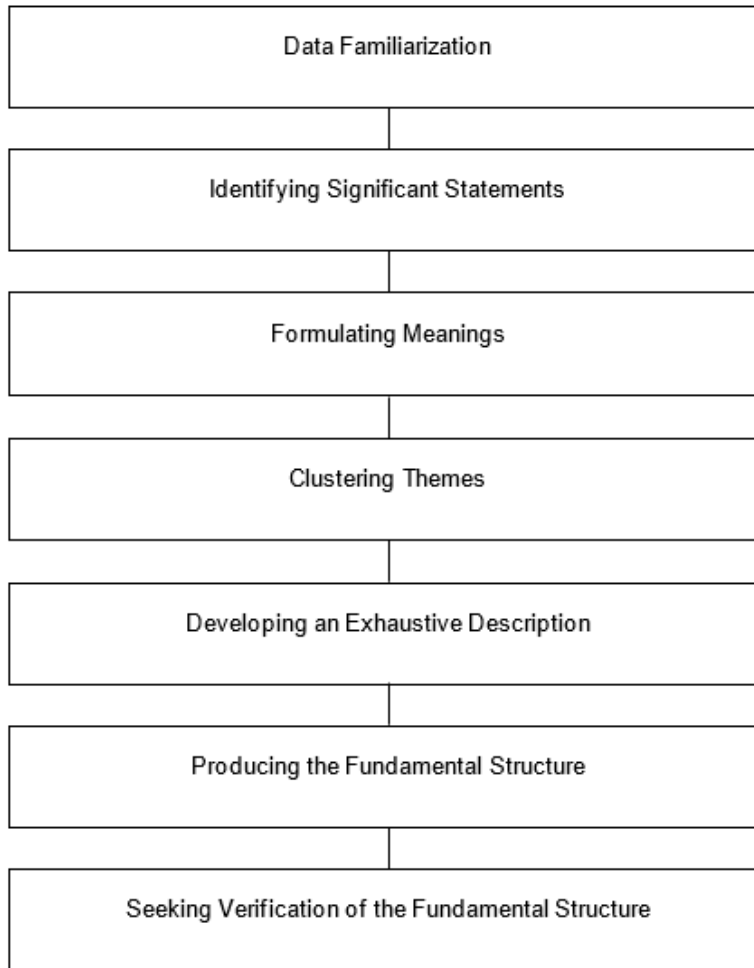


Fig. 2. Analytical Framework of the Study

essence of the participants’ experiences, concentrating on the essential components necessary for comprehending the phenomenon. Seeking verification of the fundamental structure. I asked participants if the fundamental structure statement accurately reflects their experience, either by returning it to all participants or, in larger studies, to a subsample. I might go back and change the earlier stages of the analysis in

light of their comments. Through this iterative process, the validity and credibility of the findings are increased and the analysis is kept firmly based on the perspectives of the participants. The following figure illustrates this rigorous process, highlighting each step to comprehensively explain the actions taken to comprehensively analyze the data.

2.10. *Trustworthiness of the Study*—The trustworthiness of a study is about how reliable, sensible, and authentic the research results are, ensuring that the conclusions are trustworthy and accurate. In qualitative research, factors like credibility, transferability, confirmability,

and dependability are often used to evaluate how reliable the study is. These considerations are further described below, according to Guba (1981). Credibility. Building credibility entails proving that the results are accurate. Credibility is important for this study because it evaluates if

the results accurately represent the realities and experiences of sophomore students who participate in extra-curricular activities. I converse with the participants for a long time in order to gain a thorough understanding of their experiences and to increase my credibility. I also use triangulation, gathering information from a variety of sources, including observations, interviews, and maybe questionnaires. In order to confirm the interpretations, I give the students a preliminary version of the findings as part of member checking. Transferability. The degree to which the results of this study can be used in different situations or with different populations is referred to as transferability. While the particular insights are closely linked to senior high school students' experiences in a specific educational environment, I will give thorough explanations of the research context and methodology. The study's transferability is increased because this thorough, rich narrative enables others, including educators, school administrators, and researchers, to assess how well the results apply to comparable contexts or populations. Confirmability. Confirmability deals with the study's objectivity by making sure that the respondents, not my personal prejudices or biases, shaped the findings. I keep a thorough audit trail that details every step of the research process, from data collection to data analysis decisions, in order to ensure confirmability. This methodological transparency makes it possible for other researchers to evaluate the research's objectivity by following the study's development and going over the choices made. Dependability. Dependability means proving that the study results are reliable and repeatable in similar situations. This study's dependability was attained through meticulous documentation of the entire research procedure, including the methods used for data collection and analysis. By ensuring that other researchers can duplicate the study and possibly produce consistent results, such documentation validates the research's dependability. By following these standards, the research not only offers valid and trustworthy conclusions regarding the effects of extra-curricular activities on sophomore students, but it also offers a framework that researchers and other educators can use to compare similar learning environments. This methodology enhances the study's standing in the academic community and provides insightful information for upcoming studies and instructional design.

### 3. Results and Discussion

This part of the study dealt with the research questions and the answers extracted from the responses of the participants. This chapter illuminates the challenges encountered and coping mechanisms employed by senior high school students pertaining to their career decision-making. The emerging themes for the challenges are students' economic profile, academic ability, and parental influence. Meanwhile, the coping mechanisms include consulting a career guidance counselor and exploring various career opportunities. Finally, the themes for moral values are: career planning and exploring career options.

*3.1. Challenges Affecting Career Decision-making of senior high school students—* Making a career choice is not as easy as it seems. A lot of consideration goes into it. It requires one to weigh several factors to come up with a decision. However, in the K-12 curriculum, students are given a chance to build up their career choices by choosing a strand fit for their future career. They are offered a variety of options to help them decide what path they want to take in the future. But it boils down to the question of how senior high school students come up with

their career choices and what challenges hinder them in making one. The first research question deals with this concern

*3.1.1. The students' economic profile*—As the famous adage states, poverty is not a hindrance to success. This might not be true in every circumstance and situation. Based on the narratives of the participants, one challenge they encounter in making a career choice is their economic profile. This factor limits them from pursuing the career they want because they would rather pursue a profession that they can easily land on a job, than study for an expensive course. Emeto's (2020) idea is parallel to the participants' narratives. He stated that students' economic profiles significantly impact their career decision-making in various ways. The financial stability or instability of a student's family can dictate the feasibility of pursuing certain careers, particularly those requiring extensive education and training. Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds often face pressure to enter the workforce sooner, opting for careers that offer immediate financial returns rather than long-term growth potential. Corroborating the above assertion, Tsey (2019) agreed by stating that economically advantaged parents often

*3.1.2. Academic ability of students*—Students tend to undermine their academic abilities, which hampers them from pursuing their dream careers. They think that they won't be able to handle the academic pressure and demands of the course they want to take. The extracted narratives from the in-depth interview revealed the abovementioned emerging theme. In the same vein, Koçak et. al (2021) examined the impact of academic satisfaction and family influence on career decision-making self-efficacy among university students. The findings indicated that higher academic satisfaction and supportive family environments enhance students'

have the means to support their children in exploring diverse career options and acquiring the necessary qualifications. In contrast, students from lower-income families might prioritize job security and financial stability over personal interest or passion due to economic constraints. The findings of the first research question coincided with the findings of Lindsey (2019). The availability of resources such as career counseling, internships, and extracurricular activities also varies significantly with economic status. Wealthier students typically have greater access to such resources, which can help them make informed career choices. Conversely, those from less affluent backgrounds might lack access to quality career guidance and networking opportunities, hindering their ability to explore various career paths. Malau-Aduli (2019) added that economic factors also affect the perceived attainability of certain careers. For instance, students from higher-income families might view prestigious or high-risk careers as more achievable, while those from lower-income families may perceive these paths as too risky or out of reach due to the financial investment required.

confidence in making career decisions. This suggests that academic performance and familial support are crucial for career planning and decision-making success. Meanwhile, Abe and Chikoko (2020) explored the career decision-making processes of STEM students at a South African university. Their study found that students' perceptions of their academic abilities significantly influenced their decision to pursue STEM careers. High-performing students were more likely to pursue challenging and prestigious fields, underscoring the importance of academic self-concept in career choice. The focus group discussion also revealed the same

theme. The participants also shared how it hampers their decision-making. The participants' statements are consistent with Younis's (2020) findings. He focused on the relationship between academic self-concept and career decision-making among high school students. His study revealed that students with a strong belief in their academic abilities were more likely to have clear career goals and make confident career decisions. This highlights the role of academic self-efficacy in facilitating proactive career planning. Additionally, Sinan (2020) also examined various factors influencing career choices, including academic achievements. The

*3.1.3. The parental influence*—Our parents tend to influence our career choices. They often speak to us openly about their suggestions on what career we choose to take in the future. But in a worst-case scenario, some parents do not suggest but impose. This is where the line gets blurry for the students: when there is a misalignment between what they want and what their parents want for them. Parental influence is a significant factor in the career decision-making process of students. Tao et. al (2019) found that parents' socioeconomic status and educational background substantially impact their children's career aspirations and decisions. Students whose parents have higher educational attainments and professional careers are more likely to pursue similar paths due to the expectations and resources provided by their parents. Moreover, research published by Polenova (2020) explored how parental expectations and support influence career self-efficacy among students. The study found that students with parents who actively engage in their career plan-

*3.2. Coping mechanisms for challenges affecting career decision-making*—Coming up with a career decision is not a straightforward task. It requires an interplay of several factors

review found that students with higher academic performance were more likely to aspire to and succeed in competitive careers, suggesting that academic ability is a significant determinant of career aspirations and outcomes. Finally, Koçak et al. (2020) investigated the effects of academic performance on career indecision. The researchers found that students with lower academic achievements experienced higher career indecision and uncertainty. This suggests that academic struggles can hinder career decision-making, emphasizing the need for academic support and counseling to help these students navigate their career paths effectively.

ning tend to have higher career decision-making self-efficacy. This suggests parental involvement can boost students' confidence in their career choices, leading to more proactive and informed decisions. Brisson (2020) also agreed with the theme. He focused on the impact of parenting styles on career decisions. It found that authoritative parenting, characterized by support and clear expectations, positively correlates with higher career decision-making self-efficacy among students. Conversely, authoritarian parenting, marked by high demands and low responsiveness, can lead to career indecision and lower self-efficacy. In contrast, the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health (2020) noted that the lack of parental engagement could negatively affect students' career adaptability. The research indicated that students who perceive low parental support are more likely to experience difficulties in career planning and decision-making, underscoring the crucial role of parental involvement in facilitating successful career outcomes.

that are intricately intertwined with one another. However, the relevance it plays on one's future cannot be overemphasized. One wrong decision has the ability to twist someone's fate. Hence,



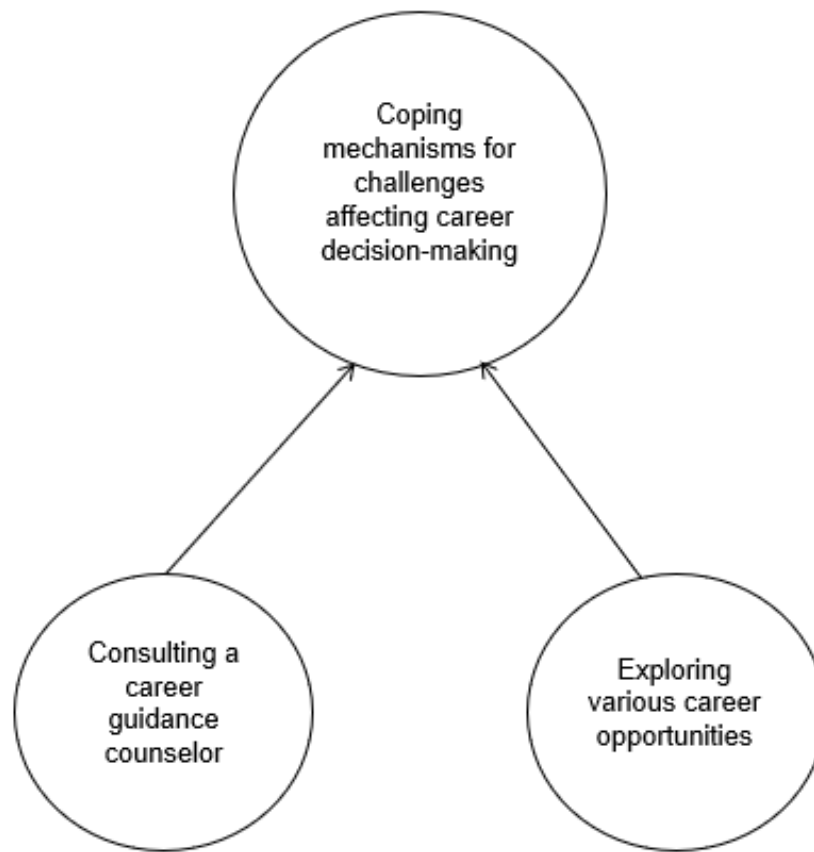


Fig. 3. Challenges Affecting the Career Decision-Making of Senior High School Students

the second research question is dedicated to unfurling the coping mechanisms employed by senior high school students in order to over-

come the challenges brought by career decision-making.

*3.2.1. Consulting the career guidance counselor—* One way to ensure that students are taking the right step in their career decision consulting their career guidance counselor. Their main task involves providing rapport with students in deciding what career path they will take someday. Numerous studies from recent years have shown that consulting a guidance counselor significantly impacts students' career decision-making. The narratives above are supported by Bryan et al. (2020), who postulated that students who engage with school counselors exhibit higher career decision-making self-efficacy. The research highlighted that counselors provide vital support in helping students understand their strengths and align these with potential career paths, thus facilitating better-informed decisions regarding their educational and professional futures. Similarly, Lent and Brown (2020) expressed the value of personalized career counseling. The study found that individualized guidance sessions tailored to student's specific needs and aspirations led to more confident and informed career choices. This personalization often includes assessments of interests, abilities, and values, which help students explore a broader range of career options they might not have considered. The extracted narratives coincided with the idea of Lapan (2020). He explored the long-term impacts of career counseling interventions. Their findings revealed that students who regularly consulted with guidance counselors during high school were likelier to pursue higher education and report greater career satisfaction in their post-graduation years. This study highlights the lasting positive effects of early and

continuous engagement with career counselors. Meanwhile, guidance counselors' support is even more crucial for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Fouad and Kozlowski (2019) found that career counseling particularly benefits students from low socioeconomic backgrounds who may lack access to career-related resources and information at home. Counselors help bridge this gap by providing essential information, resources, and encouragement, thus helping these students achieve their career goals. Moreover, Hirschi et al. (2020) examined the role of career counseling in fostering career adaptability. The findings indicated that students who received career counseling were better equipped to adapt to the changing job market and career uncertainties. This adaptability is crucial in today's dynamic work environment, as counselors help students develop resilience, flexibility, and proactive planning skills. Through personalized support, provision of essential resources, and ongoing guidance, counselors play a vital role in enabling students to make well-informed, confident, and adaptable career choices. The recently published study by Loan and Van (2020) emphasized the value of career counseling as a tool for encouraging students to consider their goals, interests, skills, and aptitudes. The connection between their life goals and the growth of responsible global citizenship is made easier thanks to this advice, which also helps students understand the dynamics of the labor market and educational system. In essence, career counseling has a variety of functions that enable students to make well-informed decisions about their future, including their professional choices and broader societal roles.

*3.2.2. Exploring various career opportunities—*

. There are plenty of fish in the sea. There are more career opportunities that await senior high school students the moment they graduate. There are endless possibilities on what career path and decision they will make that will hone who they will become in the future. This brought us to the next coping mechanism which is exploring career options. In the study of Olaosebikan and Olusakin (2019), they also emphasized the importance of discovering new avenues for career decisions and choices. According to them, exploring career options before committing to one improves future career success and satisfaction. As a result, it is critical to pinpoint and acknowledge the factors that have an impact on young people's career exploration. Similarly, Pascual (2019) also encourages students to actively investigate the world of work in light of their self-knowledge and study potential career paths. Making informed career selections requires the use of this information. Additionally, pupils are tasked with creating plans for future professional success and fulfillment during their high school years. This entails altering

their educational goals to fit their career goals, regularly evaluating and improving their career-planning portfolios, and using their academic and employment preparation abilities. Navin (2019) sheds light on the increased likelihood of future job success and pleasure. His research is focused on emphasizing the value of considering your options before deciding on a certain career path. Therefore, it is crucial to identify and comprehend the numerous aspects that impact adolescent career exploration. In today's dynamic socioeconomic environment, it is no longer adequate to only engage in career planning; thorough career study is equally important before commencing a career path. According to Wattles (2009), adopting a proactive attitude is essential to adjusting to constantly changing socioeconomic circumstances. Succinctly, students must navigate a complex process of information management to make decisions that are in line with their professional goals (Willner et al., 2019). As it directly affects their readiness for choosing majors in higher education, this procedure assumes significant importance.

3.3. *Moral values from the career decision-Making of senior high school students*—When we reach the juncture of our lives where we need to decide what path to take or what career to choose in the future, we are often bombarded with several thoughts and factors

that require consideration. In this study, the senior high school students are subjected to this predicament. But this is the process they need to undergo. The third research question deals with insights regarding the challenges and coping mechanisms of senior high school students in their career choice decision-making.

3.3.1. *Career planning*—Planning is considered as a blueprint. This is where someone plans what he/she wants for the future. In this case, the focus is on their future career choices. Based on the extracted narrative, it has been unfurled that career planning plays an important part in helping students explore their options and have a proactive attitude about career choice decision-making. In the same vein, McMahon

et. al (2020) postulated that career planning is a critical aspect of students' educational journeys, influencing their future employment and overall life satisfaction. Recent studies have highlighted the importance of early and structured career guidance programs. For instance, research by McMahon et. al (2020) emphasizes that career education should begin in primary school to help children develop a sense

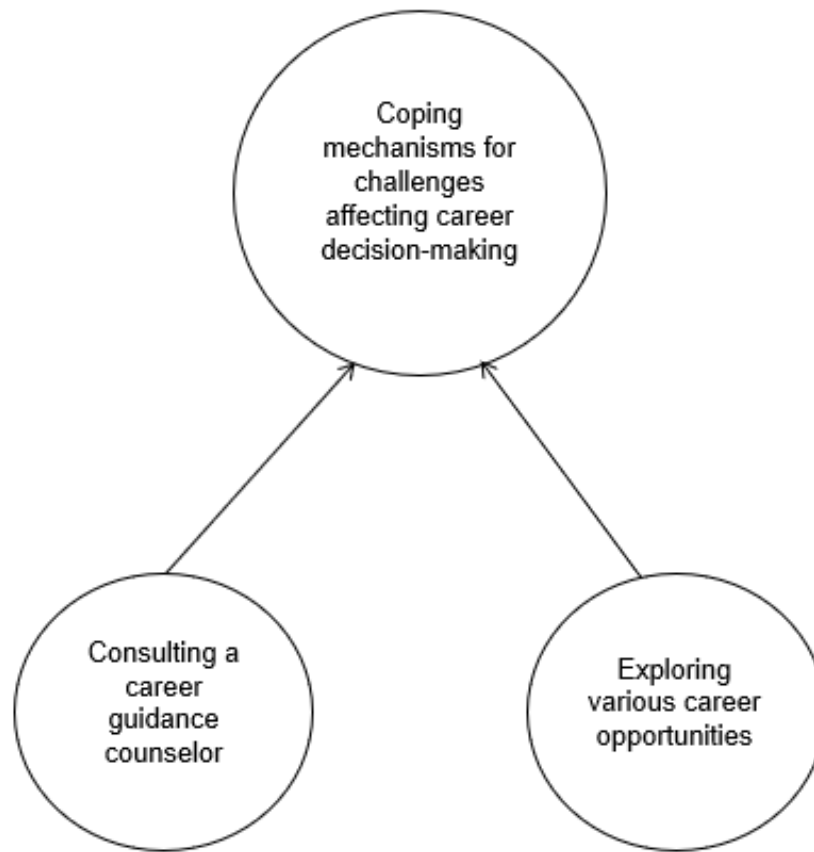


Fig. 4. Coping Mechanisms for Challenges Affecting Career-Decision Making

of self-awareness and understand various occupational roles. Their study found that early exposure to career concepts helps in forming realistic career aspirations and planning skills. Similarly, Baker and Taylor (2019) also highlight the importance of career planning. They suggested that individualized career counseling significantly enhances students' ability to make informed career choices, aligning their skills and interests with potential career paths. This study underlines the necessity for schools to integrate comprehensive career counseling services to support students' transition from school to the workplace. From the point of view of Issa and Nwalo (2018), career choice is considered a critical point in an individual's life. His/her future societal role brings about the pressure. In this regard, every individual is bound to come to a point of career decision-making at some point in his/her life. They have to make a plan on what path they want to take or who they want to be in the future. It can also ignite their passion and perseverance to achieve those plans. In the same vein, Ahmed et. al (2019) asserted that a wrong career choice directed efforts and resources in the wrong direction. The

3.3.2. *Exploring career options*—Career choice decision-making is not a straightforward task; it is composed of closely intertwined processes and factors. It is not a one-way road; rather, it is a path that points in many directions. In career choice decision-making, it is important that one makes a calculated move and considers everything. This is because choosing a career is not easy. Hence, in the interview, the participants emphasized the importance of exploring your options before making a decision. Savickas and Porfeli (2019) state that exploring career options is a vital process that enables individuals to make informed decisions about their future. Recent studies emphasize the importance of this exploration in fostering career

authors further added that misalignment with expectations exhausts personal energy and wastes resources. These findings highlight the importance of career planning and the consequences if one poorly plans the future. Lent and Brown (2020) also emphasized the role of self-efficacy in career decision-making among college students. Their research indicates that students with higher self-efficacy are more likely to engage in career planning activities and pursue career goals with confidence. This study suggests that educational institutions should focus on boosting students' self-efficacy through workshops and mentorship programs to foster proactive career-planning behaviors. Additionally, research by Smith and Patton (2021) examines the effectiveness of career planning courses in universities. Their longitudinal study reveals that students who participate in career planning courses demonstrate better career readiness and job search skills compared to their peers who do not take such courses. These findings advocate for the inclusion of career planning curricula in higher education to prepare students for successful career transitions.

satisfaction and success. Their study highlights that career exploration helps individuals identify their interests, values, and skills, leading to better career alignment and satisfaction. Their research underscores the need for educational systems to integrate career exploration activities early in students' lives to guide them toward fulfilling career paths. Moreover, the narratives parallel Hirschi's (2019) findings. He found that students who engage in thorough career exploration are less likely to experience career indecision and more likely to commit to a career choice. The study emphasizes that providing students with opportunities to explore various career options through internships, job shadowing, and informational interviews can signif-

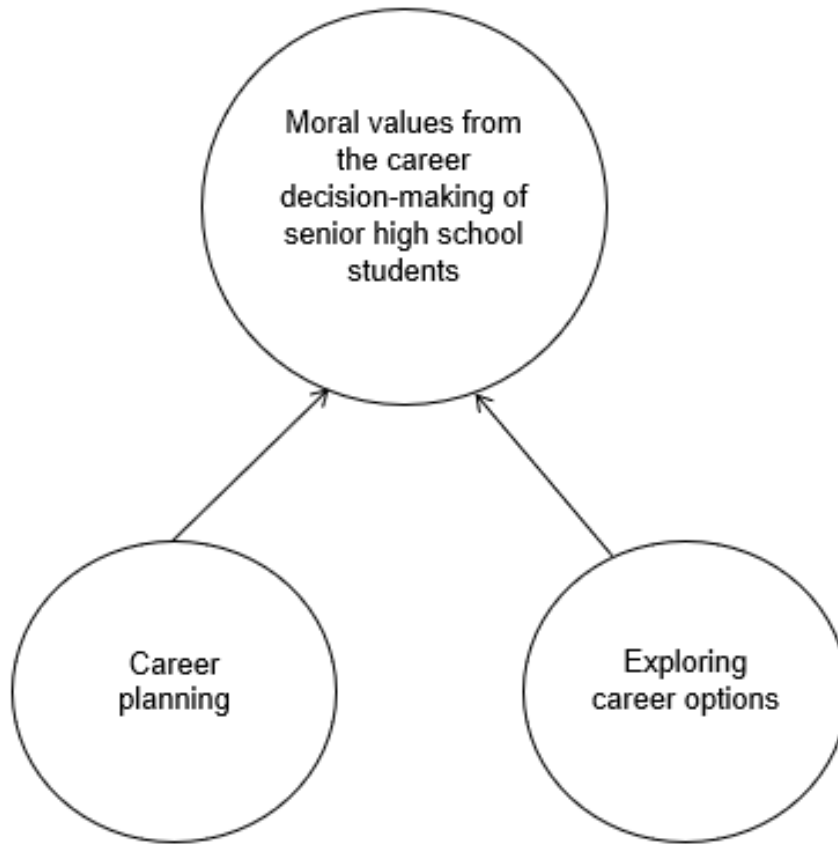


Fig. 5. Moral values from the Career Decision-Making of Senior High School Students

icantly reduce anxiety and uncertainty about their career futures. Moreover, Koen et. al (2020) further explores the relationship between career exploration and employability. Their findings suggest that individuals who actively explore career options tend to develop a broader set of skills and knowledge, making them more adaptable and employable in a dynamic job market. This study advocates for career exploration as a continuous process, encouraging lifelong learning and adaptability, which are crucial in today's rapidly changing work environment. The role of parental and societal influences on career exploration has also been highlighted Ginevra et. al (2022). Their research indicates that parental support and societal expectations sig-

nificantly shape the career exploration process. The study found that students who receive encouragement and guidance from their parents are more likely to engage in career exploration activities and make informed career decisions. This underscores the importance of involving parents and the community in the career guidance process to support students in their career exploration journey. Career exploration helps reduce indecision, enhances employability, improves academic performance, and is influenced by parental and societal support. These findings highlight the need for structured career exploration programs and the involvement of various stakeholders to support individuals in making informed career choices.

## 4. Implications and Future Directions

In this chapter, the study's summary is presented. From the summary of the findings, I drew the implications and future directions. The purpose of my study was to find out the experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights of senior high school students that influence their career choice decision-making. In order to achieve the research objectives, I made use of a qualitative phenomenological method with the use of thematic analysis. In adherence to Cresswell's (2006) guidelines open-ended questions for interviews were applied to get an authentic understanding of people's experiences. Furthermore, through this interview approach, I encouraged my participants to fully and openly discuss their own definition or meaning of the phenomenon being explored which were the narratives of senior high school students pertaining to their career choice decision-making.

*4.1. Findings*—Based on the results of the thematic analysis of the responses from the participants of the study, the following findings, and their corresponding themes were revealed: the experiences of senior high school students regarding their career decision-making are: economic profile, academic ability, and parental influence. Meanwhile, the coping mechanisms they have employed in order to overcome the challenges experienced include consulting a career guidance counselor and exploring various career opportunities. Lastly, the insights formulated in light of the experiences and coping mechanisms of senior high school students are career planning and exploring career options. In light of the unique experiences and narratives of senior high school students about their decision-making, I have uncovered two (2) emerging themes. The first theme is the students' economic profile. We often hear that we should not let poverty limit us in achieving our dreams, this is an example of those things that are easier said than done. In reality, our economic profile influences our choices in life. In the case of senior high school students, their socio-economic status in life greatly influenced the course they would take and the career they would want to achieve someday. Some even express letting go of their dream courses and school because of not being able to afford them. The second theme for the challenges is the student's academic ability. In the interview, the students have reservations and hesitations that they can handle the academic pressure that they will undergo when they take on their chosen careers. They have expressed doubts because as they said, not everyone is academically inclined. As a challenge, this also influences the choices that the students will make. The third theme and last theme under challenges is parental influence. Although not everyone views this as a negative thing, this also bears an impact on the choices that senior high school students make. Under this theme, students have shared that there are instances where they have contrasting views with their parents, especially in terms of the choices they make about their future careers. Meanwhile, the second research question sought to unfurl the coping mechanisms that students employ to overcome the challenges they are subjected to. The first theme under the second research question is consulting the school's career guidance counselor. Some students have expressed the importance of consulting the said personnel at school, for they would get insight from someone who is knowledgeable about career decision-making. The next coping mechanism is through exploring various career opportunities. In this theme, the students have shared that through exploration and discovery of several career options, they would be able to pick out what works for them and what is the best for

them with the consideration of the challenges they are put under. The third research question is dedicated to the insights gathered, and I have unfurled two (2) emerging themes. The first theme is career planning. Career choice decision-making is not a straightforward task. It does not happen in a snap of a finger because it is not meant to be done in an instant, instead, it should undergo a lot of critical thinking. This juncture of our life can cause a cascading effect. Hence, having a plan or a blueprint of

our future career choice would help us have a vision of the future and our every move will all be calculated. The last theme for insights is exploring career options. It is said that career choice decision-making is not done in an instant. Senior high school students should explore and discover more about themselves and also about the diverse and various career options available. There could be something out there that will work the best for them and for their situation.

*4.2. Implications—Implications* The results of my analysis revealed the following significant findings. The career choice decision-making process for senior high school students was a complex and crucial stage in their educational journey. It involves a combination of personal interests, aptitudes, societal expectations, and aspirations for the future. Students often consider various factors, including their academic strengths, extracurricular experiences, and passions when contemplating potential career paths. Guidance from parents, teachers, and career counselors could also play a significant role in shaping their decisions. In many cases, senior high school students engage in self-assessment to identify their skills, values, and interests. This introspective process aids them in aligning their career choices with their personal attributes and goals. Educational institutions often provide resources such as aptitude tests, career counseling sessions, and exposure to different professions to facilitate informed decision-making. Additionally, internships, workshops, and industry visits offer practical insights, allowing students to explore potential career fields and gain a better understanding of their preferences and strengths. External influences, such as socioeconomic background and cultural expectations, could also shape the career choices of senior high school students. Family expectations, financial considerations, and societal

norms may influence the perceived feasibility and desirability of certain career paths. Navigating these external pressures while maintaining authenticity and aligning with personal aspirations presents a unique challenge for students during this decision-making process. In the present study, students' experiences in making career decisions were composed of hurdles that impacted their choices. The first thing on the list was their economic profile. It has been and always plays a significant role in the decision-making of senior high school students. Also, their academic ability influences what course or career they want to take on. Parental influence also contributes to the experiences and challenges that the students are subjected to. However, despite the various factors that need to be considered, senior high school students have opened up about their coping mechanisms. These include asking the advice of their career guidance counselor and exploring various career opportunities. On the other hand, the insights include career planning and exploration of career options. These shed light on the reality that career decision-making does not happen overnight; it was not a decision one made instantaneously, but rather, it should be done with critical thinking. In conclusion, the career choice decision-making of senior high school students is a multi-faceted journey that involves self-reflection, guidance, and exposure to vari-



ous opportunities. Balancing personal interests, external influences, and realistic considerations was essential for making informed and fulfill-

ing career decisions during this critical phase of academic and personal development.

**4.3. Future Directions**—Based on the study's findings, it was important that they were properly relayed and used by the significant people for whom this research was intended. The educational leaders. They are more aware of the unique narratives, together with the experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms employed by the students, through brand-new insights and perspectives regarding the process of career decision-making. Once they have recognized the challenges and have reflected on them, they may implement programs or seminars targeting and focusing on career planning so as to guide the students on what and how to properly decide and choose their future careers. The school heads. They were more informed and aware of the students' experiences regarding career decision-making. Through the findings of the study, they could also better plan for the work immersion of the study. They could offer a more insightful and useful experience for the students that could help them in deciding and preparing for their future careers. The teachers. The study's findings can properly inform the teachers about the experiences and coping mechanisms that their students utilize to decide and plan for their careers. The teachers in the classroom could tailor their instruction so that

they could deliver information that was helpful for the student's career decision-making. They could also introduce students to new ways of making a decision properly. The learners. The study's findings may be utilized by the students as a guide on how to navigate the rough waters of the career decision-making process. They may also relate to the challenges encountered by the participants and use the coping mechanisms stipulated in the study's findings. The guidance counselor was more receptive, active, and dynamic in implementing programs focusing on how to properly form a sound career decision for senior high school students. They may conduct an information drive among graduating students to educate them, especially those who were still confused, about what career to pursue in the future. Other stakeholders. They may provide support to enhance students' work immersion experience and be the source of other ways and means to solve some of the challenges faced by the students. Future researchers may conduct the study using a quantitative research design. This design has a numerical result on what coping mechanisms were commonly utilized by the students and whether they were deemed effective in helping them in their career decision-making.

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