



Variates Affecting the State of Strand Congruency of Freshman Students in the College of Arts and Communication, University of Eastern Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive-correlational study determined the variates that affect the state of strand-course congruency of the freshmen students in the College of Arts and Communication School Year 2017-2018. Data gathered through online platform were tallied, tabulated, and analyzed using frequency counts, percentage and chi-square test. The study revealed that majority of the respondents were young, female, Roman Catholic, whose mothers were plain housewives, had self-employed fathers, and had low monthly income. A majority of them had no response on the NCAE rating category. Some of them forgot their result, while others did not get the opportunity to know in what area they excelled. Age and the level of Father's Occupation were found to have significant relationship with the state of strand-course congruency. On the other hand, Sex, Religion, Mother's Occupation, Parents' Educational Attainment, NCAE Result, and Percentile Rank were found to have no significant relationship with the state of strand-course congruency.

Key Words: *variates, senior high school, strand, congruency*

INTRODUCTION

Education is a life-long process of preparing and providing an individual with knowledge, skills, competencies, and qualities of character and values needed to survive and succeed. It is the backbone and the foundation of thriving in this modern society. And in accordance with the symbiotic relationship between the people and the government, it is a primordial duty of the state to provide quality education to the citizens considering their role in nation-building. Anchored on the global and national developmental goals, the Philippines gives primacy to education evidenced by the implementation of the K-12 Education Program

that seeks to make Philippine Education at par with that of its Asian neighbors.

In order to realize the country's developmental goals, the government initiated steps to ensure quality education for its citizens. Some of them include innovations, measures or programs introduced, planned, or proposed to democratize and improve the public educational system and make it responsive to the needs of the people and the society (De Leon and De Leon, 2015). Some of these are Education Service Contracting Scheme, Five (5)-year literacy Program, Reduction of Entrance Age, Values education framework, Parents Education Program and etc. The most far-reaching of these is the implementation of the K-12 program which, in effect, caused a semi-overhaul of the country's basic education system to make it more responsive to and in tune with the labor market (Sarmiento and Orale, 2016).

In 2002, the government restructured the basic education curriculum and in 2013, R.A. No. 10533 was approved otherwise known as the "Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum Act of 2013" which added two years of compulsory basic education in the Philippines. The implementation of this K-12 basic education program has been effected due to the following circumstances; (1) the Philippines was one of the only three countries in world with ten years of compulsory basic education curriculum; (2) In International test results, the Philippines was ranked not only below average but also as the last in Asia; (3) Filipinos in high school entering work are not only too young but are also not prepared to pursue higher education; (4) Filipino students and workers that decides to study and work abroad are not recognized. What's more, the learners are deprived of social and professional development opportunities needed in the

world of work making it necessary and critical to implement the program.

One of the salient features of this K-12 program is the opportunity given to students to be accredited in an area of specialization designed for the purpose of equipping students with skills and competence needed for employment. The students are assessed and guided in deciding what career paths they are going to pursue by taking the National Career Assessment Examination (NCAE) which measures and ranks their strengths and weaknesses in different career fields thereby forming the basis of the track or strand which the students choose. The additional two years of senior high school focuses on the improvement and mastery of skills in certain career fields. In addition, these tracks and strands correspond to courses in college which they may pursue afterwards. This policy notwithstanding, it has been widely observed that many senior high school students choose their track, rather haphazardly, while others make decision based on their pre-conceived notions about a particular field of study only to find out later that their skills, aptitudes, and socio-economic standing do not match their chosen strand causing them to enroll in non-congruent degree programs in college. This has prompted the Department Education to evaluate the program implementation to address these issue (Brilliantes et.al., 2019).

Current researches revealed that K-12 graduates tend to change their career preference when they finish their senior high school. This results to inconsistency of track/strand and courses taken by the students. The main premise of the said study was to find out the reasons of these sudden changes in career preference to help students decide on the career paths that would

best suit them. On the other hand, the current study aimed to find out the variates affecting the state of strand-course congruency of the freshmen in the College of Arts and Communication, University of Eastern Philippines taking into account the socio-demographic profile of the respondents, NCAE rating, UEP entrance examination result and state of strand-course congruency of the respondents. The main rationale behind the study is that it would help program implementers bridge the seeming inconsistency of the students' K-12 track and their college degree choices which would result in efficiency.

Methodology

The study used survey and correlational research methods since it delved into the variates that affect the state of strand-course congruency of the respondents. The respondents were freshmen students enrolled in the College of Arts and Communication of the University of Eastern Philippines during SY 2017 – 2018. These students belonged to the 1st batch of senior high school graduates under the K-12 Program. They were chosen using simple random sampling which targeted thirty percent of the freshmen enrolled in the said college.

The data were gathered using a survey questionnaire which consisted of two parts. Part I of which covered the socio-demographic profile of the respondents while Part II examined the respondents' state of strand course congruency measured by means of statements and items specifically intended to quantify the latter.

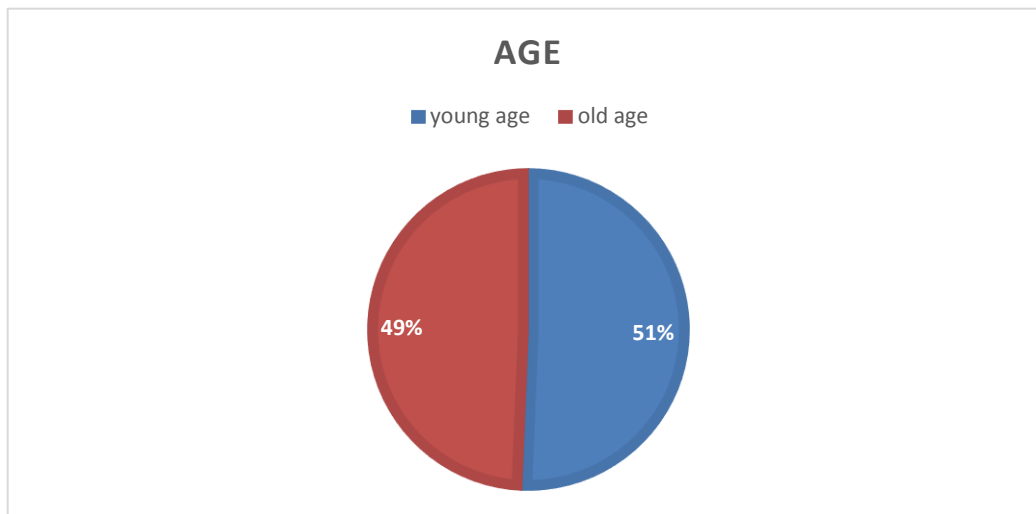
The descriptive data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentage and mean. To determine the relationship between independent and dependent variables, chi square test was used.

Results and Discussion

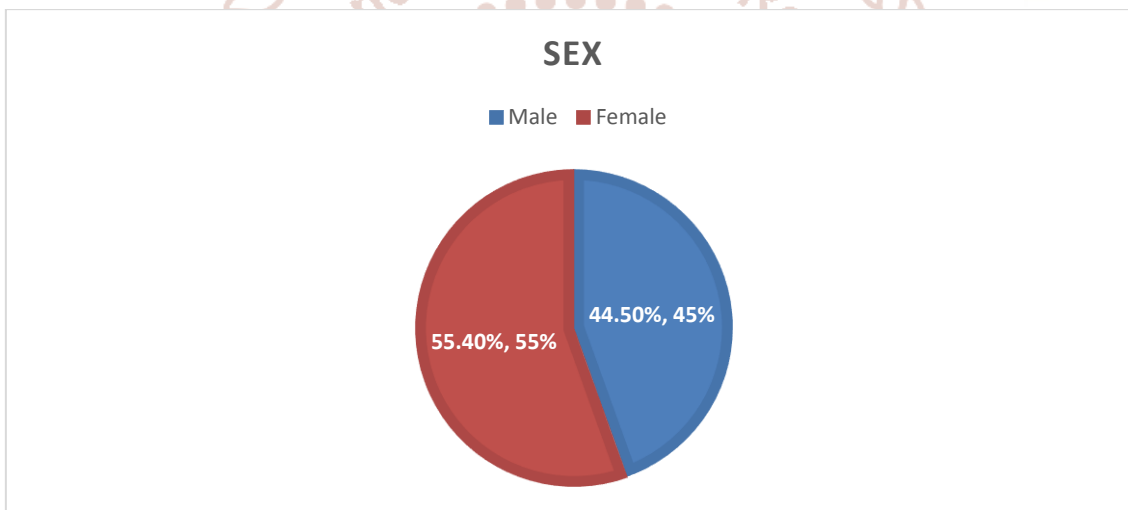
Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Age

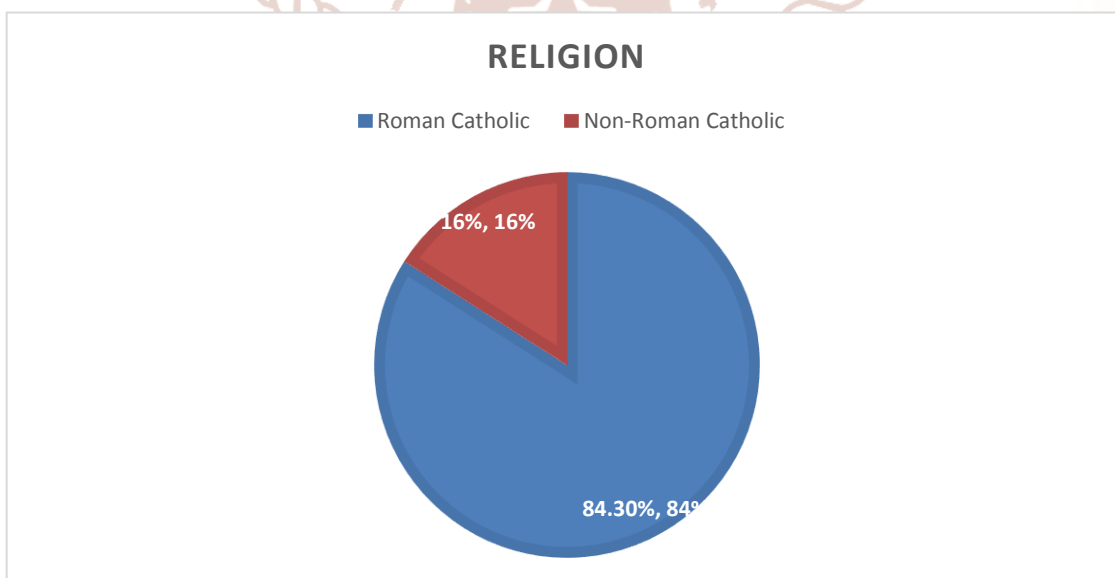
Chart 1a shows the distribution of respondents according to age. With the mean age of 20, out of 83 respondents, 42 or 50.6% belonged to the young age category and the other 41 or 49.3% belonged to the old age category.



Sex
 Chart 1b shows the distribution of respondents according to sex. Of the 83 respondents, 37 or 44.5% are male and 46 or 55.4% are female. The findings shows that there are more female than male students enrolled in School Year 2019-2020.

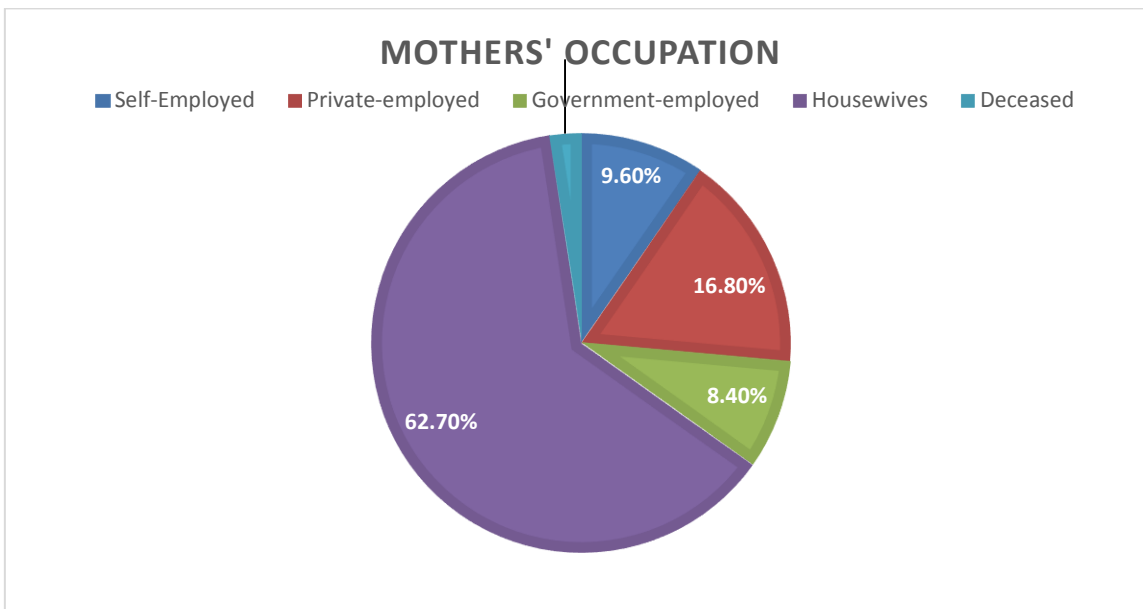


Religion
 Seventy or 84.3% were Roman Catholics and 13 or 16% were Non-Roman Catholics.

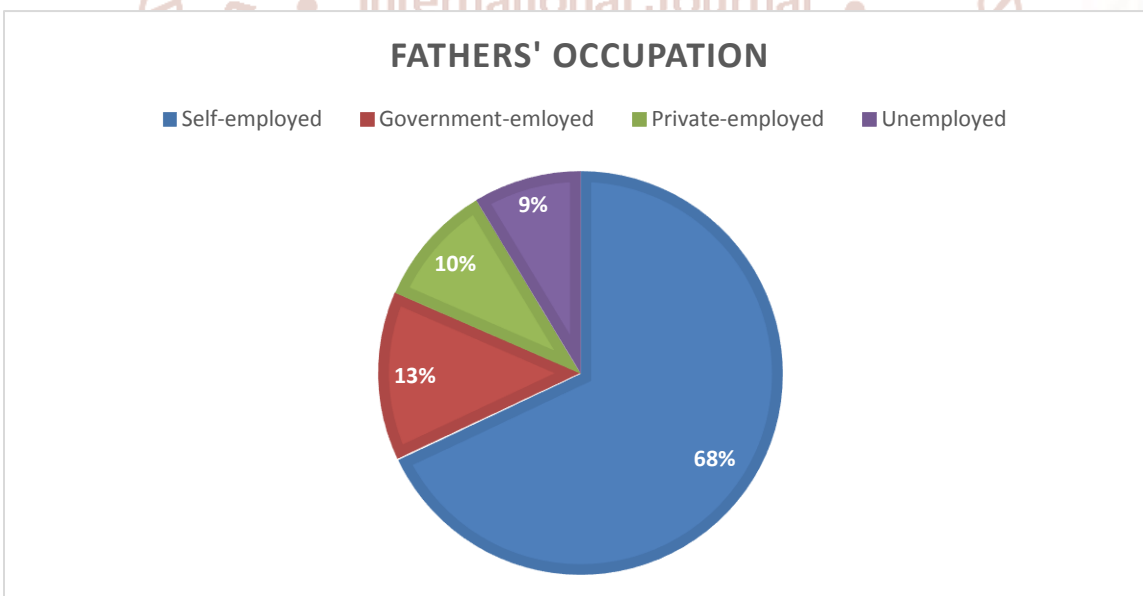


Parents' Occupation

Out of 83 respondents, 8 or 9.6% had mothers who were self-employed, 14 or 16.8% were government-employed, 7 or 8.4% were private-employed, 52 or 62.7% were housewives, and 2 or 2.4% were deceased.

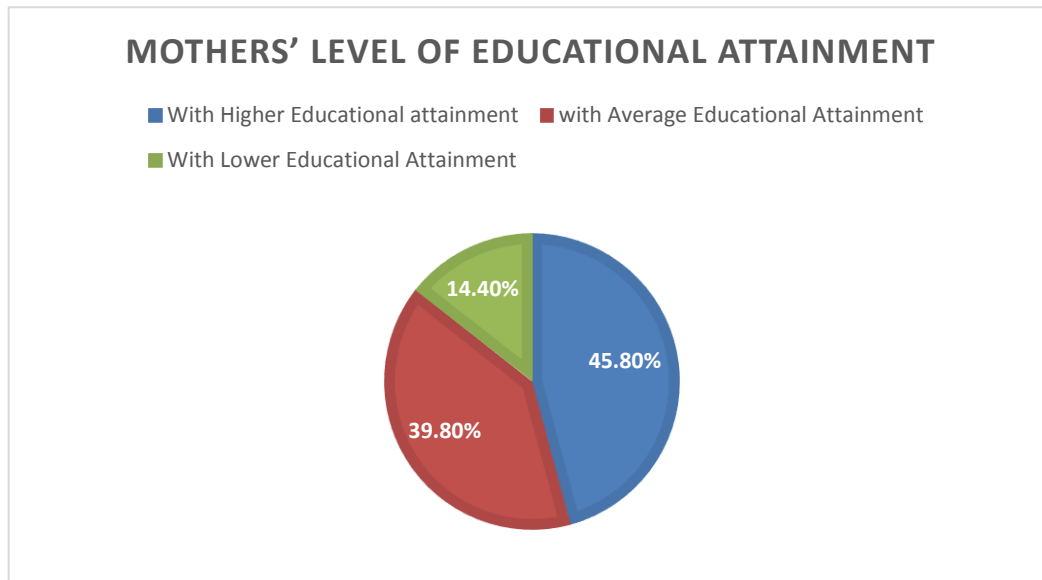


Out of 83 respondents, 55 or 66.3% had fathers who were self-employed, 11 or 13.2% were government-employed, 8 or 9.6% were private-employed, 2 or 2.4% were unemployed, and 7 or 8.4% were already deceased.

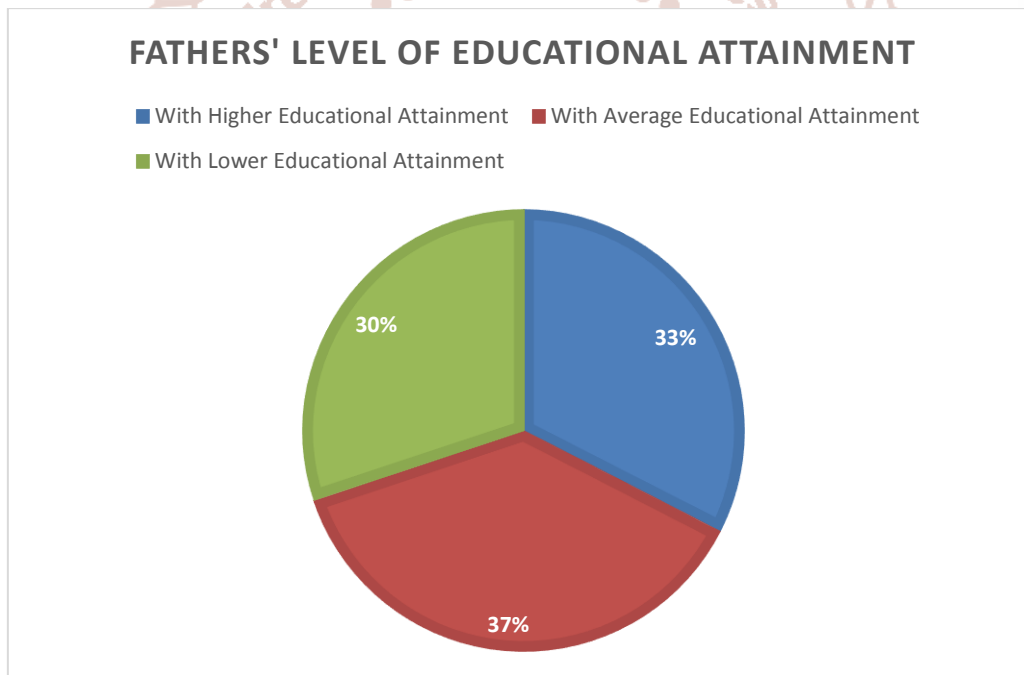


Parents' Level of Educational Attainment

Out of 83 respondents, 38 or 45.8% had mothers who had higher educational attainment, 33 or 39.8% had average educational attainment, and 12 or 14.4% had lower educational attainment.



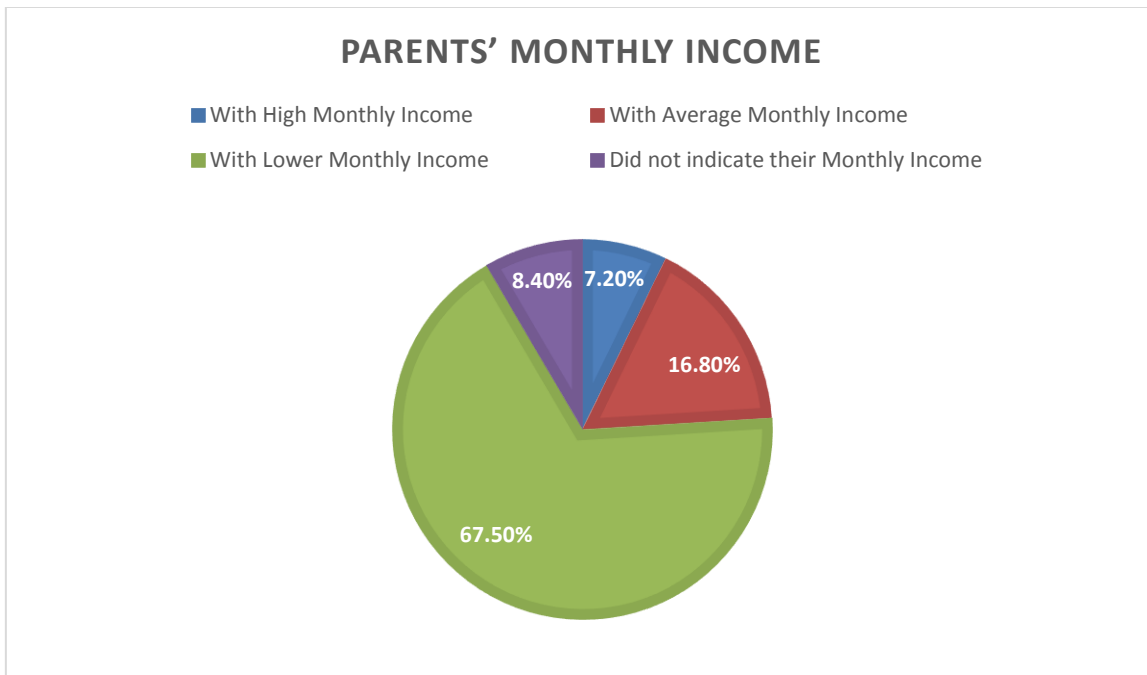
Out of 83 respondents, 27 or 32.5% had fathers who had higher level of educational attainment, 31 or 37.3% had average level of educational attainment, 25 or 30.1% had lower level of educational attainment.



Parents' Monthly Income

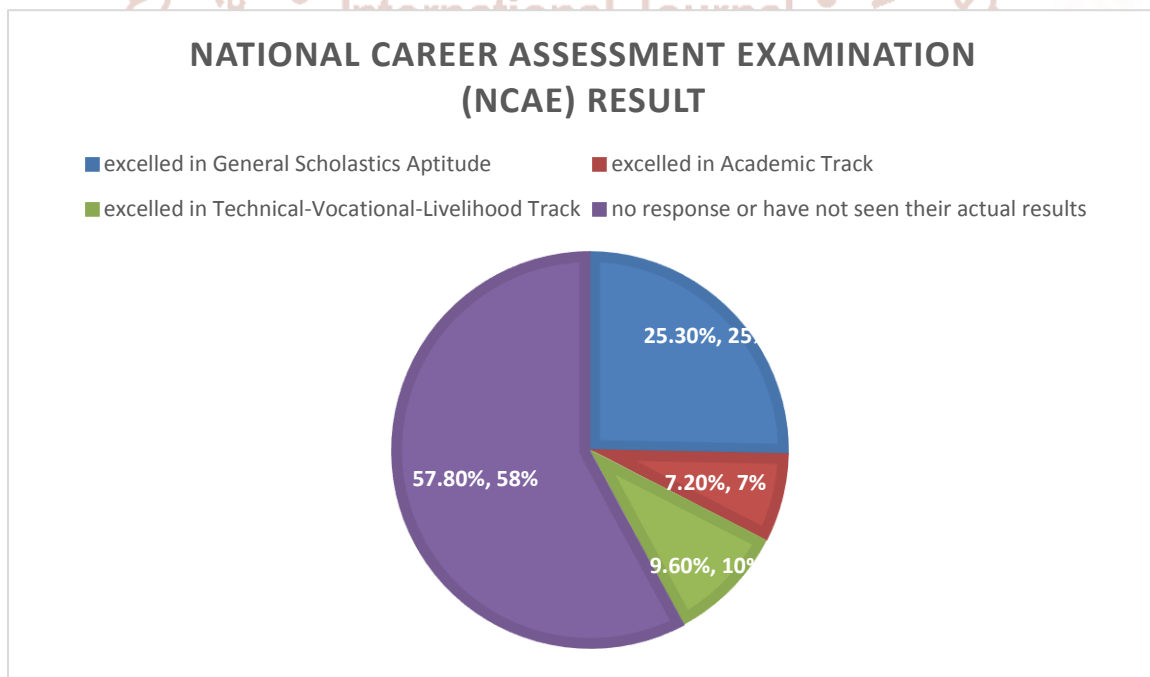
Out of 83 respondents, 6 or 7.2% had high monthly income, 14 or 16.8% had average monthly income, 56 or 67.5% had low monthly income and 7 or 8.4% did not indicate their monthly income.

The data show that majority of the respondents have low monthly income. This may affect the student's choice of career.



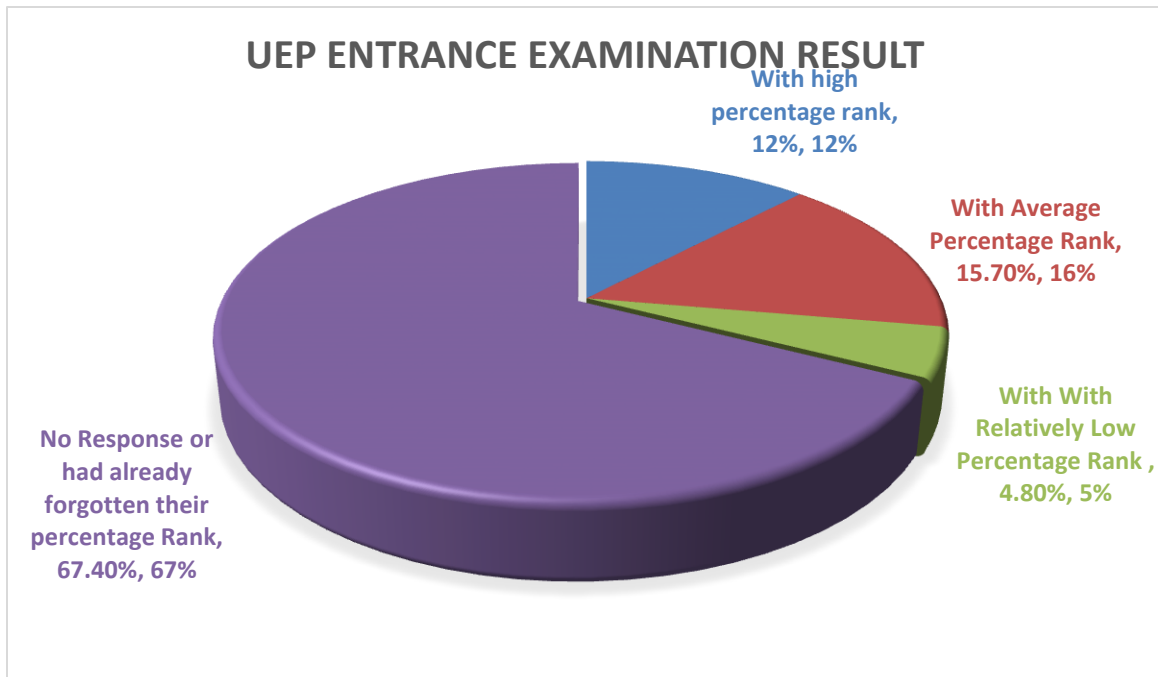
National Career Assessment Examination (NCAE) Result

Among the 83 respondents, 21 or 25.3% excelled in General Scholastics Aptitude, 6 or 7.2% excelled in Academic Track, 8 or 9.6% excelled in Technical-Vocational-Livelihood Track, and 48 or 57.8% had no response or have not seen their actual results while other have already forgotten and lost their results.



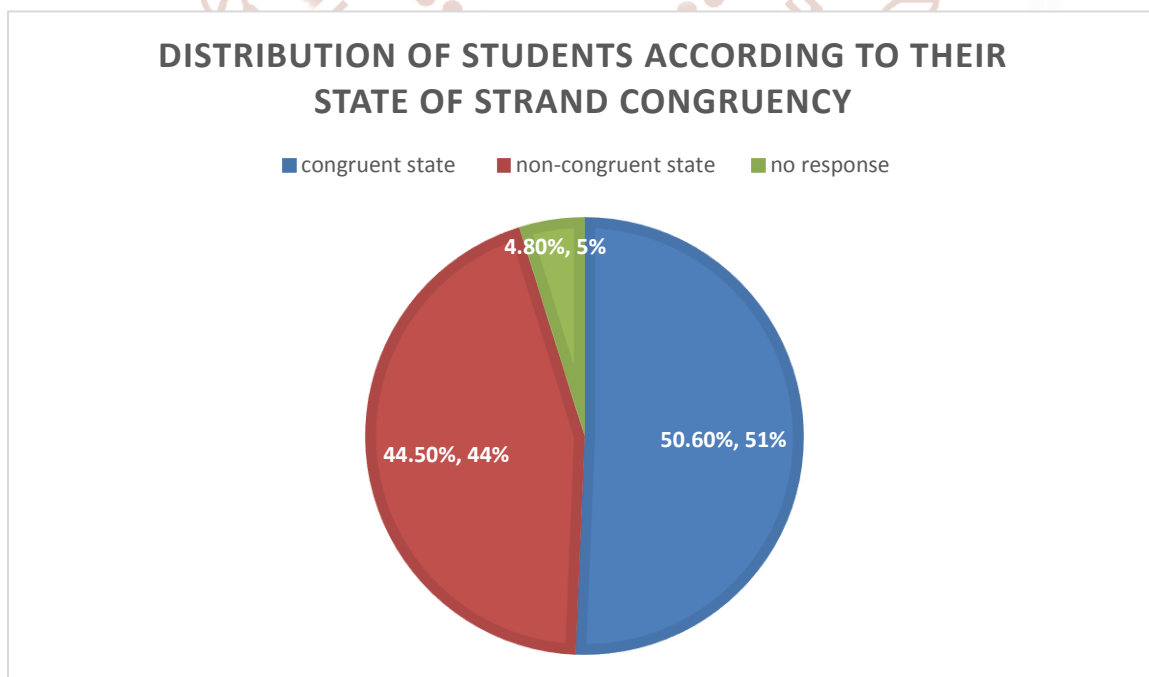
UEP Entrance Examination Result

The chart shows the distribution of respondents according to their percentile rank in the UEP Entrance Exam. Among 83 respondents, 10 or 12% had high percentile rank, 13 or 15.7% had average percentile rank, 4 or 4.8% had relatively low percentile rank, and 56 or 67.4% had no response or had already forgotten their percentile rank.



State of Strand-Course Congruency of the Respondents

The Chart shows the distribution of respondents according to their state of strand-course congruency. Among the 83 respondents, 42 or 50.6% had congruent state of strand-course congruency, while 37 or 44.5% had non-congruent state of strand-course congruency, and 4 or 4.8% had no response since they did not attend the Senior High School Program. This means that a slight majority of the respondents are enrolled in college degree programs that are parallel to or in line with their senior high school track or strand. This further means that there is good number of respondents whose current college degree programs are not parallel to their senior high school track. It can be inferred from the data that many freshman students in the College of Arts and Communication are enrolled in degree programs that are non-congruent to their senior high school strands. There is therefore clear inconsistency in the career preferences of the respondents and their senior high school strand determined on the basis of their NCAE results.



Test of Relationship

Table 1 exhibits the test of relationship between the independent variables (profile of the respondents) and their strand-course congruency. It can be gleaned from the table that out of ten independent variables, only age with a computed chi square value of 7.15 over the tabular value of 5.99 at 2 degrees of freedom and .05 level of significance and father's occupation with a computed value of 23.82 over the tabular value of 15.51 at 8 degrees of freedom and .05 level of significance were found to be significantly related to the dependent variable (strand-course congruency). This means that with respect to the said two variables, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables is rejected. Thus, age and father's occupation have marked bearing on the respondents' strand-course congruency.

Table 1 Summary of Test of Relationship between the Independent and Dependent Variables

Variables	Chi-Square Value	Tabular	Df	Level of Significance	Remarks
Age	7.15	5.99	2	.05	Significant
Sex	0.11	5.99	2	.05	Not Significant
Religion	0.34	5.99	2	.05	Not Significant
Mother's Occupation	6.43	15.51	8	.05	Not Significant
Father's Occupation	23.82	15.51	8	0.05	Significant
Mother's Educational Attainment	3.39	9.39	4	.05	Not Significant
Father's Educational Attainment	4.902	9.39	4	.05	Not Significant
Parents' Income	11.36	12.59	6	.05	Not Significant
NCAE Rating	11.14	12.59	6	.05	Not Significant
Entrance Exam Result	6.62	12.59	6	0.05	Not Significant

Conclusions

On the basis of general findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. The respondents are not fully informed and guided in choosing their career preferences. While most of the respondents are enrolled in strand-congruent college courses, a large portion are the opposite. Hence, secondary schools must conduct career orientation programs for both incoming and outgoing senior high school students to enlighten and guide them with respect to their career preferences.
2. Parents, especially fathers, are role models for their children's career preference. Thus, most incoming college freshmen prefer career paths that are similar or allied to that of their father. Hence, it imperative for academic institutions to help the students objectively assess their skills and career potentials so that their career paths are based on a personal and skill evaluation rather than just choosing career paths akin to that of their parents.
3. The NCAE does not fully serve its purpose of guiding the students in choosing their career preference on the basis of their career and occupational aptitudes. Thus, NCAE should be introduced properly to the students as it gives

important information on their ability and skills. The students should be oriented to take the NCAE seriously as it is determinative of their career preference.

Acknowledgment

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