

Career Development Learning and Employability Skills as Predictors of Career Competencies of Senior High School Students

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Abstract— The study aimed to investigate which domain of career development learning and employability skills significantly influences the career competencies of senior high school students in the selected high schools in Davao del Sur for the school year 2019-2020. Using an adapted standardized questionnaire, the researcher surveyed 294 respondents. A random sampling technique was used to identify research respondents. The mean, Pearson r, and multiple regression were used to examine the data gathered. Results of the study revealed that the level of career development learning and career competencies individually obtained a high assessment. Meanwhile, all measures of employability skills obtained a high assessment except for human skills, which were assessed very highly by the respondents. Each indicator of employability skill was a determinant of employability; hence, no overall mean was measured. Further, when analyzed as to the relationship between variables, the result suggests a significant correlation between career development learning and career competencies and between employability and career competencies. Alternatively, when regressed, the individual domains of employability skills that significantly influence career competencies are human, leadership, and communication skills. Among the three, human skills best influence career competencies.

Keywords— career development learning, career competencies, descriptive correlative, employability skills, senior high school students, teaching technology livelihood education, Philippines.

I. INTRODUCTION

With the growing desire for workers to effectively manage themselves, it is becoming more important for them to gain critical career competencies that promote their professional development (Akkermans & Tims, 2017; Blokker et al., 2019). Since individuals today are primarily accountable for obtaining career success, they must develop career competencies to aid in career navigation. This has led people to see that their unique traits may be used as a guide when deciding on a job path that would ultimately bring them happiness and success. Learning and employability skills are also related (Suleman, 2018), making them an essential focus for any school that cares about the success of its graduates. Consequently, schools must ensure that their graduate students are adequately prepared for their chosen fields of study.

Career competencies are ascertained to hold an essential role in attaining career success. For instance, an individual may grasp his traits and motivations by building career competencies and devising plans to effectively achieve his career goals as he adjusts to employment life (Rubens et al., 2018; Shanafelt et al., 2021). The statement points out the importance of career competencies and career development. Education and careful career planning are fundamental to future success (Reedy et al., 2020; Tajlili, 2014). Moreover,

when students are included in the discussion, the need for planning for lifetime career development becomes more apparent since they may be most at risk in the ever-changing landscape of professional education and employment opportunities.

A particular study in the Philippines postulated that career learning is essential for students planning and striving to advance career competencies (Presbitero, 2015). These studies all come to similar conclusions about how important it is for students to be aware of, take charge of, improve, measure, and recognize their skills and abilities, which are the vital bases they need to find employment centered on their total potential (Komariah, 2015). Given the rate of change in contemporary companies, it is increasingly important than ever for people to take charge of their professional futures.

Individuals' ability to engage in meaningful and effective employment appears to be increasingly dependent on their ability to obtain career-related competencies (Bridgstock et al., 2019). This indicates that employability is not only a quality of the young graduates but also a readiness for furthering one's education and expanding one's skills and abilities. Concerns have been raised about aspects of the senior

high school program's execution, including the students' access to internships and job chances after graduation. Hence, this research fills a gap in the literature by determining which areas of career development learning and employability skills impact senior high school students' professional abilities or career competencies most.

This study aimed to determine which factors, such as career development learning and employability skills, influence senior high school students' career competencies in Davao del Sur during the 2019-2020 academic year. The following are its Research Objectives:

1. To determine the career development learning of the Senior High School students in terms of:
 - 1.1 self-awareness;
 - 1.2 opportunity awareness;
 - 1.3 decision making; and
 - 1.4 transition learning.
2. To assess the employability skills of the high school students in terms of:
 - 2.1 problem-solving and adaptability skills;
 - 2.2 human skills;
 - 2.3 English language proficiency and literacy;
 - 2.4 ICT skills;
 - 2.5 personal organization and time management skills;
 - 2.6 leadership skills; and
 - 2.7 communication skills.
3. To determine the level of career competencies of the senior high school students in terms of:
 - 3.1 reflection on motivation;
 - 3.2 reflection on qualities;
 - 3.3 networking;
 - 3.4 self-profiling;
 - 3.5 work exploration; and
 - 3.6 career control.
4. To assess the relevance of the relationships between career development learning and employability skills with the career competencies of senior high school students.
5. To figure out which domain of career development learning and employability skills significantly influence the career competencies of senior high school students.

The study centers on Hobfoll et al.'s (2018) Conservation of Resources Theory (COR), which states that everyone strives to manage resources to achieve beneficial results. As stipulated by the COR theory, the resources support individuals in obtaining desired outcomes, such as career resiliency and adaptability to changes. These also include personal job resources (i.e., employability skills and competencies) and personal characteristics (i.e., adaptation to change) (Ahmad et al., 2019).

To strengthen the relationship of COR to the research objectives, Magnano et al. (2021) expanded the idea by citing that firms who invest in career development learning programs improve employees' performance and strengthen career advancement. This confirms the claims of Bridgstock (2018), who stressed the importance of universities in preparing graduates to successfully enter the workforce and take charge of their professional development. Given how career competencies, employability skills, and adaptation to change influence the desired outcome in career preparation and workplace orientation of the students, this exploration proposes that the COR framework is useful in studying the mentioned variables along with their predictors and outcomes.

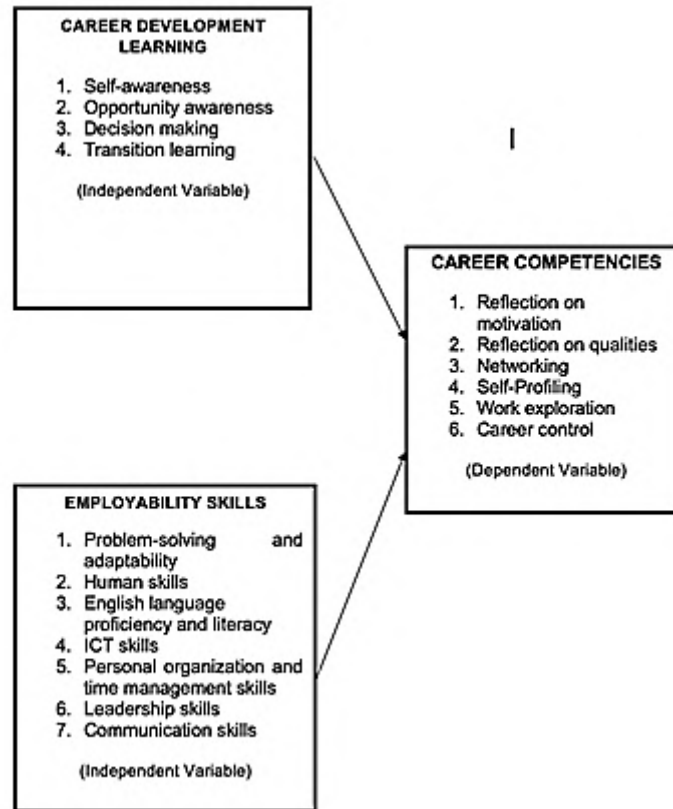
Further, this research supports the claims made by Harvey (2010), who argues that universities and colleges provide a variety of ways for students to enhance their employability, such as via self-presentation, life-long learning, and many others. Some advancements are hidden and included within the subject programs, while others are produced as standalone modules.

Jaafar et al. (2018) also posited that most technical graduates rely primarily on their degrees while looking for work, so developing marketable skills is crucial. Their citation accurately depicts the contributions of graduates, higher education institutions, employers, and employment to creating jobs and developing students' professional skills and knowledge.

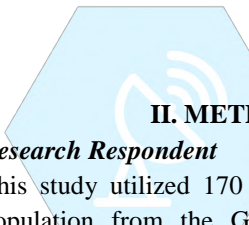
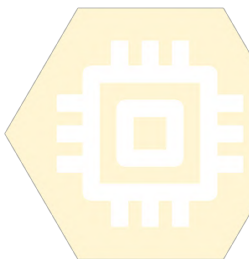
Wellman's (2010) Integrated Competence Model of Employability further supports the study's central argument by showing how knowledge, skills, and personal traits interact to increase one's employability. Technical and occupational knowledge and general assistance for micro-level abilities are combined with macro-level behavior and attitude in a unique

perspective on employability. Enabling variables, including policies, strategies, processes, and resources

Conceptual Framework



that boost employability, are also considered in the model.



II. METHODOLOGY

Research Respondent

This study utilized 170 respondents of the 294 total population from the Grade 12 senior high school students 18 years old and above enrolled in the Technical-Vocational and Livelihood (TVL) strand offered in all senior high schools in Sta. Cruz, Davao del Sur, for the school year 2019-2020. They are selected randomly, regardless of sex, ethnicity, and academic performance. The objective was to produce results that would determine the degree to which the study is essential and the tiniest possible size of the influence (Faber & Fonseca, 2014).

To provide trustworthy and valid findings, it is essential to include only eligible respondents in the analysis described in this research and a bona fide TVL student enrolled for the school year 2019-2020 within the research locale. In contrast, exclusion criteria to protect defenseless people from being taken advantage of, as stated in this study, are as follows; a minor, an alien, and those Grade 11 TVL students and Grade 12 students

who were 17 years old and below, such that the target was Grade 12 students who were 18 years old and above. Moreover, college and senior high school students outside the established geographic boundary were excluded. Finally, those tapped for pilot tests were also excluded from the survey. Respondents may discontinue or withdraw from the study for any reason and may or may not inform the researcher for evaluation and reporting.

Materials and Instruments

A standardized questionnaire was adapted and modified to fit based on the statement of the problem of the study. These questionnaires evaluated Senior High School students' career development learning, employability skills, and career competencies. The Cronbach's alpha for Senior High School students' level of career development learning was 0.901, considered excellent. For the level of employability skills of Senior High School students, Cronbach's α obtained a 0.891 score, described as good. Meanwhile, the level of career competencies of Senior High School students had a

Cronbach's α of 0.952, which was described as excellent. These values indicate that the items on the five-point Likert scale research instruments are cohesive and correlated (Joshi et al., 2015; Subedi, 2016). Meanwhile, as validated by the experts, the overall mean of the research instruments obtained a 4.57 score, described as excellent. The evaluation comments were utilized to ensure the accuracy of the content.

Career development learning was patterned from the study of Reddan and Rauchie (2012) using the five-point Likert scale of a very high level of development by giving a score of 5 or minimal development by giving a score of 1 for each statement in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was composed of eleven (11) questions: three (3) questions for the self-awareness indicator; two (2) questions for the opportunity awareness indicator; one (1) question for the decision-making indicator; and five (5) questions for the transition learning indicator.

Moreover, the level of employability skills was patterned from the study of Singh and Singh (2008). For each statement in the questionnaire, a five-point Likert scale of strongly agreed (a score of 5) or strongly disagreed (a score of 1) was used. The questionnaire was composed of fifty-five (55) questions; nineteen (19) items for the problem-solving and adaptability skills indicator; ten (10) items for the human skills indicator; six (6) items for the English language proficiency and literacy skills indicator; five (5) for the ICT skills indicator; seven (7) for the personal organization and time management skills indicator; five (5) for the leadership skills indicator; and three (3) for the communication skills indicator.

Furthermore, the level of career competency was patterned from the study of Akkermans et al (2012). For each statement in the questionnaire, a five-point Likert scale of strongly agreed (a score of 5) or strongly disagreed (a score of 1) was used. The questionnaire was composed of twenty-one (21) questions: three (3) items for the reflection on motivation indicator; four (4) items for the reflection on qualities indicator; four (4) items for the networking indicator; three (3) items on self-profiling indicator; three (3) items for work exploration indicator; four (4) items on career control indicator.

The range of means from 4.20 to 5.00 exhibits a very high descriptive level, indicating that the statement is always true and is manifested or observed. The range of means from 3.40 to 4.19 has a high descriptive level,

indicating that the statement is often true and is manifested or observed. The range of means from 2.60 to 3.39 shows a moderately agreeable descriptive level, suggesting that the statement is sometimes true and is manifested or observed. The range of means from 1.80 to 2.59 indicates a low descriptive level, which implies that the statement is rarely true and is manifested or observed. Lastly, the range of means from 1.00 to 1.79 shows a very low descriptive level, indicating that the statement is almost never true and is manifested or observed.

Design and Procedures

The study used a descriptive-correlation research design since it described and determined the career development learning and employability skills as predictors of career competencies among senior high school students in the selected high schools in Davao del Sur for 2018 and 2019. Also, a descriptive research method was used in the investigation to evaluate the current state of the phenomenon, which may be portrayed in the form of variables (Creswell, 2013). This technique analyzes the factors that lead to specific situations and occurrences by focusing on the connections that exist between such factors. In addition, a quantitative research design's essential characteristics are the statistics usually gathered by regulated research tools. The findings are based on more excellent model dimensions that are descriptive of the population, and the research study can typically be replicated or repeated, presuming that it has a high level of reliability.

According to Calmorin (2007), the descriptive research method involved not only describing and documenting the traits of the population or phenomenon under study and concentrating more on the "what" than the "why" of the research subject, but it also included the analysis and interpretation of any possible relationships between the variables that had been identified. Additionally, Bhat (2018) noted that the primary emphasis was on characterizing the characteristics of a group of people to comprehend the respondent's attitude or view about the phenomena in the query, and such information trends were assessed using statistics.

Furthermore, the study used a correlation research design since the researcher wanted to know what kinds of interactions naturally occurring variables had with one another, attempting to determine whether two or more variables were associated and, if so, how (Cheprasov, 2017). The researcher was interested in

discovering the study's relationships between independent and dependent variables. It investigated the link between senior high school students' career development learning, employability skills, and career competencies.

Data Collection

The researcher followed certain steps and procedures during data collection. First, the researcher wrote a letter to the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent, Division of Davao del Sur, requesting permission to conduct the study. Second, a permission letter was sent to the principal of each of the five identified senior high schools in Sta. Cruz, Davao del Sur, granting the researcher permission to conduct the survey. The researcher contacted the five (5) indicated institutions to administer the survey in person during the concluding quarter of the 2019-2020 academic year.

As specified, the researcher personally distributed the validated survey questionnaires and conducted the study after a letter of permission and consent was made to the identifiable respondents. To guarantee accurate and trustworthy data, the researcher instructed the respondents throughout the completion of the surveys and explained every query. Third, the data were collected and tabulated by the researcher. After statistical analysis and interpreting those analyses, formulated conclusions and recommendations for the study were made.

Data Analysis

A variety of statistical tests were used to provide a more detailed analysis and interpretation of the data:

- **Weighted mean.** This was used to determine the levels and variations of senior high school students' career development learning, employability skills, and career competencies.
- **Pearson product-moment correlation.** This was utilized to assess the relevance of the relationship between senior high school students' career development learning, employability skills, and career competencies.
- **Regression.** This was applied to estimate the degree of the effect of career development learning and employability skills on senior high school student's career competence.

In addition, the researcher meticulously gathered the essential data and information required to achieve the

objective of the inquiry, using the following ethical considerations:

Voluntary Participation. Where respondents may choose to take part out of their own will and do not risk retaliation, they should not be coerced into participating in research. They should also be fully informed on the procedures and risks involved in research. The researcher must reassure participants that they will not be put at risk of harm because of their participation. Therefore, respondents' rights were addressed in detail to be considered and adhered to once the study's purpose and advantages were given to them. At any time throughout the study, a subject may withdraw from participation. The participant must notify the researcher of his or her withdrawal from the study. A participant who decides to drop out of the study is not obligated to provide the researcher with an explanation for their decision.

Privacy and confidentiality. Information provided by respondents, whether it be personal or professional, that is necessary for the research was treated with the highest discretion and respect for their privacy. They were assured that their personal information would not be made available to anyone who was not involved in the study and that they would remain anonymous. The data that was collected from participants was kept confidential through coding. Video and audio recordings were deleted after tabulation and interpretation of data were finalized. Privacy and confidentiality were strictly followed as one should not be able to identify which section or persons took part in the research. Encryption of specific details like names and addresses to protect identities was made. Participants were guaranteed that they could not be identified as participants from information about the study.

Informed consent. Researchers followed best practices for obtaining informed permission by creating a questionnaire devoid of jargon and technical words. The survey's completion also gave participants a clearer picture of the benefits that stand to accrue to them and their respective institutions.

If a participant felt uncomfortable sharing personal information with the researcher, they were not required to continue participating in the research and might quit at any moment. Everyone engaged was aware of what they were getting into.

Recruitment. Participants are selected for involvement based on whether they meet the researcher-established inclusion criteria. The researcher made sure that none of the participants were exposed to any potentially life-threatening events over the course of the study.

Risks. In conducting the study, no participant was put in a situation where they may be harmed because of their participation, the possibility that something bad or unpleasant happened, something that produces good in helpful results and effects, and freedom from harm, danger, or the state of being safe was taken into consideration.

Benefits. The results of this research may be incorporated into the ongoing and planned efforts by the Schools Division of Davao del Sur to increase employment opportunities for high school graduates. This research may be useful to the Department of Education. The study's findings may also be used by the Schools Division Superintendent and the principals of senior high schools to shape local education policy and to ensure the implementation of national education standards and policies that support the growth of students' career development learning, employability skills, and career competencies.

The research was particularly useful for educators since it highlighted the factors that teachers may control to help their high school seniors improve their employability abilities. Senior high school students may profit from the study's findings since any action done by the educational leaders improved the students' employability abilities. Finally, this study posed a challenge to future researchers by suggesting that they look into the same problem, either by replicating the study with a larger sample size or by confirming the study's findings in another way.

Plagiarism. No instances of direct, indirect, or self-plagiarism were found in the study's usage of citations, statements, tasks, or representations. Grammarly, Turnitin, and/or any other plagiarism checker ensured that the grammar was consistent and the degree of similarity was minimized, allowing the researcher to put the ideas from several studies into the words of her choosing. The research was based on previous studies that had shown reliability and accuracy. The study also made sure the researcher was not making up stories based on the books he read and misrepresenting the authors' intentions.

Fabrication. The research did not stretch the truth or make false claims about the work of others. The models and theoretical frameworks employed were based on correct and legitimate sources since they cited all important and reliable data from several sites, links, and papers to prevent data falsification.

Falsification. Since no real survey findings, materials utilized, data, instruments, or hypotheses acquired or tested were tampered with, changed, or omitted, the research did not commit the falsification. Researchers adhered to a professional ethos prohibiting manipulation and 'cherry picking' of data to 'fit' an idea they wanted to substantiate. Further, the researcher provided all the necessary data and results with honesty and integrity.

Conflict of Interest. This research did not indicate bias or a conflict of interest. The well-being of the participants and the veracity of research results were always the main concerns, and the study was never affected by any secondary interests.

Deceit. The researcher provided full knowledge and information about the study to the participants before their participation. They were informed that they had the freedom to withdraw from sharing their ideas and experiences whenever they felt uncomfortable. The researcher had no intention of misleading the respondents or leading them to danger, instead, the researcher always assured their safety.

Observation. The respondents were assured that they were in no danger and that no trickery or dishonesty was utilized in the research. It was clear from the study's use of appropriate safeguards that the researcher was conducting the observations in a public or semi-public setting.

Permission from Organization/Location. The researcher needed permission from the organization/location where the data was collected. A formal letter was written and sent to appropriate individuals (such as school district superintendents, principals, and head teachers) to get authorization to collect data in schools. Despite the pandemic, traditional survey methods were used since they were more likely to provide accurate results if the necessary health standards were followed.

Authorship. Authorship was determined according to the study's established criteria, such as those involved in

the study's conceptualization and design, data gathering, and analysis and interpretation. The researcher worked hard on the article's composition and revision to ensure the accuracy and integrity of its key intellectual content. The thesis advisor offered supervision and direction, especially in the enhancement and development of the framework, and will be included as the paper's second author when it is eventually presented at conferences or published. The researcher not only conceived of and wrote the piece but also oversaw its revisions for key intellectual substance and gave final approval of the published edition.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Shown in Table 1 is the assessment of the level of career development learning as perceived by senior high school students. It can be observed that the overall mean was 4.05 (SD=0.430), with a descriptive rating of high,

indicating that the students frequently manifest all enumerated indicators.

The general mean was found by taking the average of all the factors in this study. As shown in the same table, self-awareness obtained the highest mean of 4.15 (SD=0.487), which result was described as high, followed by decision-making with a mean rating of 4.07 (SD=0.476) or high. Opportunity awareness is the next indicator with a mean rating of 4.00 (SD=0.525) with a descriptive equivalent of high, while transition learning yielded the lowest mean of 3.99 (SD=0.513) or still high.

The result suggests that the variable is relatively essential in helping respondents obtain appropriate knowledge, concepts, and skills that equip them to manage their chosen careers.

Table 1. The Extent of Career Development Learning Among Senior High School Students

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
self-awareness	4.15	.487	High
opportunity awareness	4.00	.525	High
decision-making	4.07	.476	High
transition learning	3.99	.513	High
Overall	4.05	.430	High

Career development of the senior high school students obtained high-level assessment as evaluated by the respondents. This suggests that senior high school students who were enrolled for the academic year 2018-2019 in selected schools within Davao del Sur have established a high level of perceived learning and career transition through appropriate management of their studies and extra-curricular activities. The findings support the insinuation of Bridgstock et al., (2019) citing that Career Development Learning has demonstrated a positive influence on the employability of higher education graduates. Several researchers (Bridgstock et al., 2019; Bridgstock, & Jackson, 2019) further cited that the high level of Career Development Learning may imply an emphasis on the development of meta-level competencies and places a strong emphasis on planning and decision-making that have an impact on a person's career development.\

regarding career opportunities (Aspden et al., 2015; Salonen et al., 2018; Zafar, 2019), and boost self-confidence and esteem, which promotes motivation and readiness to seek new work or study alternatives (Clarke & Ravenswood, 2019; Laidlaw et al., 2020). It may be assumed that respondents can balance study, leisure, and work since their academic participation gives realistic job experiences and chances for career development.

It is clear from the findings of the research that every indicator achieved a high degree of evaluation. The result suggests that students set realistic and precise perceptions of personal interests (Arnold & Boggs, 2019), are capable of developing informed decisions

Table 2 displays descriptive statistics regarding the assessment of senior high school students' employability skills. There was no overall mean score since each skill was a determinant of employability. Among the indicators, human skills obtained the highest mean of 4.27 (SD=0.499), which was described as very high. The result implied that senior high school students always observed human skills. This was followed by leadership skills with a mean rating of 3.97 (SD=0.585). Personal organization and time management skills were the next indicators, with a mean rating of 3.95 (SD=0.557), followed by problem-solving and adaptability skills, with a mean rating of 3.93 (SD=0.528). ICT skills had the lowest mean rating of 3.72 (SD=0.703). All indicators, except for human skills, obtained a

descriptive value of high. This implied that these skills were oftentimes observed. The high-level assessment implies that respondents perceived to have acquired a set of competencies or characters that they assume to be an attribute that makes them more employable. Employability skills are foundational or core transferable skills that make one employable and successful in any job.

The overall extent of employability skills of senior high school students in selected schools in Davao del Sur

obtained high assessment. This means that respondents in this study have acquired the abilities needed to obtain and keep work and have an established set of job-specific capabilities (Kenayathulla et al., 2019; Mahajan et al., 2022).

The conclusion that may be drawn is that the outcome can be linked to Abelha et al (2020) citing that employability skills enable senior high school students to enhance their skills and become successful in their endeavors.

Table 2. Level of Employability Skills of Senior High School Students

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
Problem-solving and adaptability skills	3.93	.528	High
Human skills	4.27	.499	Very High
English language proficiency and literacy skills	3.74	.662	High
ICT skills	3.72	.703	High
Personal organization and time management skills	3.95	.557	High
Leadership skills	3.97	.585	High
Communication skills	3.79	.562	High

On the other hand, the only domain of employability skills that obtained a very high assessment was human skills, which further signifies that senior high school students were devoted to working with other people. The result affirms the proposition of Succi & Canovi (2020) who further emphasized that human skills enable a person to recognize varying perceptions of his colleagues, superiors, and subordinates. The said recognition influences an individual to connect with people, which is an important aspect of employability and career-building proficiency.

Nonetheless, several experts have pointed to the importance of teaching students the abilities they will need to be successful in the profession, so it comes as no surprise that the academic community has taken it upon itself to emphasize these talents in senior high school students (Bonesso et al., 2019; Martin, 2019; Nisha & Rajasekaran, 2018). This perception runs parallel with employers' anticipation that senior high school or college graduates should acquire employability skills

not only for employment but also for them to become efficient and effective employees. Because of the positive results reflecting about the respondents, it is possible to conclude that the educational institutions in Davao del Sur have provided senior high school students with an adequate set of employability skills.

The descriptive data on measuring the level of career competencies of senior high school students are shown in Table 3. It showed an overall mean rating of 4.05 (SD=0.483) with a descriptive equivalent of high. This implied that the indicators stipulated in the domain of career competency were oftentimes manifested among the respondents. Reflection on motivation obtained the highest mean rating of 4.19 (SD=0.502) or high, followed by self-profiling with a mean rating of 4.08 (SD=0.624) and described as high. Other indicators such as work exploration got a mean rating of 4.05 (SD=0.555); networking obtained a mean rating of 3.98 (SD=0.634), and career control got the lowest mean rating with 3.94 (SD=0.580).

Table 3. Level of Career Competencies of Senior High School Students

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
Reflection on motivation	4.19	.502	High
Networking	3.98	.634	High
Self-profiling	4.08	.624	High
Work exploration	4.05	.555	High

Career control	3.94	.580	High
Overall	4.05	.483	High

Still, they were all described as high-level. In this premise, the overall high-level assessment implies that respondents are stirred with an equitable level of career competencies. Moreover, it is safe to deduce that a person with the necessary and sufficient skills to serve a particular purpose is said to be competent in that domain or field.

The perceived level of career competencies of senior high school students who are enrolled for the academic year 2018-2019 in selected schools within Davao del Sur emanates high-level assessment. The result affirmed the concept of several researchers citing that respondents can easily feel overburdened while creating different career qualifications, which might seem unexpected and daunting in a rapidly evolving digital workplace, appealing management structure, global economic conditions, and an ever-widening technical skills and competency needs (Zacher et al., 2019). Bhat (2018) further emphasizes that the rise in popularity of more exciting professions has led to a new kind of worker who actively manages his or her employability.

Senior high school students, and employees, in general, are tasked with keeping themselves employable by monitoring industry trends, selecting appropriate

courses of action, and carrying out tasks that enhance their non-technical and technical skills. Senior high school students' high-level evaluations across all variables are suggestive of their clear assessments of their drive and characteristics, networking, self-profiling, career exploration, and agency. This assertion corresponds to the statement that career competencies take the complete career into account rather than only being directly tied to the job or confined to job-specific skills (Mulhall & Campbell, 2018; Skakni et al., 2020). Career competencies may pave the way to promotion and advancement within a company. Rusilowati and Wahyudi (2020) added that, with the right set of professional abilities, people and businesses may reap mutual advantages. They are dynamic and vary with the times since they are based on the individual's understanding of their work scenario. With this pronouncement, it can be deduced that respondents are career-ready as evidenced by the assessment they have provided.

Table 4 displays the statistical findings of the study's examination of the association between variables. The total correlation of all markers of career development learning and career competencies was 0.628, $p < 0.01$, which was deemed significant.

Table 4 Correlation Matrix of Career Development Learning and Career Competencies of Senior High School Students

Career Competencies	Career Development Learning				Overall
	self-awareness	opportunity awareness	decision-making	transition learning	
reflection on motivation	.615** (.000)	.570** (.000)	.470* (.000)	.368** (.000)	.589** (.000)
networking	.374** (.000)	.380** (.000)	.408** (.000)	.347** (.000)	.439** (.000)
self-profiling	.452** (.000)	.442** (.000)	.445** (.001)	.395** (.000)	.504** (.000)
work exploration	.502** (.000)	.511** (.000)	.510** (.000)	.540** (.000)	.600** (.000)
career control	.497** (.000)	.465** (.000)	.471** (.000)	.336** (.000)	.513** (.000)
Overall	.576** (.000)	.561** (.000)	.550** (.000)	.474** (.000)	.628** (.000)

** $p < 0.01$

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A pairwise correlation study shows that every measure of career development learning has a positive link with career competencies, as shown by their r values. To wit, reflection on motivation obtained an $r=0.589$, $p<0.01$; networking with $r=0.439$, $p<0.01$; self-profiling with $r=0.504$, $p<0.01$; work exploration got an r of 0.600 , $p<0.01$; and career control obtained $r=0.513$, $p<0.01$. This means that the initial null hypothesis was rejected not just for overall correlation but also for each indicator of the linked variables.

The relevance of the association between career development learning and career competencies of senior high school students suggests that at a particular level of confidence, the better the perceived career development learning of the respondents corresponds with the number of career competencies. This was determined by looking at the correlation between career development learning and career competencies. It is believed that the strength of such a relationship is high, which suggests that career development learning and career competencies are related ideas that can be discussed together in the context of senior high school students who are enrolled for the academic year 2018-2019 schools located within Davao del Sur.

The result corroborates with the postulations of Joo and Lee (2017) who state that a good way to maintain competence is to help employees develop their careers in a specific field. This follows the postulations of the conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll et al., 2018) citing that individual endeavors enable a person to manage acquired resources and influence positive outcomes. Further, the role of academic institutions in the foundation of relevant competencies of the students plays an important function in academic growth and career development.

As concrete evidence of the result, the established link between career development learning and career competencies is consistent with the pronouncement of Magnano et al., (2021) who claimed that firms who invest in career development learning programs improve employees' performance and strengthen career advancement. High career development is important for improving career competencies. The words of Akkermans, Paradniké, Van der Heijden and De Vos in 2018, emphasized that individuals need career competencies to help them manage their careers. The concept is generally addressed to young individuals who

are starting their careers since they are at greater risk of underemployment, landing a temporary job, and job mismatch, among others. Therefore, the opportunity to obtain practice competencies in academic and work settings with experiential learning is significant in the overall competency of the respondents.

Furthermore, Table 5 showed the indicators of employability skills conveyed a significant correlation with career competency, as enumerated, the problem-solving and adaptability ($r=0.607$, $p<0.01$), human skills ($r=0.616$, $p<0.01$), English language proficiency ($r=0.480$, $p<0.01$), ICT skills ($r=0.313$, $p<0.01$), personal organization ($r=0.646$, $p<0.01$), leadership skills ($r=0.729$, $p<0.01$) and communication skills ($r=0.683$, $p<0.01$) obtained significant value which signified the rejection of the null hypothesis of no correlation. The analysis did not consider the overall mean of employability skills as a determinant of career competency as each of the indicators demonstrated a different measure of said variable. Before moving on to the next test of considerable effect, this study was necessary as a check of the underlying assumptions.

The significance of the relationships between employability and career competencies in the context of senior high school students in selected schools in Sta. Cruz, Davao del Sur rejects the first null hypothesis of no correlation between variables. According to the findings, the associated career competencies will be greater in proportion to the level of employability skills that an individual has. The outcome may be connected to the statement made by Bridgstock (2018), who emphasized the relevance of providing graduates with the skills essential to independently manage their professional competence and to actively navigate the world of work.

The established correlation between employability skills and career competencies also concurred with the pronouncement of Wang (2013) citing that a practical career competency plan should consider employability skills to acquire and achieve development goals as both concepts are associated with each other. They further insinuated that both career competencies and employability are perceived to successfully adjust students' careers. Hence, students in their final year of high school have already built employability skills and career competencies, which is a sign that they are prepared for the workforce and are job-ready.

Table 5. Correlation Matrix of Employability Skills and Career Competencies of Senior High School Students

Employability Skills	Career Competencies					Overall
	reflection on motivation	Networking	self-profiling	work exploration	career control	
problem-solving and adaptability	.491** (.000)	.515** (.000)	.598* (.000)	.506** (.000)	.417** (.000)	.607** (.000)
human skills	.557** (.000)	.511** (.000)	.602** (.000)	.487** (.000)	.411** (.000)	.616** (.000)
English language proficiency	.360** (.000)	.324** (.000)	.420** (.000)	.511** (.000)	.390** (.000)	.480** (.000)
ICT skills	.253** (.010)	.259** (.008)	.255** (.009)	.332** (.000)	.208* (.035)	.313** (.000)
personal organization	.547** (.000)	.524** (.000)	.657** (.000)	.474** (.000)	.486** (.000)	.646** (.000)
leadership skills	.606** (.000)	.655** (.000)	.594** (.000)	.562** (.000)	.620** (.000)	.729** (.000)
communication skills	.515** (.000)	.565** (.000)	.579** (.000)	.650** (.000)	.537** (.000)	.683** (.000)

** p<0.01

The multiple linear regression analysis depicting the predictive value of markers of career development learning and employability skill sets on the total career competencies of senior high school students in the study region is shown in Table 6. According to the findings, the calculated R2 of 0.739 and the modified R2 value of 0.708 indicate that the entry of all indicators of career development learning and employability skills accounts

for 70.8% to 73.9% of the variation in senior high school student's career competencies. The remainder 26.1% can be attributed to other factors that were not included in this study. The study was significant, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis of no linear link between career development learning and employability skills on senior high school students' total career competencies.

Table 6. Multiple Linear Regression Results Showing the Influence of the Indicators of Career Development Learning and Employability Skills on Overall Career Competencies of Senior High School Students

Regressors	B	S.E.	β	t	p-value
(Constant)	0.239	0.278		0.858	0.393
self-awareness	0.168	0.086	0.170	1.952	0.054
opportunity awareness	0.120	0.081	0.130	1.473	0.144
decision-making	-0.078	0.092	-0.076	-0.847	0.399
transition learning	-0.053	0.076	-0.056	-0.693	0.490
problem-solving and adaptability skills	0.016	0.091	0.018	0.176	0.861
human skills	0.166	0.080	0.171	2.073	0.041*
English language proficiency and literacy skills	-0.003	0.057	-0.004	-0.046	0.964
ICT skills	-0.050	0.044	-0.072	-1.121	0.265
personal organization and time management skills	0.135	0.070	0.156	1.927	0.057
leadership skills	0.302	0.064	0.366	4.753	< .001**
communication skills	0.223	0.074	0.260	3.034	0.003**

F (11, 91) = 23.43, p<0.05

R² = 0.739

Δ R² = 0.708

Among the indicators, only three employability skills were found to be a significant predictor of the overall career competencies – human skills (β =.171,

t=2.073, p<0.05), leadership skills (β =.366, t=4.753, p<0.05) and communication skills (β =.260, t=3.034, p<0.05). This indicated that a one-point

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increase in human skills, leadership skills, and communication skills may increase the level of career competencies of senior high school students by 0.17, 0.36, and 0.26, respectively, if all other predictors and accounted variables are held constant.

On the other hand, the significance of other variables was acknowledged, but each was found to have a non-significant influence on career development learning and employability skills on the overall career competencies (p -value > 0.05).

Prior studies necessitated the assessment of the domain(s) that best affect the career competencies of senior high school students in selected schools in Sta. Cruz, Davao del Sur and their relationship to career development learning and employability skills. Based on the regression analysis results, only three employability skill areas were identified to have a substantial incremental positive impact on the career competencies of high school seniors. Human skills, leadership skills, and communication skills were shown to be the best and only significant predictors of these employability skills.

Human skills have been considered a significant human springhead for both individual and career development. Significantly, Singh and Ramly (2016) illustrated the importance of high levels of human skills as one of the best predictors of career competencies. They said human skill is among those traits that impact graduates' total competence. This was strengthened by Siddiqi et al (2015) implying that human skills hold important functions in the enhancement of career competencies. They further proposed that the workforce should be equipped with important skills to improve career competence attain desired knowledge and skills and sustain competitiveness. On this premise, it can be deduced that human skills are an effective domain that influences career competencies.

The relatively high level of communication skills as one of the predictors of career competencies confirms the statement of Tripathy (2020) that "career development begins with good communication skills". As senior high school students prepare for a globalized workforce, the importance of communication skills becomes overly critical for career enhancement and employability. Moreover, communication skills are important for career success and contribute considerably to

organizational performance (Rao, 2019; Rustamov & Mamaziyayev, 2022).

Senior high school students with improved communication skills help other employees and employers have productive and amicable relationships.

The fact that leadership skills should be understood conceptually by senior high school students in the acquisition of career competencies has come to the forefront. Relative thereto, the high level of leadership skills of the respondents was perceived to support the study of Daniëls et al., (2019) implying that leadership skills contribute to career advancement.

The claim was also in consonance with the pronouncement of Mourão (2018) citing that career competency is directly associated with leadership skills as well as the growth and expansion of another set of skills and attitudes and the strengthening of acquired knowledge. Thus, individuals who invest in improving leadership skills along with its domain can foster the expansion of career competency.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The academic inquiry has revealed an overall high level of career development learning. The level is true in all of its indicators: self-awareness, opportunity awareness, decision-making, and transition learning. Meanwhile, employability skills were measured individually as each domain was a determinant of the variable. The assessment revealed that each domain was rated high as reflected in all its domains except for human skills, which was the only indicator to have attained very high levels. Career competencies also revealed an overall high level as assessed by the respondents. The indicators were also assessed as high: reflection on motivation, networking, self-profiling, work exploration, and career control. Collectively, the high levels of these variables indicate that career development learning, employability skills, and career competencies are linked to the aspects that can be strengthened to guarantee that senior high school respondents have acquired significant competencies. Further, the high-level assessment affirms the idea of Harvey (2010) citing that academic institutions serve as the foundation for learners to improve opportunities including employability skills, among others.

Moreover, the study revealed an existing correlation between career development learning and career

competencies. This is confirmatory with the assumptions of Magnano et al (2021) who claimed that firms that invest in career development learning programs improve employees' performance and strengthen career advancement. The study further revealed a positive correlation between employability skills and career competencies, which affirms the pronouncements of Bridgstock (2018) who stresses the importance of providing graduates with the skills to proactively navigate the world of employment and self-manage the career competencies.

Lastly, the combined dimension revealed that career development learning dimensions do not have a causal relationship with career competencies. However, three dimensions of employability skills were found to significantly have an incremental positive influence on the career competencies of senior high school students – human skills, leadership skills, and communication skills. The significant influence of the repressors indicates that an increase in human skills, leadership skills, and communication skills causes an increase in overall career competency. There are, however, other aspects or variables that may be held consistent to explain.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The high level of career development learning of senior high school students in selected schools in Davao del Sur entails that academic institutions have implemented an effective curriculum that seeks to enhance career learning. The high assessment suggestively manifests that the selected schools are committed to producing quality students that are equipped with knowledge that will enhance their competency when deployed in specific work conditions. It is recommended, however, that academic institutions may maintain the commitment to upholding quality learning to students, particularly in preparing them with adequate knowledge of career learning and competency. It further recommended that this study would also cater to and determine the readiness of senior high school students for college, entrepreneurial engagement, and middle-level skills.

Similarly, the high degree of employability skills across all categories shows that respondents have been trained in specialized employability skills. The high rating indicates that responders are well-found to possess the required talents that companies look for to get hired. Even human talents were given a very good rating by

those who participated in the survey. Considering these findings, to stay up with the present demand for work, it is recommended that respondents retain a high level of perceived employable abilities. In addition, respondents can stay afloat in the face of chronic obstacles in the work market if they participate in suitable training and seminars.

Additionally, after being evaluated, the respondents reached a high level of career competencies. This shows that respondents who were enrolled in their senior year of high school have learned strong career competencies that allow them to function well in career management. This is very necessary for responders to maintain the level of professional skill that prospective employers will demand. However, considering this assumption, respondents must investigate ways in which they could be able to keep their existing level of competence. This might be accomplished by engaging in seminars that will boost their professional competence about the efficiency and effectiveness with which they execute their competency.

All indicators of the variables involved in the study that obtained high assessment, nonetheless, do not reflect an influence on the overall measure of career competencies. It can be surmised, however, that the respondents are equipped with the skills and competencies necessary to progress in employability and career development. Relative to this, it is essential to continually improve employability and career competencies to cope with changing demands of employment opportunities. This can be done through involvement with on-the-job learning and training, participation with working groups, study for a complementary degree, and identification of areas for improvement.

This research, which focused on exploring the concepts of career development learning, employability skills, and career competencies, emphasizes the domains that require improvement to equip students with adequate competencies. In this contention, the selected schools' career enhancement agenda may highlight schools not included in the study to emphasize the strategies that will enhance and sustain their students' career competencies and employability skills.

Additional studies should be carried out in other contexts or locations to investigate additional factors that impact professional competence. These factors

could include career development learning and employability skills, among others. Furthermore, a comprehensive inquiry that will characterize the motivation of respondents to maintain professional competence has the potential to enhance the claim made by this study - that is, that career development learning and employability skills significantly affect total career competency. It is possible that in the future, researchers may look at more elements that either have a favorable or negative impact on the professional competence of seniors in high school.

Students in their final year of high school will acquire knowledge that will prove to be of great value if these suggestions, which are firmly based on the findings of this study, are put into action. Because of this, and with time, they will eventually attain the optimum career development learning and employability skills, and they will proceed with caution while putting their expertise into practice.

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