



The Role of Family in Shaping Career Pathways: Examining Parental Expectations and Their Impact on Career Preferences Among Secondary School Students in Noida

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ABSTRACT

Parents play an active role in their children's education in many ways, including being involved in school activities, teaching academic skills, learning themselves (in and out of the classroom), supervising the educational process, providing learning resources, and arranging meaningful experiences. Students confront a difficult decision-making process when selecting a profession; hence, parental engagement is essential in raising knowledge of possible career options. Students at Noida's public and private aided secondary schools had their job ambitions analyzed to see how they compared to those of their parents. Two hundred students from ten different schools were chosen using a mix of simple and purposive sampling for this descriptive survey study. To examine the relationship between parental expectations and professional choice, we used SPSS and Excel to compute means and standard deviations, and we conducted correlation analyses using ANOVA and regression. The data was gathered using questionnaires. The findings underscored the significant role of parents in guiding their children's career choices during secondary school. Parents' educational level was identified as a factor influencing their children's decision-making. The results indicated a notable influence of parental expectations on preferred or chosen careers, with a composite mean score of 3.32. It is recommended that parents enhance their support by engaging in discussions about academics, monitoring their children's progress, rewarding achievements, and encouraging them to explore various career options and develop awareness about them.

Keywords: Career preference, parental engagement, parental expectation, parental influence

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is characterized by speedy physical development and alterations in one's psychological and social well-being. Apart from the notable bodily changes that come with puberty, teenagers also acquire the ability to engage in abstract thinking, delve into different options in their quest for self-identity, adjust their relationships with their parents as they seek more independence, and navigate through major educational changes. While these changes offer improved growth opportunities, they pose difficulties that may activate vulnerabilities (**Gerard & Booth, 2015**). One such challenge is deciding what to do after graduating from school. Adolescents face the daunting task of choosing between further education, vocational training, entering the workforce, or something else entirely. Some factors that influence the career decision process are limited awareness, unclear interests, financial constraints, peer influence, external pressures and an inability to think long-term (**Nelson, 2022**).

Parents express their expectations/aspirations by participating actively in their children's lives. Parental engagement in education encompasses various actions, such as engaging in school activities, imparting academic skills, participating in both in-school and extracurricular learning activities, being actively involved in the schooling process, providing necessary learning resources, offering educational experiences, and facilitating relevant learning opportunities (**Tazouti & Jarlégan, 2019**). However, research conducted by **Kingi (2013)** examining the impact of Parent Teacher Meetings on the administration of public secondary schools in Kenya, uncovered several difficulties that parents faced when fulfilling their responsibilities. These difficulties included inadequate training, ambiguous guidelines, insufficient induction programs, and a lack of confidence.

According to research conducted by **Udoh and Sanni (2012)**, **Mwaa (2016)**, and **Wachira (2018)**, it was found that a notable portion of students often turn to their parents for assistance regarding career-related concerns. "However, parents with limited exposure to information and minimal experience in higher education may not be able to provide substantial guidance to their children regarding career choices. Conversely, children whose parents possess a higher educational background are less likely to encounter difficulties when making career decisions

than those whose parents have a lower level of education.”Parents must have the expertise to direct their children in this area properly.

Scholars have shown that parental goals and dreams affect their children's professional choices. Teens are more likely to follow their dreams if their parents are involved in encouraging and helping them achieve their professional goals (**Jungen, 2008**); (**Radhika, 2018**); (**Njogu, 2019**). It is becoming increasingly apparent that understanding the influence of family on professional choices is vital because of the changing make-up, dynamics, and composition of families. Therefore, it is important to recognize the impact of parents on their children's professional choices in secondary school. A parent's involvement and oversight in their children's schooling is crucial for materializing parental expectations. (**Zhang et al., 2019**).

According to the research that looked at, parents' active participation, close supervision, and support of their children's chosen courses greatly impacted their children's career choices. However, there is no obvious agreement among the research concerning the extent to which senior secondary schools have successfully integrated parental assistance into job choices. This validates the need for suitable orientation and training programs and transparent policy guidelines that let parents have a say in their children's professional trajectories. Even though previous studies have shown a link between parental ambitions and their children's professional choices, there has been a shortage of in-depth investigations into the magnitude and relevance of this relationship. Additionally, most studies are conducted in the African continent or the East Asian part of the globe. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the impact of parental aspirations on career decisions among secondary school students in Noida city. The objective is to enhance the role of parents in this important process and recognize their valuable contribution. The following research questions guide the present study.

- i) What factors influence children's preferences for specific career paths?
- ii) How does the financial situation of a family impact the career paths chosen by students?
- iii) How does the educational background of parents impact their capacity to provide guidance for their children's career decisions among secondary students in Noida?

Hypothesis H₀: There a no significant influence of parental expectations on career choices among secondary school students in Noida.

The delimitations of the study are mentioned below

- i) Student participants were sampled from the private aided and government schools affiliated with UP board.
- ii) The schools were selected from the Visrakh block of Gautam Budh Nagar district of Uttar Pradesh.
- iii) Respondents were both males and females studying in grades 11 or 12.
- iv) The medium of instruction in the sample schools was Hindi.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a descriptive research methodology and collected data through a questionnaire. The study population comprised 200 secondary school students from five Inter-colleges in Noida. The schools were selected using convenience sampling followed by a random selection of 200 students through simple random sampling. A self-developed questionnaire (Hindi language) was used to collect the data, which underwent thorough reliability and validity checks. The questionnaire used in the research had two main parts. –Part 1 collected background information about the participants, such as their age, gender and other demographic details. The dependent variables for this study were presented in the second section (Part B) of the questionnaire, which aimed to determine how parental expectations impacted the respondents' career choices. The survey used the Likert-type scale to evaluate the participants' views on vocational education. The scale ranged from "strongly agree" (rated 5) to "strongly disagree" (rated 1), with intermediate ratings of "agree" (rated 4), "neutral" (rated 3), and "disagree" (rated 2). Microsoft Excel and the statistical package SPSS were used to analyze the data for descriptive and inferential statistics. The statistical tool used to collect data is provided in Annexure A.

FINDINGS and DISCUSSION

Out of 200 participants, 187 answered the questionnaire without missing any details. So, the response rate was calculated to be 93.5 percent. A summary of the results is displayed in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1: perceived influence of parental involvement on career selection of their children

Item No.	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	SD
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1	3	1.6	5	2.7	16	8.6	45	24.1	118	63.1	4.44	0.878
2	10	5.3	23	12.3	32	17.1	47	25.1	75	40.1	3.82	1.231
3	5	2.7	12	6.4	28	15	39	20.9	103	55.1	4.19	1.077
4	5	2.7	12	6.4	23	12.3	46	24.6	101	54	4.21	1.057
5	18	9.6	21	11.2	28	15	56	29.9	64	34.2	3.68	1.306
6	27	14.4	36	19.3	40	21.4	37	19.8	47	25.1	3.22	1.388
7	27	14.4	32	17.1	30	16	54	28.9	44	23.5	3.3	1.374
8	52	27.8	58	31	20	10.7	31	16.6	26	13.9	2.58	1.402
9	126	67.4	19	10.2	9	4.8	18	9.6	15	8	1.81	1.339
10	92	49.2	54	28.9	17	9.1	14	7.5	10	5.3	1.91	1.164
											3.32	

With a cumulative mean value of 3.32, the results show that parental expectations significantly affect the career choices selected by Noida secondary school students. The overall agreement standard on the effect of parental goals on job choices is 66%, corresponding to this score. Academic performance is favorably impacted by parents' moral support, as shown by the observational data (mean = 4.44). On top of that, the school administration often invites parents to meet with their children to go over their academic achievements (mean = 3.82), encourages them to research potential vocations (mean = 4.19), and gives them rewards for doing well (mean = 3.91). Additionally, many students do not choose occupations that align with their parents' (mean = 4.21) and choosing a profession for a kid does not always need academic excellence (mean = 1.91). The above findings agree with the findings by (Whiston et al., 2017) (Keller & Whiston, 2008).

Table 2 Influence of parental aspirations on career choice: ANOVA Results

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
X1	Regression	.654	1	.654	5.477	.020 ^b
	Residual	41.295	346	.119		
	Total	41.949	347			

a. Dependent Variable: Y

b. Predictors: (Constant), X1

Table 3 Influence of parental aspirations on career choice: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
X1	.125 ^a	.016	.013	.34547	1.862

a. Predictors: (Constant), X1

b. Dependent Variable: Y

Table 4 Influence of parental aspirations on career choice: Regression Weights

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3.241	.115		28.226	.000		
	X2	.079	.034	.125	2.340	.020	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Y

The null hypothesis (H_0) stated that parental expectations have no significant influence on career choices among secondary school students in Noida. However, the results presented in Table 2 demonstrate a correlation coefficient of $r = .125^*$ and an ANOVA value of $P = .020$ ($< \alpha$ value = 0.05). The null hypothesis is rejected at the 0.05 significance level, concluding that parental goals have a substantial positive connection with students' professional choices.

Additionally, the findings in Table 3 reveal a predictive value for parental expectations, with an R-squared value of .016. This suggests that out of the total effect on secondary school pupils' job choices, family expectations make up 16%. This finding is further supported by the regression analysis in Table 4, which shows that parental expectations continue to substantially influence the professional choices of senior secondary school pupils ($\beta_2 = .079$, $P = .020$). These findings are in congruence with (Gayotri, 2015), (Radhika, 2018), (Njogu 2019), (Owusu et al., 2021) and many more.

CONCLUSION

“The study's findings indicated a significant positive correlation between parental inclination towards a career and the career choices made by students of secondary schools situated in Noida. Furthermore, the educational qualification of parents was identified as a critical factor influencing the career decisions of their children. The majority of parents confirmed the impact of their aspirations on their children's career choices, emphasizing the importance of effectively

communicating their expectations without exerting excessive pressure. These findings highlight the necessity of providing training to parents regarding their role in guiding career selection and the need for clear policies outlining the parental involvement in secondary schools.”

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The present study has several limitations which can be overcome in future studies.

- i) This study does not explore the difference between parental aspirations based on gender, ethnicity, or location, which can be explored in future research.
- ii) Parenting styles also influence career selection among adolescents. A comparative study of the role of parenting styles can be carried out in new research.
- iii) Qualitative research can be conducted where a structured interview can be conducted with the parents and their children.
- iv) The influence of various parental factors such as income, educational qualification, and peer pressure on adolescent career choice can be explored.

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