

Role of Parents in Molding Career Trajectory of Their Children: A Review and Future Perspectives



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Abstract

The objective of this study was to review the literature on the impact of parental factors on career decision choices of their children, as parents influence their choices of activities at school level and further at college level. With backdrop this review highlights some significant parental factors that particularly influence the career trajectory of individuals during different decades. Some parental factors were found to have an impact on career choices of an individual. However, a major revelation was that there is a dearth of research on the age at which parents should get actively involved in career choices of their children.

Keywords: Career Decision-Making; Parental Factors; Parental Influence.

Introduction

A successful career requires a careful career planning and a well defined goal. According to Jepsen (1984) career decision making is a process in which the decider needs to have complete information not only about himself but also about the work in which he/she wants to pursue his/her career. It does not involve just one step, but it includes a series of steps. In short it is a sum total of life experiences which include paid and unpaid work. Most of these decisions are irreversible and they certainly do carry with them some amount of pressure. These could be general expectations from self or from different environment factors surrounding an individual. Young adults are often found confused with which profession to choose.

Late adulthood and early adulthood is the stage during which the major decisions related to the career planning are taken. The choices regarding their further education as well as future career choices, all such important decisions are taken during this stage (Millward *et al.*, 2006). The students in senior secondary schools are usually pooled up with self confidence, adventure, desire and energy as they consider themselves to be on the threshold of adulthood. They want to pursue a different profession but they are often found confused with choosing a career. These problems are usually because of lack of information, career guidance and availability of proper resources. Late adolescent and early adulthood is a stage where career development is considered most important (Super, 2009). At this stage an individual is mostly gullible in choosing a career. While making career related choice an individual encounters numerous problems faced by different factors. These factors could be extrinsic factors, which surround an individual. For example family, parents, society, peers, life circumstances, availability of jobs etc. or they can be intrinsic factors which are related to an individual's personality, interests, values interests etc. a well planned career is an instrument to a satisfied and happy future.

Parents are the primary figures for which children look for guidance as well as emotional support. Roe (1957) was among the first theorists to examine the effect of different family origin factors on career plans of children, but her work did not get enough recognition. Parents are the closest agent who has direct influence on the major decisions of the children. The stress among children multiplies when they feel the void of guidance. Children need to express their emotions when they are confused with their decisions. In such situations if parents are not ready to understand the needs of their children the void between the parents and children increase. Apathetic behavior might have a negative impact on the mental as well as physical health of the students.

Michael Rutter (1980) said that young people often share their parent's values and often turn to them for guidance and other major decisions of their life. Children are often found confused with their different interest areas, it is the responsibility of their parents to keep a track of their interest areas, gather information, discuss those information with their children and come to a conclusion, rather than rejecting them first handedly. Parents who have already gone through the process can act as a source of guidance to their children and can majorly influence the decision making of their children in a more effective way. They have gone through the process but they should also keep in mind that the trends and different environments surrounding children today have changed majorly.

The role of parents are not just limited to an authoritative figure, instead they are friends, guide and philosophers as well. The more dynamic educational environment these days has made students more vigilant about their educational aspirations and career choices. In between all these changes the indulgence of parents in their children's decisions has somewhat sidelined. Thus parents should put in more efforts to make their presence in their children's major decision making. They need to be more aware about the latest trends happening in the field of education. They need to get more information about how they can involve with the

career decisions of their wards being a friend. They must try to know more about the interests, aptitudes of their children, the new field of career that has established a landmark in this world within past few years.

The society has changed so much in past few decades that it is very important for the youth to have proper guidance, emotional support and motivation. Parents being the first source of inspiration in their children's life can help them in knowing about different aspects of not only their child but also about the latest trends. For this it is important to explore all the dimensions related to parental factor which affects youth's career choices.

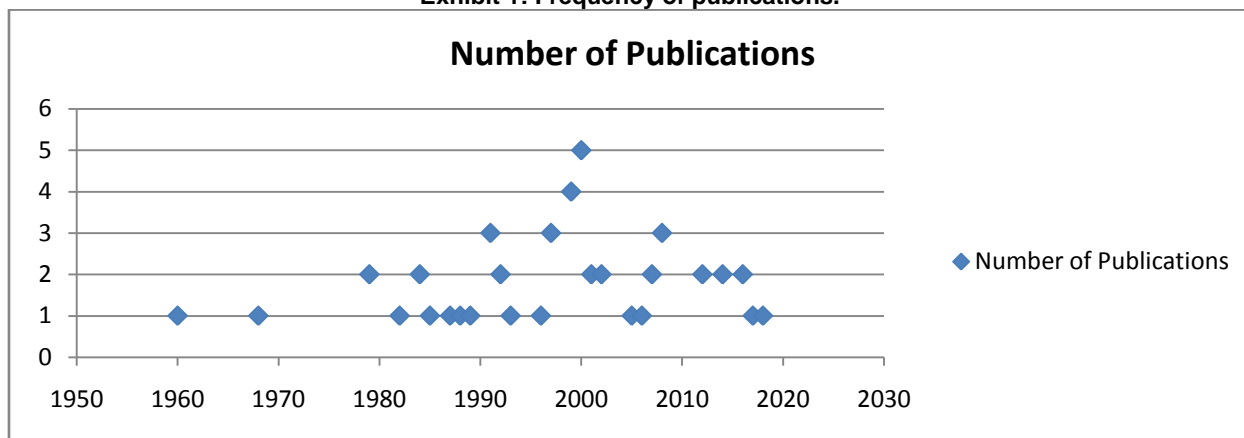
Objective of the Study

This paper is aimed to explore various aspects of the parental factors and their influence on career decision making. Gamut areas related to parental influence on career decision making of youth have been highlighted in this paper.

Research Design

Different research papers and research articles were reviewed to get a broader understanding of how young adults make their decisions related to career. Most of these papers were taken from data base such as Emerald, Sage, Elsevier, Springer, Shodhganga, Taylor and Francis Online, Wily Online Library, JSTOR etc. Exhibit: 3.1 show the frequency of Publications.

Exhibit 1: Frequency of publications.



Review of Literature

One of the earliest studies examining the parental influence on career decision making was conducted by Roe (1957) in which she focused on early childhood experiences based on different parental behavior which she believed to be responsible for the selection of an occupation. However, her writings were primarily focused on narrow aspects of parental factors. Different studies have been conducted in past years to find out various parental factors which are responsible for career choices among young adults.

Ohlsen *et al.* (1979) found some major impact of parents on career decision making of students. A research conducted by Osoro (2000) showed that students ranked parents as the major factor influencing their career plans. Similar results were shown by Naulal *et al.* (2001), Clayton (1993),

Auyeng and Sand (1997), Ferry (2006), Jacobs *et al.*, (2007). Bakshi (2012) found that youth career choices were mostly influenced by their mothers and fathers. A study of 65 youth contributed to these results. Koech *et al.* (2016) and Kaneez and Medha (2018), Sharma and Ahuja (2017) concluded the same. However, the results given by Olaosebikan and Olusakin (2014) concluded that the influence of family does not have an impact on career decision making of adolescents.

Another research conducted on 100 girls to find out the major influence on their career choices results showed that parents marked a major influence and daughters were more likely to select a profession similar to their mothers (Steinke and Kaczkowski,1960).Studies by Paa and Mc Whirter (2000), Kerpelman (2007) and Paolillo and Estes (1982) gave similar results. However, Mikelson and

Velasco (1998) found somewhat opposite results. Their study showed that there was a very little relationship between mother’s profession and career choices of their daughters. Leppel (2001) a research on 4161 respondents revealed that if mother or father are working on a higher post the children are more likely to choose that profession. Falaye *et al.* (2008) conducted a research to find out the factors influencing career choices of 318 students it was found that father’s qualification and mother’s occupation also plays a major role in career choices of students. According to Smith (1991) parent’s formal education was found to have and positive effect on perceived parental goals. In their research Mbagwu and Ajaegbu (2016) found that parental background affects career choices of teenagers to a great extent.

Marcie (1996) found that parents can play a major role in seeking answers to the questions and provide directions to the question of their children. In a study of 236 German students Kracke (1997) found that students from middle track education families face more concern about career choices than adolescents from higher and lower educated families. Wong and liu (200) in their research found that perceived parental support, career concern and barriers plays a major role in career choices. Keller and Whiston (2008) aimed to find out the effect of different parental behavior in career choices of students. With 282 students they concluded that parent’s interest and support in career plans of young adolescents help them to make effective career decisions. Similarly, Hargrove *et al.* (2002) revealed in his findings that perceived quality of family relationship and family support goals may have a small impact but it still majorly impact career choices of students. Hairston (2000) took a sample of 51 participants to find out the impact of parents on career of students. Results revealed that major parental factors influencing career choices of students were support and early exposure provided by parents to their children.

In his research Eigen *et al.* (1987) aimed to find out the impact of family interaction on career related decisions. 197 participants were interviewed and it was found that family interactions plays a major role in directing career decision of an individual and those parents who are too tight or too loose in their

rules usually hamper the career decision making of their children. Tang and Smith (1999), Bregman and Killen (1999) strongly supported family involvement in career choices. Johnson *et al.* (1999) took a sample of 230 students to examine the impact of family function on vocational choices of students. Results indicated that expressiveness out of all family functions appeared to be the major predictor of vocational choices.

Hoffman *et al.* (1992) worked to find out the effect of closeness on career choices of college students. 260 senior level graduated revealed that even little closeness with fathers have an impact in career choices of students, whereas closeness with mothers does not play a significant role. Again, Aggarwal (2008) conducted a research to find out the factors influencing career choices of students. 93 students from Delhi were selected for research purpose. It concluded that father have a great influence on career decision making of students. Contrary to the previous studies Shumba and Naong (2012) found that mothers were found to have a major impact on career choices of children. In a research conducted by Felsman and Blustein (1999) it was found that attachment with mothers have a positive effect on career decision making of students. Kartz *et al.* (2018) in his study on 229 students of 10th class found that students who have their parent’s support tend to be more autonomous in their career decision making. Trusty *et al.* (1997) in his research concluded that economic condition does not play a major role in parental involvement in career decision making of students.

Discussion

The study examined multifarious parental dimensions which have an impact on career plans of an individual. This literature review provides a summary and evaluation of the published research on the topic of career decision making. Table 5.1 concludes the study conducted in 1960-1990. The main focus of early researches on career decision choices was on the effect of parental opinion and profession of parents, effect of parental concern, effect of various parental programs as well as parents as role models on career decision making choices of their children.

Table 5.1: Literature review from 1960-1990

Author/year	Purpose	Sample	Findings
Steinke and Kaczkowski (1960)	To find out some of the major factors offering vocational choices of 9 th grade girls.	100 girls enrolled in health school and their mothers.	Results concluded that parents were marked as the major factors affecting their career choices by the girls. Majority of daughters selected a professional occupation similar to their mothers were employed in it.
Ohlsen <i>et al.</i> (1979)	To find out the extent where high school students and their parents share same opinion related to their career choices.	822 seniors and 284 parents from Indiana	Parents affect majority of career decisions of high school students.
Paolillo and Estes (1982)	To find out the impact of various common factors in career decision making of Accountants, attorneys, engineers and physicians.	625 members of each profession.	Least parental influence was found on accountants and engineers were more affected by their parents in their career related decisions.
Weidman	To find out the impact of few	Several national	The study shows very limited influence of

(1984)	selected factors on career perceptions of collegiate.	survey data of 72 universities	parents on career perceptions of individuals.
Eigen <i>et al.</i> (1987)	To find out the effect of family interaction on career related decisions ³ .	197 participants.	It was concluded that family interaction plays a major role in directing career decisions of an individual and those families which are too tight and loose in their rules usually hamper the career decision making of an individual.

Table 5.2 focused on studies conducted during 1991-2000. Majority of studies concentrated on the effect of parental attachment with their children, their concern, their ambitions and expectations about their children's career decisions. Some researchers

also focused on the effect of parental education, their culture and their economic condition on the career related decisions of their children. A major focus was also given on the effect of attachment with mother on career choices.

Table 5.2: Literature review from 1991-2000

Author/year	Purpose	Sample	Findings
Blustein <i>et al.</i> (1991)	To check the degree to which psychological separation and parental attachment affects career decision making of young adults.	278 young adults from northeastern state universities.	Psychological separation does not seem to influence career decision making tasks of young adults.
Smith (1991)	To find out the motivational aspects of children's career decisions to adopt or reject perceived goals advocated by parents.	2236 students.	Good academic achievement and parental formal education were found to have positive effect on perceived parental goals.
Hoffman <i>et al.</i> (1992)	To find out the effect of parental closeness on career choices of college students.	260 senior level undergraduates	Even little closeness to fathers have a significant effect on career decision making of students, whereas closeness to mothers does not impact career decision making, also gender of students does not impact students' perception of parental influence on their career choices.
Clayton (1993)	To find out the influence of family on occupation and career choices.	2118 students from Texas.	Parents were found to have a great influence on career related decisions.
Marcie (1996)	Four modes of confusion related to late adulthood was measured	86 males from Hiram College.	Parents can play a major role in seeking answers to the questions and provide direction to the questions of their children.
Kracke (1997)	To find out influence of parental behavior and education on career exploration of adolescents.	236 students of German school.	Students from middle track education families face more concern about career choices than adolescents from higher and lower educated families.
Trusty <i>et al.</i> (1997)	To find out the effect of economic and other life on parental involvement in career decision making of students.	11273 parents and students.	Findings suggested that economic condition does not play a major role in parental involvement in career decisions of their children.
Auyeng and Sand (1997)	To find out the influence of career factors in career choices of accounting students of cultural variability.	632 participants from Australia, Hong Kong and Taiwan.	Parental influence was found to be a prominent factor in career decision making of students from Hong Kong and Taiwan.
Mikelson and Velasco (1989)	To find out maternal influence on career choice of daughters.	1850 high school senior students.	Overall there was very little relationship between mother's profession and daughter's career choices.
Bregman and Killen (1999)	To find out how young adults conceptualize the role of parents in their career choices.	72 adolescents from Washington D.C.	Young adults believe that parent's involvement in their career decision making will help them take better decisions.
Johnson <i>et al.</i> (1999)	To examine the effect of family functioning on vocational choices.	230 college students.	Findings indicated that expressiveness out of all family functions appeared to be a major prediction of vocational choices.
Tang and Smith (1999)	Factors that might affect Asian African students career	187 students from east west and	Effect of family involvement in career choices is strongly supported.

	choices.	Midwest area of US.	
Felsman and Blustein (1999)	To find of role of peer relationship in career development tasks in adolescents.	147 participants.	A little attachment to mothers was found to have positive influence in career decision making.
Osoro (2000)	To find out the influence of career decision making choices of high school students of Kenya.	200 high school students from Kenya.	Students rated parents as most influential factors in their career choices.
Hairston (2000)	To find out how parents of African-American students influence the vocational teaching career of students.	51 participants of southeastern states.	Results revealed that major parental factors influencing career decision making of students were desire to imitate parent's attributes, high academic expectations from parents, parental support and early exposure of teaching provided by parents.
Paa and Mc Whirter (2000)	To examine the perception of high school students about different factors on career expectation.	464 high school students.	The influence of mothers on girls was found to have a major impact in their career selection.

Table 5.3 provides an overview of the different research works conducted during 2001-2010. During this decade the focus of research broadened by inculcating factors such as family support, role models, parent's profession, their socio economic status and parental behavior.

Table 5.3: Literature review from 2001-2010

Author/year	Purpose	Sample	Findings
Leppel (2001)	To find out the effect of socio economic status and parental occupation in college major freshmen choices.	4161 students.	Findings revealed that parental influence affects the choices of career. Also, if father or mothers are in executive jobs then their children are more likely to choose the same profession.
Nauta <i>et al.</i> , (2001)	To determine the dimensions of role models that influence career decision making.	634respondents for four different studies.	Parents were found to be most influential as role models in career decision making.
Hargrove <i>et al.</i> (2002)	To find out family interaction pattern on career related decisions of students.	210 college students of Northeast.	Finding revealed that perceived quality of family relationship and family supported goals may have a small impact, yet it plays a significant role in career decision making of standards.
Wong and Liu (2002)	Impact of parents on career decision choices of students of hospitality and tourism.	566 respondents.	Perceived parental support, parental concern and parental barriers were found to be salient predictors of career decision making.
Bright <i>et al.</i> (2005)	To find out the role of unplanned factors on career decision making.	650 university students.	Students perceived as the most influential factor and current course choices were found to have an influence of father's occupation.
Ferry (2006)	To find out factors that plays a major role in career decisions making of rural high school seniors and young adults.	98 high school students from Central Pennsylvania.	Parents and community play a major role in career decision making of young adults.
Kerpelman (2007)	To find out the influence of parents on career aspirations of young women	327 female college students.	Results conclude that parental factor is an important factor in young women's career related decisions.
Jacobs <i>et al.</i> (2007)	To study parental gender type occupational expectations and their long term relation with their children's changing age.	143 sixth grade classes of Midwest city.	It was found that parental early gender type expectations from their children were quite similar to the actual occupational decisions made by the children when they were adults.
Agarwala (2008)	To find out the range of factors that influence career choices of management students.	93 students from Delhi.	The results showed that father have a major influence on the career choices of both female and male students of India.
Keller and	To find out the effect of different	282 students.	It was found that parental interest and

Whiston (2008)	parental behavior on career plans of young adolescents.		support in career plans of young adolescents help them to make effective career decisions.
Falaye <i>et al.</i> , (2008)	To find out factors influencing career choices among youths.	318 students.	Father's qualification and mother's occupation have impact on career decisions of school youth.

Table 5.4 focuses on research works conducted during 2011-2018. Researches were mostly inclined toward the impact of educational background, influence of mothers on the career

choices, also the influence of parents on career decision making choices of students of public and private sector schools.

Table 5.4: Literature review from 2011-2018

Author/year	Purpose	Sample	Findings
Shumba and Naong (2012)	The purpose was to find out the impact of various factors on career choices and aspirations of students.	133 students.	Family is a major factor affecting career decision making of students. Also, mothers have a major influence on career decision making of children.
Bakshi (2012)	The career choices of youth and their perception of influences on their career choices.	65 youth from Mumbai, India.	Youth career choices were highly influenced by mother, father.
Olaosebikan, and Olusakin, (2014)	To find out the influence of parents on adolescent's career decision making.	300 adolescents from Logos State, Nigeria.	It was found that parental influence does not have an effect on career decision making of adolescents.
Mbagwu and Ajaegbu (2016)	Impact of parental educational background on career choices of teenagers.	400 teenagers from Oweri Imo State.	Parental educational background affects career decision making of teenagers to a great extent.
Koech <i>et al.</i> (2016)	To study the influence of family, peer, job opportunities, personal interest role models on career selection.	210 students from Kenya.	Parents play a major role in career selection.
Sharma and Ahuja (2017)	Career decision making patterns of public and private school students.	100 high school students from private schools and 100 from public schools from Nainital district, India.	Family factors play a prominent role in career choices of students.
Katz <i>et al.</i> (2018)	To find whether adolescent's perception of their parental support have an impact on their autonomous career decision making.	229 10 th class students	Students who have their parent's support tend to be more autonomous in their career decision making.
Kaneez and Medha (2018)	To find out factors influencing career decision making of 10 th graders in Mauritius.	400 students in grade 10 from Mauritius.	Results also significantly supported the fact that parents majorly influence career decision making of their children.

Conclusion

Although it is strenuous to draw a definitive conclusions from this extensive body of research but there are some verifiable inclinations that suggests that parents do affect an individual's career plans in certain predictable ways. In examining the parental influence on career decision making this review indicates that during first decade children seem to get majorly influenced by profession of their parents. Most of the research was concerned with the traditionality of career choices with some indications that mother's occupation specifically influences daughter's career choices. Interestingly during second decade mother's profession does not seem to have much influence on daughter's occupational choices. A number of studies during this period reflected that parents have more influence on career plans of adolescent than any

other factor and their guidance proved to be a major source of information. The researchers during this period seemed to focus their research on parental influence, interaction and their concern. The succeeding decade seemed to have a massive increase in research work in this field. In drawing inference related to parental impact on career choices most of the researchers during this decade appeared to focus their attention on family function, family perception and their involvement. Few other researchers pivoted their research work on effect of role models, family educational background and their economic conditions. Mother's influence however continuously appeared to grab researcher's attention till date. Much of the research during this period has been on older adolescents.

Researchers in consecutive decade continued the trend. However they shifted their interest slightly towards factors like community, family relation, their support and interest. Majority of respondents were youth and college students. Modern decade comprises few Indian studies as well, the chief intend of which was to evaluate influence of parents and the difference in career decision making pattern of public and private sector school students. Several other studies investigated the impact of social and psychological factors on career exploration.

Most of the studies supported that these parental factors have a positive influence in molding the trajectory of career plans of youths. However there were few researchers who also found negative impact of few parental factors on career related choices on youth. Some studies also concluded that parents do not have an influence on career related decisions of their children.

Although, we have identified some significant trends regarding the parental influence on career plans, still there are some noteworthy gaps in the research body. In particular, researches have not demarked the phase of life at which parents should get actively involved in helping their children to take a proper career decision. Furthermore, we have come across very few research works which focus on importance of parental career counseling in their ward's career choices.

Even though a consistent theme throughout this review was focused on the effect of parents on career path of an individual, an impediment in conducting the present review was the lack of theoretical foundation that clearly defines positive and negative impact of parental influence. In conclusion, we believe that the understanding of different parental factors in career plans of an individual would contribute in vocational development, to the knowledge of psychological and career counselors working in this field. By gaining an insight on how parental factors affect career plans of students an effort can be made to guide the parents on how to contribute in a positive way in the career decision making of their children. However this study has limited generalization but it thoroughly reviews the influence of parents on career choices of an individual.

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