

**IMPOSITION OF PARENTAL CAREER CHOICES ON THEIR CHILDREN IN
QUAID-I-AZAM UNIVERSITY ISLAMABAD**

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to identify the effects of the parental imposition of career choices on the children's satisfaction level and to determine the factors on which parents impose careers on their children. The literature review has covered an overview of parental influence on children's career selection, the effects of parental influence on career choices, and the factors which influence the career selection of an individual. A qualitative research methodology has been adopted to gather detailed information by conducting in-depth interviews. At the same time, the sampling method was stratified from the different departments of Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad with a sample of 20 students, and the data were analyzed with the help of MAXQD 12. Discoveries from the study reveal that there exists a variety of factors on the bases of which careers are imposed on children, including gender, socioeconomic background, parents' education level, single parenting, marriage, number of children, financial dependency, death, injury and illness in a family it is also found that imposed careers lead to dissatisfaction among students in their future life.

Keywords: Career choices, Imposition, Satisfaction, Parent-child relationship.

INTRODUCTION

We live in a competitive world, so every parent wants to see their child well settled in society. As written by Meyer Bloomfield in his book Finding One's Place in life, "because the world is making such drastic demands upon the coming workers, every thoughtful man and woman, every teacher and reflecting parent, is planning ways to fit the children for the life and needs of this new century." (Meyer, 1917:150)

A career plays a very significant role in an individual's life because it requires a lifelong commitment as it is the most important source of income in an individual's life. Instead of earning, it also helps an individual in developing his personality. So career should be given due importance because this decision can open the doors to success in one's life. Career selection should be very thoughtful because many career fields require high initial investments of money, time, and training. A career is the total sum of experiences in life, including paid and unpaid work (Olaosebikan et al., 2014).

Parents are one of the most dominating figures in an individual's life. It has been observed that parental influence is one of the most decisive factors affecting children's

career development and decisions. Parents are the primary forces in shaping their children's careers (Kniventon, 2004). Research shows that parents strongly influence their children's career choices and even impose some predetermined careers on their children. However, parents forget that every child has his or her interests and dreams, so when parents impose their wishes on children, the child is unable to perform well, and his abilities are not best utilized in such a situation, the child's personality is affected because he gave preference to his parents' choice on his dreams. Imposed careers lead to frustration and depression among children because they cannot perform well and satisfactorily (Sonu, 2015). It has been observed that parents show their preferences for different professions by showing heightened support for some particular professions. Parents in our society impose their dreams on their children, which dramatically affects the child's personality and satisfaction level. It is also observed that parents have different criteria for career selection among their daughters and sons. The present study is conducted to determine the reasons on which the career selection of an individual is based. The present endeavors to understand why parents select and force different careers on their children. It will focus on how factors like parents' education, socioeconomic level, and other factors play a role in selecting one's ultimate career choice.

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the parameters and factors on the bases of which parents impose different careers on their children.
2. To find out the effects of imposed careers on the satisfaction of children.

1. An overview of Parenteral influence on adolescents' career choices

It has been observed that parents strongly influence their children's career choices, which often induces young adolescents into predetermined careers, sometimes without considering the child's interests. At the same time, career selection is a decision that affects an individual's entire life, so it should be given great importance and made carefully. The present literature review views the relationship between the parental imposition of careers on children and its effects on their future achievements because most of the research related to this topic is done in the west. The literature presents more part of parental influence than the parental imposition of career because imposition is not practiced there.

It is often thought that career selection is an individual's decision alone, but researches show that many influences are likely to change an individual's ultimate career choice, such as family, community, gender, and social and economic factors. Adults, through interaction with parents, family, school, and society, learn about different occupations that ultimately lead to their own career choices. Although these schools, peers, and society all impact the child's identity and career choice, the expectations of parents of occupation for their children play significant roles in shaping a child's career choice (Ferry, 2006). Research shows that a child pays more attention to what their parents expect of them than peers and other sources when choosing a career for them (Jungen, 2008).

According to research at Michigan state university, which took 6000 students nationwide to see what influenced them most in their education and focused on the students of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine, the result showed that their parents did not influence only 4% of them. In contrast, the rest were influenced by their parents or family (Pepper, 2012).

Another research on 3562 junior high students in South Alberta shows that adolescents rely on their parents and friends more than any other source for help in

career planning. Parents create the strongest impression on their children's career choices more than any other group like councilors, teachers, friends, or even people in the same occupation they desire. Adolescents prefer their parents over any other source, even the councilors and teachers, regarding their career selection (Bardick et al., 2004)

It is observed that parents are so conscious about their children's career choices that some parents even start deciding their child's career before he is born and thus start expecting that he will go into the same profession. Their intention is primarily to secure the life of their child. Nevertheless, a child has dreams and interests, so when parents do not understand him/her, the problem arises because of which, despite having capabilities, the child is unable to perform well and becomes depressed or reserved (Nudrat Huda-Times of India- Jan 31, 2015). It is observed that in some cases, because of parental pressure and fear, students often commit suicide. According to statistics from the National crime records bureau (2007), at least 40 students kill themselves every year in India due to the stress they face in the examination, which is parents' high expectations.

Effects of parental influence on career choices

Dr. Arlene Veter, a clinical psychologist, said that we do not have to generalize about family pressure. It is not only the pressure of family; it all depends on the demands of culture and communities. Parents in different communities will have different expectations. There is a situation in which the child is confused about his parents who have done a lot for him, and they are planning his future for his wellbeing, but at the same time, he wants to join some other profession, or he did not like the career his parents has selected for him in such a situation the child suffers from the dilemma that should he please his parents and be thankful to them? Or should he go his way? That results in a confused personality.

Research shows that students who choose their careers by their own decision are more successful in the studies and have high confidence and satisfaction. So these students have high self-esteem and are less frustrated and depressed. Whereas imposed careers on children lead them towards more significant depression and frustration, they cannot perform well in their respective fields. What children need from their parents is parental trust and confidence in deciding the right career choices for themselves (Singh, 2015).

There are a variety of factors on the bases of which his parents make specific career choices; three of them are discussed below.

Sibling Birth Order

Kniventon's (2004) study shows that the magnitude of influence on children's career choices changes with a child's birth order. Through a series of interviews and questionnaires, 384 students in his study said that their parents significantly influenced their career choice and teachers. Concerning birth order, it was observed that the youngest child took advice from his mother and is more influenced by the mother, whereas the eldest child by his father. He also fined evidence of the same-sex parental influence that girls took more advice from their mothers and boys from fathers regarding career choices (Kniventon, 2004)

In a child's occupational choices and career goal development, parents, guardians, and family play a very significant role. Without their permission, approval, and support, students are reluctant to explore career possibilities for themselves. Young adults and college students cite their parents and family as influencing their occupational and career choices. Research indicates that their parent's expectations of them influence adolescents' desires and aspirations. Adolescents who perceive their parents have high

educational expectations are likely to have a stronger desire for education (Taylor et al., 2004).

Gender and Career Choice Expectations

Careers are also imposed on the basis of gender because our society has specific attitudes for both genders and thus creates gender roles prescribed as ideal behavior for a person of that specific gender.

Research shows that gender beliefs are internalized because of other people's expectations. Males are thought to be more competent at a task than females, so both unconsciously expect more competent tasks from men. So because of others' expectations, an individual makes a self-biased assessment of one's ability (Shelley, 2001)

Li and Kerpelman (2007), in their study, indicate that parents have such a strong influence on their children that their desires can change the decision of their children. Research shows that the more there is communication between parents and daughter about career desires and aspirations, the more the daughter is concerned about the parental feedback and is willing to change and reconsider her career choice according to her parent's desire.

A study on 132 students in Pakistan revealed that social assumptions in which parents influence students' careers or not as valid as they are believed in Pakistani society. The new generation has the freedom to choose their career. Children only need parental trust and confidence (Saleem et al., 2013).

Socioeconomic Status

Research shows that the socioeconomic background of one's family plays a crucial role in selecting a career. Parents who belong to high socioeconomic backgrounds are more successful in preparing their children for future life than parents with low socioeconomic backgrounds. Parents with high socioeconomic backgrounds can provide better education facilities to their children because they have a wide and better range of resources and fewer social and financial issues. In contrast, children with fewer facilities and less financial support cannot get good opportunities and study in good institutions, so they are less prepared than from high-class. Children who study in elite schools have more leadership opportunities and high confidence because they have better facilities like wearing good clothes and studying in academies (Memon et al., 2010).

Children of educated parents of high socioeconomic backgrounds are on the better end of society because their parents can better shape their ideas; they can better guide their children compared to uneducated parents. This is why children of doctors, teachers, and bankers are different and more successful than those of farmers, peasants, and cleaners. But on the other side, children with lower background are more determined to change their economic conditions and are more encouraged than those from higher classes (Ngozi and Celestine, 2015).

Based on different factors, parents influence their children's career choices and, in some cases, impose careers on them in which they are not interested. The present study aims to study the effects of imposed careers on children and determine the factors on which careers are imposed on children.

Research Methodology

A qualitative research methodology has been adopted to gather detailed information by conducting in-depth interviews. The sampling method was stratified among the different departments of Quaid e Azam University Islamabad on Master level students because they had already gone through the experiences. They were considered in a better position to tell whether following the career of their parents' choice was

satisfying or not. A sample of 20 students (nine boys and eleven girls) was recruited for in-depth interviews, and the data were analyzed with the help of MAXQDA 12.

Results

There are various factors based on which parents impose some particular predetermined career choices on their children.

Gender

Gender is one of the main factors in which career choices are made for an individual. In our society, people have fixed mindsets for both genders. Few professions are considered suitable for girls, like teaching and doctors. The same is the case with the boys. If someone wants to be a chef or a designer, he is not thought to be doing a good or respectable job. The present study's results also indicate that 60% of the boys think that the present career is imposed on them because of their gender and the rest said that if they were girls, they were sitting in their homes and doing house chores with their mothers. The results also show that in certain areas in Pakistan where girls are not even allowed by their parents to go out of home for education.

A respondent said that he is forced to join his father's business because he is a boy, which shows that in the family, fathers prefer their sons to join the business than girls. He said:

"I wish I were a girl; at least in that situation, I would not be forced to join my father's factory."

It has also become evident that because of societal attitudes, parents are reluctant to send their children into some particular careers because they think their children, especially daughters, will not be given due respect in those professions.

"You are a girl who cannot handle criminals, so stay away from them."

In our society, thinking of people is primarily traditional and orthodox. Thinking from childhood, children's grooming is done in such a way that girls are always said to be weak and do homely work compared to boys. Because of this, their ideas and choices are also shaped accordingly. In the present study, it has been observed that because of societal pressure and expectations, ideal professions for girls are considered doctors, fashion designers, interior designers, and joining media. There is a meager percentage of girls who want to join professions like army and business because they think these are for boys and similarly ideal careers for boys are army, air force, police, or business

Marriage

Marriage is considered to be more important for girls as compared to boys. Almost all of the female respondents under study said that the present career is imposed on them because they are girls and their parents want them to marry some excellent and respectable families. Parents think that if their daughters join professions like media, army, sports, and lawyers, it will become difficult for them to marry into good families.

"Because I am a girl so my parents want me to establish such a career after which I can marry in some good family."

Religion

Religion also shapes the parents' criteria for the career selection of their children. A respondent wanted to be a singer, but she belonged to a Syed family, and singing was strictly a sin for her family. She said that the present career is imposed on her because of religion.

Socioeconomic Background

The socioeconomic background of one's family plays a significant role in selecting a career. Children from high-class families have different upbringings and life

experiences because their dreams and career criteria differ from those of middle and lower-class families. It has been observed that children who belong to middle or lower-class families are more determined to achieve something in life and also that parents impose particular careers on their children to change or to maintain their present socioeconomic background

Parents of low socioeconomic backgrounds want to establish their children's careers in professions where they can earn more and provide better living standards for their families. So they want to make the child doctor or engineer so that they can change their socioeconomic background. Further, it has also been observed that an individual's socioeconomic background also plays a role in shaping his dreams.

Parents Education

Parents' education also plays a significant role in their children's career choices. Educated parents have different criteria and parameters for careers compared to uneducated parents. It is observed that educated parents can guide their children on which professions are better for them. In contrast, uneducated parents think traditionally. For them, only some professions like doctors and engineers are promising. They do not know much about the versatility of different fields like architecture, computer science, electronics etc.

Financial dependence

Financial dependency also plays an essential role in selecting one's career. Mostly it is thought that children are following the career of their parents' choice because of their deterrence and that they do not want to hurt them, but there is also another side there exists a variety of students who are following the career of their parents' choice just because they are financially dependent on them.

Findings suggest that some students are forced to follow the career of their parents' choice because their parents are the only financers and do not have any other option. It has also been observed that because parents impose their own choices on their children, they are more likely to think evil about their parents. Whereas most of the females said that they are following the career of their parents' choice because, being daughters, they had to obey their parents in all cases.

Death, injury, or illness in the family

Sometimes in life, some particular incidents and experiences have a lifelong effect on one's life. It has also been observed that a family member's death, illness, birth, or injury is also a reason which contributes to shaping the parents' behavior based on which parents impose careers on their children. Different careers are imposed on children because someone in the family has gone through some bad experience, such as death, injury, or illness.

In some cases, it is also seen that children are following the career of their parents' choice because their parents are not healthy and are suffering from some disease due to which the child does not want to give any tension to his parents and for the happiness for their parent's children follows the career of their parent's choice.

Single parent

Parents are the most important figure in a child's life because they are the primary caregivers for a child, so there is nothing more precious than his parents. In the present study, it has been observed that single parenting is also a factor because a child agrees to give up his dreams and study according to his parent's choice not to hurt his parent.

A Child knows that because of being a single parent, a mother or father has endured many hurdles in the child's upbringing.

"No! in any case, I had to follow my mother's instructions because she has suffered a lot in her life for us as she is a single parent."

Satisfaction Level

Career selection holds a significant position in one's life because it becomes an individual's income source. An individual should be satisfied with his career so that he can perform better with satisfaction and determination. In the case of imposed careers, it is observed that a child is unable to perform well with satisfaction if he is not satisfied with his present career. From the present study, it has been observed that because of imposition of parental career choices, children are not satisfied in their present fields and so are unable to perform well and with interest because of which they get low grades and so are unable to excel in the particular field in future.

Regarding satisfaction, a girl said,

"It's like a hell for me"

Such a student statement shows how unsatisfied she is because of her imposed career. She considers her present educational field hell, and a person cannot work well and excel in a profession or work if he/she considers it hell.

Overall it is observed that the satisfaction level of students is affected to a great extent in imposed careers students are unable to perform well compared to careers of their own choice, and they still wish to switch their career options to their own choice.

Discussion

From the present literature, it has become evident that parents play a significant role in selecting their children's career choices. In our society parent is the most important figure for a child because of whom they hold an important influence on the career selection of their child, and so the child also gives preference to what his parents expect from him. From early childhood, parents attach expectations from their children towards a career path, but over time children develop their interests and desires and thus fall into confusion regarding the selection of their career choices. It is observed that parents did not understand that every individual has his interests and dreams. It is not like parents are on the wrong side. It is a fact that all parents want their children's welfare, but parents generally have fixed criteria for some professions like doctors and engineers. The present study also reveals that uneducated parents have little interest in the career selection of their children as compared to educated parents. It is observed that parents want their children to fulfill their dreams instead of giving preference to the child's choice, which dramatically affects the child's performance, and he is unable to perform well and get good grades.

It has been observed that it is the society that shapes the choices of an individual by providing different factors like gender and socioeconomic level and also that parents impose careers on their children on the bases of different factors like for them some professions are suitable for girls and some for boys because of the societal demands and pressure. It is observed from the collected data that parents forget that imposed careers lead to dissatisfaction, and an individual can only perform better if he works with his interest and satisfaction.

In the responses to the question regarding satisfaction level, most respondents said that they are not at all satisfied and are also unable to get good grades, which is that they are unable to develop an interest in fields that are not of their choices and are imposed on them. It is also observed that almost all the respondents in the present study wanted to switch their careers to their own choice to perform well and excel in life. The parent's selection of wrong career choice may lead to a less professional outcome.

Conclusion

Parents play a very significant role in selecting their children's careers. There exists a variety of factors on the bases of which parents impose some predetermined careers on their children. These factors include gender of the adolescent, marriage, religion, socioeconomic background of the family, child's financial dependence on parents, single parenting, death, injury or illness in the family, number of children, and most importantly, the societal attitude toward different professions and careers it is the society which shapes the choices of parents regarding professions. It has also been concluded that the satisfaction level of an individual is greatly affected due to imposed careers. A child is unable to perform well with satisfaction, which also affects his academic performance. So it is observed that parents should not impose their dreams or careers on their children because by doing this, they are wasting the capabilities of their children.

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