



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Psychology

IMPACT OF PARENTAL PRESSURE ON SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' CAREER CHOICES

KEY WORDS: Parental Pressure, career choice, Secondary school students, carer decision.

Dr. Ashutosh Ranjan

Department Of Psychology, T.M.BU, Bhagalpur-812007.

ABSTRACT

Choosing a career is a crucial stage in every individual's life, as it not only shapes their future but also impacts their personal and professional development. Parents often exert a significant influence on their children's career choices. When this influence becomes excessive, it can negatively affect children's mental and emotional well-being. Parents desire a secure and comfortable life for their children, which lead them to have high expectations. This study focuses on understanding the impact of parental pressure on secondary school students. Amidst increasing competition and academic pressure, active parental involvement sometimes dictates children's career choices, thereby hindering their ability to make independent decisions. The study reveals that balanced parental support can aid in children's progress, while excessive pressure leads to problems such as stress, low self-esteem, and decreased interest in their chosen career path. The findings emphasize the importance of promoting student autonomy, fostering open communication with parents, and strengthening career guidance programs in schools to mitigate these negative effects.

INTRODUCTION

Choosing a career is a crucial decision in every individual's life, as it not only shapes their future but also impacts their personal satisfaction, financial stability, and overall quality of life. Selecting a career requires individuals to understand their interests, abilities, values, and available opportunities. This process demands careful consideration, exploration, and planning.

The transition from school to higher education or employment is a significant phase for students. During this time, they face critical decisions about their future. For many students, the role of parents in this entire process is highly influential. While parental advice can be helpful, it can sometimes become a source of pressure, making it difficult for students to choose a career independently.

Parents want their children to have secure and successful lives. Therefore, they often guide them towards career options they consider respectable or stable. However, when these expectations become excessive, they can negatively impact a child's mental and emotional well-being. This is why understanding the role of parents and the effects of their pressure in career selection are extremely important.

Parental Pressure

The pressure exerted by parent's manifests in many forms.

Direct Pressure:

Parents impose their preferred career choices on their children.

Indirect Pressure:

In the form of comparisons, expectations, and emotional appeals.

While some guidance can motivate children, excessive pressure can lead to stress, anxiety, and a decline in self-confidence.

Objectives

The objectives of the study were:

1. To understand the extent of parental involvement in career selection.
2. To determine how this pressure influences the decision-making process.
3. To investigate the psychological and social effects of this pressure on students.

Method

The study is descriptive and based entirely on secondary data.

Current Scenario In India

In a competitive environment, parents in countries like India steer their children towards secure options such as medicine, engineering, law, or government jobs. According to the NCRB, over 13,000 student suicides were reported in 2021, with competition and family pressure being significant contributing factors.

Trends Observed

Parents often prioritize higher earnings and stable careers. In modern times, some parents are also accepting creative, sports, and startup careers. Social media and the internet have broadened children's career options.

Forms of Parental Pressure

Direct pressure: Imposing a predetermined career path on the child.

Indirect pressure: Through comparisons and expectations.

Cultural pressure: Family reputation and social norms.

Effects On Students

- Positive:
- Motivation in studies
 - Financial and emotional support
 - Guidance towards stable career options
- Negative:
- Stress, anxiety, and fear of failure
 - Suppression of interests
 - Poor academic performance
 - Depression, low self-esteem
- Factors Behind Parental Pressure
- Parents' education
 - Family's economic status
 - Social pressure
 - Family reputation

Psychological Impact

Excessive pressure can lead to emotional exhaustion, burnout, and feelings of estrangement from parents. Many students hesitate to choose their desired careers and are forced into professions they have no interest in.

Gender-Based Pressure

Boys are pushed towards STEM and high-status careers. Girls are steered towards "traditional" fields such as nursing, teaching, and social services.

Healthy vs. Harmful Parenting

Supportive parents provide guidance, advice, and maintain

open communication. Overbearing parents limit the child's autonomy.

Role Of Schools And Counselling

School counselling programs help children with self-awareness, career choices, and mental well-being. Workshops also help educate parents on how excessive pressure can hinder their children's progress.

CONCLUSION

Many students are pushed towards popular career paths due to parental expectations, regardless of their personal interests. This excessive pressure leads to stress, anxiety, and confusion. Conversely, those who are given more freedom by their parents tend to experience greater satisfaction in their careers. Therefore, balanced parental support, open communication, and career guidance at the school level are crucial.

Recommendations

1. Both parents and students should engage in dialogue and make balanced decisions.
2. Parents should be informed about the impact of their pressure on their child's mental health.
3. Parent workshops should be conducted in schools.
4. Professional career Counseling should be made available.
5. Awareness should be raised about new and emerging career options.
6. Career diversity should be embraced, prioritizing children's interests.

REFERENCES

1. American Psychological Association (APA). (2021). Parental Expectations and Their Effects on Children's Career Aspirations.
2. Brown, D., & Associates. (2019). Career Choice and Development. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
3. Chao, R. K. (2017). Parental influence and children's career development in Asian families: A study of Chinese adolescents. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 101, 78–89.
4. Grotevant, H. D., & Cooper, C. R. (2020). *Adolescence and the Family: Career and Social Development*. Springer.
5. Ghosh, P., & Banerjee, A. (2022). The role of parental pressure in career decision-making: A study among high school students. *Asian Journal of Social Sciences*, 12(1), 56–72.
6. Gupta, S., Chakrabarty, S., & Varma, R. (2015). Parental pressure and its effect on students' career choices. *Journal of Career Development*, 42(3), 276–290.
7. Ibarra, H., Kiefner, C., & Im, S. (2019). Gendered career pressure and the mismatch between aspirations and expectations. *Gender and Education*, 31(5), 613–629.
8. Kumar, S., & Srivastava, A. (2021). Parental influence on career choices among adolescents: A psychological perspective. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 45(3), 120–135.
9. Kang, H., & Park, J. (2015). Parental influence on career choice in South Korea. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 23(1), 61–75.
10. Liu, J., Xu, X., & Zhao, W. (2019). The role of parental pressure in Chinese adolescents' career decision-making. *Journal of Adolescence*, 71, 91–102.
11. Mau, W. (2016). Parental influence on the career choice of high school students. *Journal of Career Development*, 43(5), 391–404.
12. McWhirter, E. H. (2018). Career development and parental expectations: Exploring the dynamics. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 106, 12–25.
13. Patton, W., & McMahon, M. (2014). *Career Development and Systems Theory: Connecting Theory and Practice*. Sense Publishers.
14. Singh, R., & Sharma, N. (2020). Impact of parental expectations on students' mental health and career decisions. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 38(2), 89–102.
15. Shin, H. (2019). Parental expectations and career choice in East Asian adolescents. *International Journal of Psychology*, 54(4), 324–338.
16. Stead, G., Watson, M., & Gouws, D. (2018). Career development in South African high schools: The role of parental influence. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 26(4), 425–440.