



CAREER DECISION MAKING

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Abstract: Career decision making is a process which explains the choices that a person makes when selecting a particular career. This paper aims to learn about the who and why behind the career choices made by an individual in the present generation and previous generation. Interview method was used to gather data for this qualitative research from 20 participants who were chosen by convenience sampling. The individual, parents and society play a role in career decision making. The career choices are based on many factors which includes interest and abilities of the individual, gender, opportunities available, current job scenario and expected financial growth.

Index Terms: Career choice, decision maker, factors

Introduction

Right from the beginning, there are a variety of factors at play that determine the kind of exposure a child gets. Even the education one receives is dependent on multiple socioeconomic variables (including all kinds of economic, political, social and geographical variables). Parents play a crucial role in determining the choices their kids make in every sphere of life. There is a vast literature that supports this argument that parents are at the top of the career choice that a child makes.

Parents influence the level of education or training that their children achieve; the knowledge they have about work and different occupations; the beliefs and attitudes they have to work; the motivation they have to succeed. Most of this is learned unconsciously – children and teenagers absorb their parents' attitudes and expectations of them as they grow up.

Some of the key influencers are:

- The expectations parents have for their children's education and career.
- The example they set for their children.
- The values they show to their family, friends, and society.
- The opportunities they offer their children to learn and develop.
- The kind of parent-child relationship they develop.

Macro-level and micro-level factors that contribute to the parental socialization of individuals and have a subsequent influence on career decisions and success include parental socio-economic status, support, interpersonal relationships, parenting style, and role modelling. (Valentine, Bailee 2023)

Career decision making is a complex phenomenon that has social, psychological and philosophical aspects to it (Aldona & Liuda, 2004). Parents provide practical assistance and scaffolding to their children regarding

career decisions (Din et al., 2022). Hoffman et al. (1992) indicates that students are influenced more by their fathers than their mothers when making career decisions.

It was found that career development is a lifelong process dependent on many factors including, basic personality type and self-concept, family influence, social interactions and academic excellence. Parents had a strong influence over the career choices their children make, which can be both intentionally and inadvertently. Their influence can either inspire children to explore a diverse set of potential occupations or to stick to a path they think their parents will approve. (Shazia Nawabi 2019)

Coercive behaviour of parents acts as a barrier to the personal choice of interest in 48.3% of students. The study clearly indicates that 61.7% of respondents chose the stream not out of personal interest and they are not having any determination about their future. Majority (70%) of students has experienced academic stress from parental pressure as the parents compel them to study and score high marks. Parents have a great expectation on children and it is imposed on children and leads to stress. (Anakha P M 2024)

Objective

This paper aims to learn about the who and why behind the career choices made by an individual in the present generation and previous generation.

Methodology

Interview method was used to gather data for this qualitative research. 20 participants, who are parents of school-age children were chosen by convenience sampling.

The following open-ended questions were asked to the participants:

Who decided your career?

Who would decide your child's career?

What are the factors which influenced/ would influence the decision?

Results and Discussion

- Parental influence on career choices plays a major role in the past and present generation. But it is seen to be decreasing, as parents feel more acceptance towards the child's choices.
- Most parents in the present generation have a mindset to allow the child to make his/her own career choice and act as a guide in this process rather than being a decision maker.
- Fathers influence more than the mothers in the career choices of a child.
- Gender difference played a vital role in career choice in previous generation than in the present generation. Women's choice of educational courses and career options were viewed with a restricted mindset. Some parents of the previous generation have opted only for the courses that were available in women's college. Co-educational colleges were not considered.
- In cases where the parent is less educated or lacks awareness of the current scenario and available opportunities, child's decision has more weightage.
- The changing or uncertain interests of the child requires the parent to step in and guide the child to choose the right career based on the child's interest, skill, talent and opportunities.
- Career choices are also based on the earnings expected in each option, making the child or parent or both in some cases, to choose a career which would provide the maximum earning. Such decisions might lead to dissatisfaction and regret in future as it might not really match with the talents or skills of the individual. Also, in times of fast changing trends, a career may lose its charm even before the individual completes his/her education required to get into the planned career.

Conclusion

A person's success, happiness, and mental health can all be impacted by the career they choose for the rest of their lives. Determining one's career is therefore a significant turning point in one's life. In time of career choice, students must know the various facilitative techniques to increase their self - awareness, educational awareness, career awareness, career exploration, career planning and decision making.

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