



**THE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' CAREER CHOICES
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, OYO CAMPUS**

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ABSTRACT

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This study investigated the parental involvement and its implications on undergraduate students' career choice at the University of Ibadan, Oyo campus. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The study has a total population of 1029 students, and a simple random sampling technique was employed to select 115 students for the study. Data was collected using a self-structured questionnaire. The instrument was validated by two experts from the field of guidance and counselling. Data collected were analysed using frequency count, mean and standard deviation, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was used to test the null hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance. The results showed that although students want to have some control over their career choices, parental contribution continues to be a crucial and encouraging factor in undergraduate students' career choices at the University of Ibadan, Oyo campus. It was also discovered that there is a positive relationship between parental involvement and the career choice of undergraduate students. The study recommended, among others, that undergraduate students should be given appropriate orientation on the modalities of choosing career rather than rely on social media, friends, admirers or experiences of others

Introduction

The process of choosing a career is a crucial phase in an individual's life. The precision of career selection significantly influences an individual's success, fulfilment, and happiness (Ugwu, 2021; Tochukwu, 2023). A person's career choice significantly impacts their lifestyle, physical health, mental health, and the well-being of their families. A significant number of students tend to seek parental guidance regarding career-related matters. Parents with limited exposure to information and insignificant experience in higher education may struggle to assist their children with career-related issues (Tochukwu, Ugwu, &Nwankwo, 2023). Mbagwu and Ajaegbu (2016) found that children of highly educated parents were less likely to encounter challenges in making professional decisions compared to those whose parents had lower educational attainment. Chen (2021) demonstrates that fathers prioritise their sons' professional success over that of their daughters. In the same vein, he also establishes that male students are more inclined to acquire skills associated with their father's profession compared to other professions. Furthermore, Makinde, Bello & Falade (2022) confirmed that mothers are more inclined than fathers to employ supportive communication to influence their daughters' career choices. Zhu, Wen, & Li (2022) found that maternal support for educational and career-related issues had a more significant impact on girls compared to boys. Saleem, Akhtar& Bashir (2014) found that men exhibited a higher likelihood of support.

The career aspirations of young individuals, especially undergraduates, can be influenced from an early age by the support and direction of engaged parents. Active parental engagement in a child's educational experience, including participation in school activities, support with assignments, and discussions about future careers, can markedly enhance the probability that the student will seriously consider and ultimately pursue a career in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (Nwani, Oladipo, &Sanni, 2022) Selecting a profession is frequently regarded as a significant milestone in a young adult's life. This decision can either facilitate achievement or obstruct opportunity. Although sometimes regarded as a personal decision, research indicates that numerous variables, including families, educational, communal, and socio-economic aspects, are likely to shape an individual's final profession choice (James, Prayer, &Saleh, 2024).

A student's career choice is a hard decision that sets the kind of job the person plans to follow. Possibly the most significant choice a person will ever make, it strongly determines their status, compensation, lifestyle, and level of job happiness. Career decisions are also influenced by ideals and personality variables. Chance circumstances can change a person's best-laid plans, and environmental limits can limit the job that one aspires to. An attempt to fit one's attributes with those of a given occupational sector can also be classified as job job-seeking activity. The paramount concern confronting

young school dropouts is determining the appropriate vocation or occupation to pursue. Making a career decision is exceedingly difficult, especially when one's life depends on it. Career plays a very important and significant part in the life of an individual and society. Not only because they impact the pattern of income distribution among individuals, but also because they affect the individual personality and concepts in life. Career, consequently is a choice of life goal, life job or success in one's career occupied by a person throughout his or her lifetime. A career is a person's chosen pursuit, life's job, or achievement in the profession they have pursued throughout their lives.

University age is in the exploration period, when students should already be concentrating on developing a more detailed diversity of career possibilities, but not making a final decision. For instance, the majority of students at this age choose majors and institutions in order to concentrate on particular careers. Students' major goal is to have a successful career that matches their skills (Hoth, Adekunle, & Yusuf, 2017). Choosing a career is a complicated decision for students because it determines the specific job they choose to pursue for the rest of their lives.

The emergence of distinct career opportunities, societal changes, and increased awareness of global trends has led to a transformation in parental involvement in career decision-making. Parents are required to manage the complex relationship between encouraging their children's aspirations and supporting their independence in an increasingly competitive and evolving job market (Chaturvedi&Saimons, 2022). Parental encouragement is a critical determinant in children's career choices (Egbo, 2017). Many parents appear unaware of this influence and assert that their involvement in their children's career choices is minimal (Ezeani, Ogu, &Sabboh, 2023). Parents aim for their children to excel, as parenting involves numerous decisions, and the quest for perfection often places considerable pressure on their children to attain success (Adikwu &Ereka, 2023).

Parental involvement in career decision-making is fundamentally grounded in diverse theoretical frameworks. The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) elucidates how behaviours, such as career decision-making, are shaped by attitudes and subjective norms, including parental expectations (Zhang, Zhao, & Liu, 2014). Parental involvement encompasses the proactive participation and active engagement of parents or guardians in their children's education, development, career decisions, and overall well-being. Modern children and adolescents encounter significant and intricate challenges, especially concerning parental influence on their career decisions, which drives this research. Thus, in the absence of adequate guidance, young children may fail to recognise their life aspirations. Most young individuals encounter difficulties in selecting a vocation that corresponds with their capabilities, interests, and abilities, as well as viable career paths (Tochukwu, Ugwu, & Nwankwo, 2023). Selecting the optimal degree can be a daunting task for any student, as it necessitates meticulous contemplation of their prospective profession. Certain pupils possess a comprehensive comprehension of their chosen topic, whereas others do not have

this proficiency. Parents ought to be incorporated into the professional decision-making process, as students often encounter difficulties in choosing an appropriate career route. For this to occur, the parents and their children must maintain proximity. Researchers have demonstrated a positive association between career exploration and parental attachment, defined as the proximity of parents to their children (Onoshakpokaiye, 2023). Parental attachment refers to the extent of a child's emotional connection and support from their parents.

Parent-child interactions represent a distinct form of relationship in which all individuals are deeply engaged. Kolyukh and Oragwuncha (2024) noted that the degree of intimacy in a parent-child relationship distinguishes it from other types of interactions, including those with friends, relatives, and partners. Studies on parent-child relationships have examined various dimensions. Several researchers investigated the impact of parent-child relationships on children's decision-making and communication (Chung, Lanier, & Wong, 2022). Research demonstrates that a parent who is attentive, supportive, and nurturing fosters a strong bond with their child, thereby sustaining the reciprocal dynamics of their relationship (Yang, Zhao, Zhou, & Gong, 2024).

Empirical research has consistently shown the beneficial effect of parental involvement on students' professional goals and decision-making processes. Khatri and Periwal (2020) emphasised the pivotal influence of familial supervision in determining professional trajectories, especially within collectivist cultures. Koçak, Yildiz, & Demir (2021) recognized the crucial influence of parental encouragement on improving students' professional decision-making.

In the contemporary landscape, selecting a career necessitates confidence in one's ability to fulfil the responsibilities of the position. Students often have difficulties in selecting the optimal degree, as it requires a thorough assessment of their future career aspirations. Some pupils lack this competency, while others possess a comprehensive comprehension of their chosen subject. Consequently, parents have a significant role in facilitating their children's development. In comparison to previous eras, contemporary technological improvements have rendered the decision-making process for career choices with educational degrees more intricate (Joel, Peter, & Samuel, 2017).

The issue of career selection has prompted numerous enquiries and responses among researchers. The issue is complicated and has generated significant controversy, remaining unresolved and requiring careful consideration. A definitive process for students in making career choices is lacking. Many students depend on their parents, guardians, mentors, or role models to make career decisions, which are significantly influenced by these figures. Many students are often influenced by their parents in selecting a career path that may ultimately fail to align with their expectations, resulting in unfulfilled ambitions or aspirations. Consequently, numerous parents may seek what they believe to be beneficial and optimal for their children. However, they frequently neglect to consider their wards' natural abilities and potential

before imposing and selecting a career for them. A majority of children subjected to this form of career indoctrination frequently do not attain their objectives, with only a small number succeeding in fulfilling their parents' career aspirations. The issues related to this encompass an increase in examination failures, diminished concentration in selected careers, school dropouts, teenage pregnancies, elopement, cult activities, rising crime rates, political thuggery, armed robbery, occultism, and various other societal problems. This research aimed to examine the impact of parental involvement on the career choices of undergraduate students at the University of Ibadan, Oyo Campus.

Statement of the Problem

The decision to pursue a career is vital for undergraduate students since it has a substantial impact on their future performance as well as job satisfaction. At the University of Ibadan, Oyo campus, there is growing concern over the role of parental influence in students' career decisions. Although parents want to help their children have a successful future, their expectations may not always match their children's specific interests and abilities. The shift from secondary to university education complicates matters further. While previous literature recognises parental influence, there is a scarcity of empirical research that precisely investigates how various forms of parental involvement, such as emotional, financial, and occupational support, influence undergraduate students' career selections in this setting. This study aims to fill this vacuum by investigating the nature and intensity of parental involvement in students' career pathways at the University of Ibadan, Oyo campus.

Objectives of the study

1. To identify career decisions of undergraduate students in University of Ibadan, Oyo campus;
2. To ascertain the parental-child relationship of undergraduate students in university of Ibadan, Oyo campus;
3. To determine the parental involvement on the career choice of undergraduate students in University of Ibadan, Oyo campus;
4. To examine the relationship between parental involvement and career choice of undergraduate students in the university of Ibadan, Oyo campus.

Research questions

1. What is the career decision of undergraduate students in university of Ibadan, Oyo campus?
2. What is the parental-child relationship of undergraduate students in university of Ibadan, FCE (Sp.), Oyo campus?

3. How does parental involvement impacts career choice of undergraduate students in university of Ibadan, Oyo campus?

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant relationship between parental involvement and career choice of undergraduate students in university of Ibadan, FCE (Sp.); Oyo campus.

Methodology

Research design

The descriptive research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study comprised one thousand and twenty-nine (1029) undergraduate students of university of Ibadan, Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo, Campus. This comprises of 100 Level – 400 Level students from different discipline. The study adopted simple random sampling technique to select one hundred and fifteen (115) respondents. Self-structured questionnaire was used for this study. 115 questionnaires were produced and administered to the respondents. The questionnaire was given to the department of guidance and counselling three experts in measurement and evaluation for face validation. Based on their opinion, important modifications were made, and the final instrument was obtained. Data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency count, percentage (%), mean distribution and standard deviation were used to answer research question one to three while Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. A decision rule of 2.5 was made to determine agreed or disagreed item.

RESULTS

Answers to research questions

Research question one: What is the career decision of undergraduate students in university of Ibadan, FCE (Sp.), Oyo campus?

Table 1: Career choice of undergraduate students

S/N	ITEM	Mean	S.D	Remark
1	I believe in my ability	3.77	.427	Agreed
2	I adjust my career choices to my abilities	3.24	.823	Agreed
3	I believe my career will be successful through effort, not because of my talents	3.54	.501	Agreed
4	I have the posture that supports the career I want	3.15	.619	Agreed

S/N	ITEM	Mean	S.D	Remark
5	I have prepared several career options for the future	3.13	.864	Agreed
6	I need other people to help me get a successful career	2.94	1.095	Agreed
7	I didn't have enough courage to choose a career	2.15	.891	Disagreed
8	I chose a career based on the successful experiences of others	2.49	1.135	Disagreed
9	I thought about the good and the bad before choosing a career	2.89	.944	Agreed
10	I associate the future with my past, that I have experienced in choosing my career	3.11	.781	Agreed
11	I have goals that I will adapt to my career choices	3.30	.910	Agreed
12	I search for information from various sources about the further education that I want	3.11	.868	Agreed
13	My achievements make me more confident in choosing a career	3.45	.679	Agreed
14	I have many achievements that support my future career	3.33	.722	Agreed
15	I am looking for specific information about the career choice I am interested in	2.94	.679	Agreed
16	My current education makes me even more prepared to choose a career	3.34	.771	Agreed

Table 1 represents the career choice of undergraduate students in university of Ibadan, Oyo campus. The table revealed that most of the respondents agreed that they believe in their ability when it comes to their career choice (mean = 3.77). The respondents also believe that the success of their career is dependant of their efforts rather than talent (mean = 3.54). Other respondents also believe that their achievements make them feel confident on their career choice (mean=3.45). However, some respondents felt that they do not have enough courage to make their career choice by themselves (x = 2.15) while another respondents admitted that they make their career choice based on the successful experience of others (mean=2.49). It can be deduced that most of the respondents in the studied area make the choice of their career by them based on their perceived abilities, efforts and experiences of other people.

Research question two: What is the parental-child relationship of undergraduate students in university of Ibadan, FCE (Sp.), Oyo campus?

Table 2: Parent-child relationship of undergraduate students

S/N	ITEM	Mean	S.D	Remark
1	I consider my parents' opinion in choosing a career	3.03	.843	Agreed
2	My parents have their own opinion about the career that I will choose	2.76	.952	Agreed
3	My parents have prepared a good career for me	3.15	.891	Agreed
4	Social media is the only source I use to find information	2.45	1.011	Disagreed
5	I am looking for specific information about the career choice I am interested in	2.98	.918	Agreed
6	I am looking for further education information from the counselling teacher	3.17	.920	Agreed

7	I chose a career without considering anyone's opinion	2.63	1.104	Agreed
8	I chose a career based on the choice of my friends	1.82	1.113	Disagreed
9	I lack confidence in showing my career choices to my parents	2.07	1.160	Disagreed
10	Other people's opinions will make me more confused in choosing a career except my parent's	2.23	1.110	Disagreed
11	I consider teacher input on my career choice	2.42	1.034	Disagreed
12	I chose a career based on the input of friends	1.90	1.139	Disagreed
13	My career choice is based on the careers of people I admire	2.03	.950	Disagreed
14	I love my parents that I cannot resist their opinion on my career choice	3.94	.665	Agreed
15	My father is the determinant to whatsoever everybody becomes in our family	2.71	1.074	Agreed
16	My mother is the determinant to whatsoever everybody becomes in our family	2.70	1.043	Agreed

Table 2 reveals the parent-child relationship of undergraduate students in university of Ibadan, Oyo campus. The table showed that more than 90% of the respondents agreed that they love their parents that they cannot resist their opinion on their career choice (Mean= 3.94), while others seek for education information from counselling teachers rather than their parents (Mean= 3.17), while some respondents affirmed that their parents already prepared good careers for them. On the same vein, large percentage of the respondents considers their parents opinion in choosing their career (Mean = 3.03). However, the respondents disagreed that their choice of career is based on their friend's opinion rather than parent's (Mean = 1.90). Also, the respondents disagreed that their career choice is based on their admirers (Mean= 2.03). It can therefore be deduced from the table that the respondents have more confident on their parents and relay on their opinions and guide in choosing their careers than following the opinions of their friends and admirers. Some respondents also believe on their school counsellors and follow their guide in choosing careers.

Research question three: What is the parental involvement on career choice of undergraduate students in university of Ibadan, FCE (Sp.), Oyo campus?

Table 3: Parental involvement in career choice of undergraduate students

S/N	ITEM	Mean	S.D	Remark
1	My career choices are influenced by my parents' career	2.67	1.090	Agreed
2	I will accept the career that choice by my parents	2.38	.980	Disagreed

3	My parents facilitated my career choice	2.92	.919	Agreed
4	I ask other people about further education information	3.16	.914	Agreed
5	I will continue my education based on my abilities	3.63	.582	Agreed
6	My family imposes its career choices on me	2.42	1.116	Disagreed
7	The ability to choose one's career is not influenced by the educational background	2.63	1.002	Agreed
8	My family supports all my choices in a career	3.36	.850	Agreed
9	My parents want me to continue the family business instead of my desire career choice	2.07	1.114	Disagreed
10	The success of my parents inspired me to choose the same career	2.66	1.107	Agreed
11	I choose to be an employee with a definite income compared to continuing my parents' business	2.77	1.046	Agreed
12	My career choice is adjusted to the circumstances in my family	3.73	.940	Agreed
13	A certain work culture influences my career choices	3.80	.664	Agreed
14	My culture influences my career choices	2.63	.921	Agreed
15	My culture limits my career choices	2.30	1.094	Disagreed

Table 3 shows the parental influence on the career choice of undergraduate students in university of Ibadan, FCES, Oyo. The table indicated that the culture and believe of their parents influences their choice of career ($x = 3.80$). Likewise, some respondents agreed that their career choices are controlled by the circumstances of their families ($x = 3.73$). Some respondents opted to continue their education and career based on their abilities and not the status of their parents ($x = 3.63$). On the other hand, some respondents disagreed that their parents want them to continue the family business instead of their chosen career ($x = 2.07$), while some students disagreed that their parents' culture limits their career choices ($x = 2.30$). Also, some respondents disagreed that their parents impose their career on them. From the table, it can be observed that parents, rather than imposing their desired careers on their children, guide them rightly to make their choices of career. To a great degree, the parents do not impose their obligations, businesses or jobs on their children, which gives their students under opportunity to make their career choice by themselves.

Test of hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between parental involvement and career choice of undergraduate students in the University of Ibadan, FCE (Sp.), Oyo campus.

Table 4: Relationship of career choice and parental involvement in the career choice of students



Variables	Mean	Std. deviation	N	R	Sig. (P)	Remark
Career Choice	49.88	4.798				
Parental Involvement	42.14	8.249	115	0.72**	0.003	Sig.

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 revealed the correlation between career choice and parental involvement of undergraduate students in the University of Ibadan, Oyo campus. The tests were significant at $P < 0.05$. The p-value is 0.003 while the correlation coefficient between career choice and parental involvement is 0.72. This shows that there is a strong positive correlation between career choice and parental involvement of undergraduate students in the University of Ibadan, Oyo campus. In other words, there is a positive relationship between the two variables and a tendency that the career choice of undergraduate students will increase parental involvement positively and vice versa.

Discussion of Findings

This section discusses the findings as they relate to the stated research questions and hypothesis of the study on Parental Involvement and Its Implications on Undergraduate Students' Career Choices at the University of Ibadan, Oyo Campus. Findings from the study revealed that the majority of students demonstrated a strong sense of self-awareness and confidence in their career decisions. They believed in their abilities (Mean = 3.77) and efforts (Mean = 3.54) as key drivers of career success. Many had considered multiple career options and reported that their academic achievements boosted their confidence in selecting a suitable career. However, some respondents expressed uncertainty and reliance on others, indicating a lack of courage in making independent career decisions (Mean = 2.15). This suggests that while most students engage in autonomous decision-making, a notable portion may be vulnerable to external influence due to indecision or lack of exposure. This finding aligns with Hoth, Adekunle, & Yusuf, (2017), that career decision-making in youth, is a complex, evolving process influenced by personal and contextual factors.

The data analysed showed that a strong emotional bond exists between parents and students, significantly shaping the latter's career-related decisions. Respondents agreed that they value and often consider their parents' opinions (Mean = 3.03), with many acknowledging that they "love their parents so much that they cannot resist their opinions" (Mean = 3.94). However, they were also open to gathering information from school counselors and other educational sources. Interestingly, the influence of peers,

friends, and admirers was largely disregarded, reinforcing the unique position of parents in shaping career outcomes. This supports the work of Slead, Slade, & Fonagy (2020), which highlighted the role of secure parent-child relationships in building confidence and effective decision-making capabilities.

Findings revealed that parental involvement is present and largely supportive, rather than coercive. Students reported that their parents facilitated their career choices (Mean = 2.92) and supported their decisions (Mean = 3.36). Some parents' career paths or success stories were seen as inspirational (Mean = 2.66), yet most students still preferred to pursue careers that align with their own abilities and interests (Mean = 3.63). A small proportion of students reported family-imposed expectations or pressure to continue family businesses, but these instances were not prevalent. Cultural and family values did influence choices (Mean = 3.80), showing that contextual factors still play a significant role in shaping student aspirations. These findings align with Olaosebikan and Olusakin (2014), who emphasised the significant but often indirect role of parents in career development.

Hypothesis

The null hypothesis was rejected, as the statistical analysis showed a significant and strong positive correlation between parental involvement and career choices ($r = 0.72$, $p = 0.003$). This indicates that as parental involvement increases, students are more likely to make confident and informed career decisions. The correlation suggests that emotional support, encouragement, and constructive communication from parents enhance students' clarity and confidence in career planning. This supports findings by Khatri & Periwal (2020) who found that parental influence is a decisive factor in students' career development, especially in collectivist societies.

Conclusion

Overall, the results highlight that although students want to have some control over their profession choices, parental participation continues to be a crucial and encouraging factor in undergraduate students' career choices at the University of Ibadan, Oyo campus. Career planning becomes more deliberate and self-assured when parental guidance and student self-awareness are balanced. According to the statistics, undergraduate students' career choices at the University of Ibadan, Oyo campus are significantly and favourably impacted by positive parent-child connections and non-imposition involvement.

Recommendations

The subsequent recommendations were derived from the findings:

1. In situations where students lack the courage or confidence to make personal career choices, parents guide their children by identifying their strengths, skills, and talents to recommend suitable career paths.

2. Parents who are not well-informed should consult with guidance counsellors to ensure they make educated choices about their children's career trajectories.
3. Students ought to receive proper guidance on the methods of selecting a career instead of relying on social media, peers, admirers, or the experiences of others. The abilities and strengths of others did not align with their own.
4. Parents of undergraduate students ought to invest considerable effort in comprehending their children's capacities and capabilities before imposing any career, business, or job upon them.

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