

Career Selection: Role of Parent's Profession, Mass Media and Personal Choice

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Abstract

This study explores the effects of “parent’s profession,” “mass media” and “personal choice” on students’ career selection. The data was collected through online survey method by employing Systematic Random Sampling technique from the first semester students of three leading business schools of Lahore. This study validates that “parent’s profession” has influence on students’ career choice. Similarly, “personal choice” has strong and direct impact on students’ career selection. Moreover, this study claims that media is also playing a significant role in career selection. In addition, all three factors including “parent’s profession,” “mass media” and “personal choice” have mutual influence on career choice of students as well. The study claims that “mass media” and “personal choice” have more impact than parents profession influence on students’ career choices.

Keywords: Parent’s profession, mass media, personal choice, career selection, Pakistan

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Introduction

Career selection has become more complex in 21st century due to individual's dependence upon mass media that plays a significant role in imparting information to parents and shaping personal choices. Apostol & Näsi (2013) maintain that the young generation is more media prone and the societal dynamics are continuously changing because of the media exposure and people are influenced more from media characters' occupations. Moreover, Wroblewski & Huston (1987) claim that Television is one of the important sources of occupational information for youth because it regularly portrays work-related activities of fictional characters. On the other hand, parents' profession and skills, knowledge, socio-economic, educational and cultural backgrounds and their financial and moral support to children are also important factors in career selection (Jodl, et. et al, 200; Kracke, 1997; Noreen & Khalid, 2012). While several studies also indicate that personal interests and choices are very important in the process of decision making of individual's career selection (Ilgen et al, 2003; Bundura et al., 2001; Angela & Bardick, 2004). In addition, career counseling is also an important factor that helps individuals to choose among diverse nature of profession around globe (Amundson, 1984). Therefore, there is an exhaustive list of factors that influence the individual's career selection process but the basic objective of this study is to explore direct effects of "parent's profession," "mass media" and "personal choice" on students' career selection. In addition, it analyzes mutual influence of parent's profession, mass media and personal choice on career choice.

There are several factors that influence students' career selection. This study analyzes the impact of three major factors including "parent's profession," "mass media" and "personal choice/interests" on students' career selection.

Parents' Profession as Factor in Children Career Selection

Parents have significant impact on children career section (Amundson, 1984; Bundura et al, 2001). Various studies concludes that parent profession, income level and their knowledge about various professions, the beliefs, norms, information regarding modern occupations, exposure to local and international job market and the job skills they acquire can affect the career selection of their children. In addition, Parents' influence, approval or disapproval to certain professions and children's financial dependency upon parents' have also restricted children to select the careers of their choices (Jodl, et. et al, 2001). Among other factors including socio economic conditions of parents' (Arthur, 1996), education level of parents' (Ilgen, 2003),

parents' expectations from children (Amundson, 1984), children idealization of parents' profession (Angela & Bardick, 2004), parents' supervision and the confidence and trust parents' incorporates in children (Steinberg, 2001) and the kind of exposure and training provided to children (Lapan, 2002) that motivate or limit the children to select the career of their choices. Kracke (1997) maintains that the influence of parental education and behaviors on adolescents' career exploration is very significant. The data was collected from 236 9th-grade students enrolled in German middle-track schools. The results indicated that parental authoritativeness, openness to adolescents' issues, and concern with promoting career exploration significantly related to the career exploration by their children, independent of parental educational background and adolescent gender. Leppel, et al. (2001) examines gender perception regarding the effects of socioeconomic status and parental occupation on choice of college major. The study concludes that father's professional or executive occupation has a significant effect on female students compare to mothers in a similar occupation. The opposite holds for males. Women from families with high socioeconomic status are less likely to major in business; the opposite holds for males. Students who believe that being very well off financially is very important are more likely to major in business than are other students. Adya & Kaiser (2005) argue that in students' selection of IT as career, the parental involvement is pivotal. Moreover, mothers have strong impact on general career direction and academic lives of their children, while fathers may have greater influence in choice of computing careers. Mothers' professional status and education has significant impact on daughters' career choices. Bright, Pryor, Wilkenfeld and Earl (2005) conduct a survey from 651 university students and measured the influence various factors including family, friends, teachers and the media on career decision-making and concluded that students were under influence of family and teachers in their career decision making. Moreover, distal influences such as the media and web-based information were also significant. Students' current course enrolments and career intentions were significantly more likely to be in interest categories congruent with their father's job. Maharaj (2008) investigates the factors affecting the career choice of health-care students including; physiotherapy, chiropractic, medicine and occupational therapy, in KwaZulu Natal and concludes that parents were a major factor influencing career choice (68.1%). The medical students (20%) were influenced by television to a greater extent than the other professions. The majority of respondents obtained information from professionals visiting schools (56.5%), while family and guidance counselors were also important sources of information (52.2% and 50.7% respectively). To sum up, several studies maintain that parents' influence and motivation are important factor in students' career selection.

Personal Choice/Interest as Factor in Career Selection

Personal Interests/choices for career selection have one of dominant research topics since long time. Ginzberg (1951) discusses various steps in behavior change and the thought process of a person while choosing his/her career. He argues that till the age of 11 individuals live in fantasy world regarding their career selection. At this stage they frequently change career selection without analyzing the skills sets, educational background, training requirements and economic factors they possessed. He further claims that youngsters between 12 to 18 years are tentative about career selection. The third and final stage is the called realization of career selection, where individual begin to focus logically and pragmatically about career and indulge in exploration and crystallization about career. Lindholm (2004) argues career counselor's diagnosis and individual active role during assessment process and clarity of self-concept are important factors in career selection. In addition, people with strong interests in a specific field make them successful professionals (Ilgen et al, 2003). Several studies support the argument that there is a strong relationship between the individual interests and career selection (Suutari, 2003). Arthur & Rousseau (1996) maintain that individuals with more academic aptitude can better guess about themselves. The older students are in better position in estimating their interest types. Moreover, the high productive level have found among the individuals who select career of their choice. In addition, the skills of an individual that is developed and learned with passage of time also influence career selection (Bundura, et al., 2001). Angela and Bardick (2004) stresses that socio-economic and cultural environment of individuals are also importance in shaping the preceptions regarding careers. No individual is exactly the same as the other (people's choices cannot be exactly same in every case), including identical twins that may differ in certain respects of career selection as well. Boverie (2009) maintains that individual's skills and abilities to do something, individuals learning rate also contributing in development of interests regarding careers choices.

Media as Factor in Students' Career Selection

Mass Media especially television, newspapers and social media websites, is frequently been used by youth to seek information regarding various professions, job market and knowledge about the world around them. Wroblewski & Huston (1987) argue that children knew more about the "real life" and "television occupations" than other jobs, therefore, television serves as a source of occupational information. Television is one of the important sources of occupational information for youth because it regularly portrays work-related activities of fictional characters. Hoffner, et al. (2006) conducted interview from 132 economically disadvantaged young people and maintained that "the income and education levels of respondents' dream jobs are

positively correlated with the attributes of the TV characters' jobs. Wishful identification is higher for characters whose jobs had higher income, required more education, were seen as more realistic, and were perceived as having greater extrinsic values (e.g., benefits, respect)." DeFleur and DeFleur (1987) maintained that the television "is an important source for "incidental" learning about the labor force. A substantial "homogenization effect" was noted regarding children's knowledge of the world of work, apparently resulting from the stereotyped ways in which TV portrays occupations." Moreover, Trujillo and Ekdom (1987) argued that Television plays vital role in teaching us about occupations that are socially valued in America (p. 369). Jeffries-Fox (1978) conducted interviews from adolescents about their sources of information for six jobs: police, lawyers, judges, doctors, paramedics, and psychiatrists and found that TV was by far the most frequently cited source of information about these jobs, and the students discounted the TV information only when it was directly contradicted by another source, such as personal contact. Reading was rarely credited as a source of job information. To sum up, media not only create awareness and inform people but also make their mind for change. Therefore, above mentioned studies concludes that media play vital role in informing about careers as well as shapes students' mind through fictional characters.

For an individual to choose right career is always significant. Therefore career choice is largely influenced by combination of factors including; parents, individual interest and mass media. On the basis of review of literature this study proposes a model that parent's profession, mass media and personal choice/Interest have direct and independent influence on career selection of students. In addition, parent's profession, mass media and personal choice also have mutual influence on career choice.

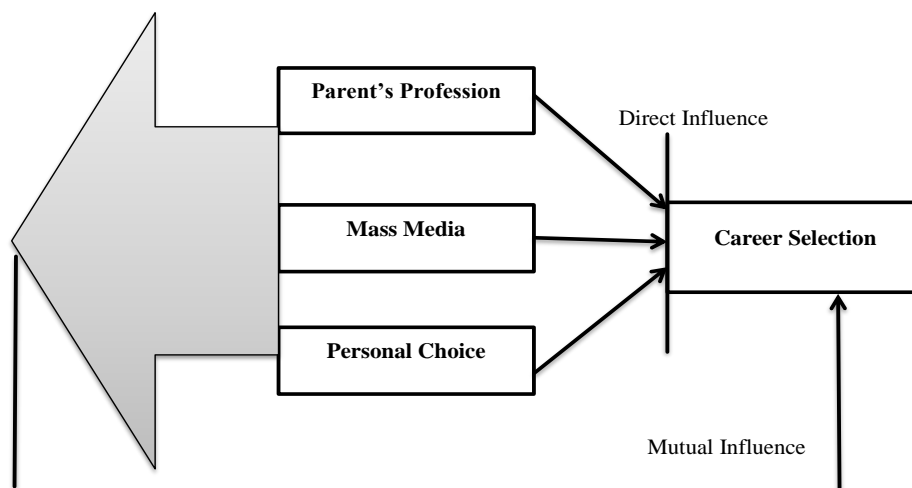


Figure 1: Factors influencing the career selection process

Research Strategy

The data was collected through online survey method by employing systematic Random sampling technique from the first semester students of three business schools of Lahore including University of Central Punjab-*Business School*, University of Lahore-*Lahore Business School*, *Sulam Dawood Business School* at Lahore University of Management Sciences. In this study purposely fresh graduates were selected and every 5th student was sent questionnaire. The 1253 questionnaires sent to students through emails and 444 complete questionnaires were received. Table 1 shows detailed characteristics of the target sample. AMOS 18 and SPSS 17 software's have been used for data analysis.

Table 1: *Sample (N=444)*

Name of Business School	TE	SD	*RR
1.UCP Business School	402	187	46.51
2.Lahore Business School	451	151	33.48
3.Sulam Dawood Business School	381	106	27.82
Total	1234	444	35.98

TE = Total Enrollment; SD = Sample Drawn; *RR: Response Rate is reported in percentage.

Note: student of 1st semester were the targeted for the study

Measures

Three measures i.e. career selection, personal choice and parent profession have been adopted. One measure i.e. mass media is developed and tested on couple of fresh enrolled students at a business school. All four measures have used Likert Scale (1-5), whereas (1) means strongly disagree and (5) strongly agree. All variables including career selection, parent's profession, personal choice and mass media are established as factors through CFA. Model fit indices were used to assess model adequacy. According to Hair et al. (2010), CFI (Comparative Fit Index) and TLI (Tucker–Lewis Index) values above 0.90 and RMSEA (Root-Mean Square Error of Approximation) scores below 0.08, whereas CMIN/df below 3.0 represent good model fit. When the first model (with all the items for 4 factors) is tested, the model fit statistics were relatively poor (CMIN/df = 1.875, CFI = 0.865; TLI = 0.89, RMSEA = 0.059). The first model is also presented in the following figure. The items with low factor loadings were removed. Total of three items were removed i.e., one from Parents' Profession, two from Career selection. The model fit statistics were significantly improved to an acceptable level in the second model (CMIN/df = 1.423, CFI = 0.937; TLI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.044).

Table 2: *Convergent and Discriminant Validity and Reliability (N=444)*

	CV	MSV	ASV	CAR	NI
1 Career selection (DV)	0.54	0.45	0.29	0.694	11
2 Parents' Profession (IV)	0.57	0.30	0.21	0.728	4
3 Mass Media (IV)	0.51	0.24	0.20	0.702	5
4 Personal Choice (IV)	0.51	0.45	0.32	0.802	4

Note: DV: Dependent Variable; IV: Independent Variable; Convergent validity:

CV> .50;

MSV = Maximum Shared variance; AVE = Average Variance Extracted;

ASV = Average Shared Variance; Discriminant validity: CV> MSV

Number of Items: NICronbach's Alpha Relativity Threshold : CAR > 0.70

The details of items added, dropped, modified and developed are available in Annex I

Refer to Table 2, results depicts that all the measures fulfilled the statistical criteria of reliability and validity. However measures were revalidated in local context. Career selection is dependent variable and is tapped through eleven items the CAR value for career selection is 0.694 which is approximately 0.7 and thus accepted. The independent variable is Parents' Profession is taped through five numbers of items last question is removed thus four items were used for data analysis. The CAR value for parents' profession is 0.728. Personal choice independent variable is tapped by four items. The CAR value is 0.802 for personal choice thus is accepted for further analysis. Mass media is also independent variable is tapped by five items. The CAR value is 0.702 for personal choice thus is accepted for further analysis.

Findings

Descriptive study is conducted and demographic variables such as age, level of education, and gender were tapped by direct single question as shown under. Refer to Table 3, Educational mix consist of 78.8% BBA and 21.2% MBA fresh enrollment of year 2012 responded from three selected business schools. The 59.8% were females and 40.2% were males from first semester of business schools. As far as, age mix is concerned 60.6% student were aged between 18-20 years, whereas 39.4% were around 21-26 years old.

Table 3: *Demographics*

Gender	Education	Age (in years)
59.8% Female	78.8% BBA	18-20 (60.6%)
40.2% males	21.2% MBA	21-26 (39.4%)

Note: The data is taken from three business schools of Lahore Pakistan (i.e. UCP Business School, Lahore Business School and Sulam Dawood Business School at LUMS)

After determining the reliabilities, Pearson correlation matrix is obtained for the three independent variables and one dependent variable. Each hypothesis is then tested.

Table 4: *Correlations Statistics*

Variables	1	2	3	4
1. Parent's Profession (IV)	1			
2. Career selection (DV)	0.307*(.000)	1		
3. Personal Choice(IV)	0.335*(.001)	0.664*(.000)	1	
4. Mass Media(IV)	0.335*(.001)	0.664*(.000)	0.331**(.041)	1

Significance Level * $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$

Independent Variable (IV) , Dependent Variable (DV)

Refer to table 4, partial but statistically significant correlation of 0.307 ($p < 0.000$) between parents profession and the career selection exists. There is moderate level of correlation i.e. 0.664 ($p < 0.000$) between personal choice and career selection. Thus, correlation statistics qualifies this independent variable to test cause-effect relationship. Finally, there is a partial but statistically significant correlation of 0.331 ($p < 0.05$) between mass media and the career selection exists and hence correlation statistics also qualifies this variable to test cause-effect relationship with dependent variable.

Table 5: *Regression Analysis*

Independent Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
1. Parent's Profession (IV)	0.095 (0.050)	0.221 (0.060)	-	0.335 (0.081)	-
2. Personal Choice(IV)	0.632 (0.049)	-	0.466 (0.046)		-
3. Mass Media(IV)	0.032 (0.041)	-	-		0.331 (0.046)
Intercept	1.505	2.707	1.667	2.291	1.292
R-Square	0.451	0.095	0.442	0.112	0.092

Dependent Variable (DV): Career selection (for Model 1, 2,3&5)

Model 4: Personal Choice is DV and Parent Profession is IV

Standard Error is given in parenthesis

H₁: It is assumed that “parent’s profession” has significant influence on “students’ career choice” in Pakistan.

H₂: It is assumed that “students’ personal choice” has significant association with “career selection” in Pakistan.

H₃: It is assumed that “mass media” has significant impact on “students’ career selection” in Pakistan.

First model showed the relationship as

$$CS = 1.505 + 0.095 PP + 0.632 PC + 0.032 MM$$

Where

CS = Career Selection, PP = Parents’ Profession, PC = Personal Choice and MM = Mass Media

All variables applied in above sated model have proved significance up to 5% level of significance. The power of the model remained 45%, explains that 45% of the variation in career selection is due to all these three selected variables which reasonably good. Results further shows in terms of percentage change in Career Selection, 63% is due to Personal Choice, 9.5% is because of Parent’s Profession and only 3.2% is the result of Mass Media influence.

Second model showed the relationship with 9.5% explanatory power as

$$CS = 2.707 + 0.221PP$$

Third model explained the relationship with 44% explanatory power as

$$CS = 1.667 + 0.466 PC$$

Fifth model explained the relationship with 9% explanatory power as

$$CS = 1.292 + 0.331MM$$

Fourth model explained the relationship with 11% explanatory power as

$$PC = 2.291 + 0.335PP$$

All these models remained significant and supported the outcomes of first model. However, interestingly, the 'personal choice' contained the highest magnitude of impact in case of 'personal career' that perhaps further shaped through 'parents profession' as reflected by fourth model. The role of mass media proved significant as well. Hence it may be deduced that actually every sampled students has developed personal choices on the basis of their parents profession which inspired them usually from the childhood, however, increased intervention of mass media has now get its place in their life as well, but initially with lower magnitude of impact. Consequently all three hypotheses have worth to stand.

The results are compatible with the culture of Pakistan where parents usually have more intervention in decisions regarding the selection of career. Based on rapid growth of mass media it is further expected that the magnitude of impact may increase if mass media would take the responsibility to launch awareness, educational and career building programs to provide an effective and dynamic source of guidance.

H₄: It is assumed that "mass media, "parent's profession" and "personal choice" regarding students' career selection have significant mutual association with high magnitude.

The Table 4 indicates that the correlation among all four variables helps to establish the fact that personal choice and mass media remained highly associated with career selection as both will change more than 66 times, i.e., if 10 career selection decisions are made 6.6 times a change will occur in mass media and personal choice individually. Effectively personal choice are also getting influence through mass media and perhaps indirectly effects career choice along with high magnitude of direct influence.

Therefore, it may be concluded that mass media is growing influence on career selection process through shaping personal choices along with the influence of parent profession indirectly over time and directly perhaps due to mature observation of student. Consequently fourth hypothesis truly reflects the reality.

Conclusion

This study shows that “parent’s profession, “mass media” and “personal choice” play important role in the selection of the career. This study validates that parent’s profession has strong and direct influence on students’ career choice. Similarly, “personal choice” is also has strong association with career selection of students. Moreover, “mass media” has also influence on career selection of students both directly and indirectly. In addition, all three factors including “parent’s profession,” “mass media” and “personal choice” have mutual influence on career choice of students as well. This mutual influence on career choice may be the result of the following factors. (1) Students are more empowered because of information they gathered through usage of new information technology and basic education and skill set they have. (2) Students have strong understanding about the parents’ profession that way they adopt their profession as career. In addition, parents’ endorsement and professional life style, sometimes, also the reasons of selection of similar profession. (3) The mass media has significant influence on the perception and decision making of people. In this global village, media’s influence is increasing on career choices as well because of information exposure of students to various professions. Therefore, this study concludes that the factors like “parent’s profession,” “mass media” and “personal choice” not only influence the students’ career choices individually but collectively as well.

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