

Relationship Between Parenting Style and Career Decision-Making among Higher Secondary School Students

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ABSTRACT

Background: Parenting style reflects parental control and the emotional climate of parent-child relationships, while career decision-making involves the process of choosing a career path. Effective parenting is crucial for adolescents' positive growth, which can influence their career decision-making. This study assessed the relationship between parenting style and career decision-making among higher secondary school students.

Methodology: A quantitative cross-sectional design was adopted. The study population consisted of higher secondary level students from a school in Rupandehi. A probability systematic random sampling technique was used to collect the 170 sample size. Self-administered standard validated tools, Diana Baumrind's Parenting Style scale, and Kirandeep Singh's Career Decision-Making scale were used. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, mean, median, and standard deviation, and Inferential statistics, Karl Pearson's correlation coefficient, were used to analyze the data.

Findings: The mean age of respondents was 17.7 ± 0.8 SD. More than half (57.1%) were male. 78.8% resides in urban residences and belong to a nuclear family (75.3%). Authoritative parenting was the most common parenting style, and most of the respondents (67.6%) of the respondents showed an average level of career decision-making ability. Correlation analysis showed that authoritarian parenting style had a statistically significant positive relationship with career decision-making ($r = 0.640$, $p = 0.046$).

Conclusion: There is a positive correlation between authoritarian parenting style and the career decision-making ability of the respondents. So authoritarian parenting is recommended for improving the ability of the children in taking decision regarding future goals. The authoritative and permissive style of parenting style should be discouraged.

Keywords: Authoritative, authoritarian, career decision-making, parenting style, permissive

INTRODUCTION

Parenting style reflects parental control and the emotional climate of parent-child relationships, while career decision-making involves the process of choosing a career path. Effective parenting is crucial for adolescents' positive growth, which can influence their career decision-making.¹ Parenting is a dynamic concept, and every generation employs distinct child-rearing strategies. In the 21st century, interconnection

and communication have been rapidly enhanced worldwide.² Parenting style refers to the emotional and behavioral strategies parents use in raising their children and is commonly classified as authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful.^{3,5,6,7} Children of more authoritative and authoritarian parents were more decisive than those of permissive parents.⁴ Adolescence is a critical developmental period during which individuals make important educational and

career-related decisions that influence their future pathways^{6,7,8}. Career decision-making is shaped by multiple personal and environmental factors, among which parental influence plays an important role^{9,10}. Parenting styles are considered an important determinant of adolescents' career decision-making¹¹. Previous studies have shown that authoritative parenting is positively associated with adolescents' self-efficacy and effective career decision-making, whereas authoritarian and permissive parenting may negatively influence adolescents' confidence in making career choices.^{12,13} Supportive parenting that encourages autonomy and participation helps adolescents develop confidence in career decision-making, which is crucial during adolescence—a transitional stage when students select academic paths aligned with their abilities and future goals^{13,14,19}. Adolescents' perceptions of parenting styles significantly influence their career decidedness and indecision.^{20,22} The Kirandeep Singh Career Decision-Making Inventory identifies three levels of career decision-making ability.²¹ With increasing modernization and urbanization, the present Nepalese family is challenged to meet the dynamic parenting demands of modern society. In our context, limited studies explore how adolescents perceive their parents' parenting styles and how these influence their career decision-making. Thus, the researcher aimed to examine how the parenting styles adopted by their parents reflect adolescents' career decision-making.

METHODS

A cross-sectional study was conducted among students of a higher secondary school to assess the relationship between their parenting styles and career decision-making ability. Shree Shanti Namuna Higher Secondary School, located in Manigram, Rupandehi, was the study setting. All the students studying in grade twelve were the study population. The systematic random sampling technique was used to select the required sample. The sample size was determined using Cochran's formula, taking the prevalence of 11.33%,¹² with a 95% confidence interval and 5% allowable error. The total sample size was

170. Students who were living with both mother and father, and both male and female, were included in the study. The sampling interval(k) was calculated using the formula $k=N/n$, where N is the total number of eligible students and n is the required sample size. A random starting point between 1 and 3 was selected, and every 3rd student was chosen systematically until the required sample size was fulfilled.

A structured self-administered questionnaire was used to assess parenting style and career decision-making among the higher secondary school students. The instrument consisted of three parts: part I included questions related to socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, part II consisted of the standardized Parental Authority Questionnaire developed by Prof. Dr. John R. Buri will assess the perception of maternal and paternal parenting style, which includes parenting style as authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive dimensions. The questionnaire consists of 30 items on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree(1) to strongly agree (5), where a higher score indicates the dominant perceived parenting style. Part III consisted of the standard Career Decision-Making Inventory developed by Dr. Kirandeep Singh, consisting of 18 items. Responses were categorized as exactly like me (3), somewhat like me(2), and not at all like me(1). Based on the total score, career decision-making was classified as low (<28), average (29–41), and high (>41).

Ethical Approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Committee of the Institute of Medicine (IOM, IRC:166(6-11)E2 and formal permission from the authority obtained from the principal of Shree Shanti Namuna Model Secondary School through an official letter issued by Maharajgunj Nursing Campus. Informed written consent was obtained from parents through students, and written assent was obtained from adolescents. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained by using code numbers and informing respondents that their names would not appear on the questionnaire. Data was thoroughly checked for accuracy and completeness, then edited and coded. It was analyzed using SPSS version 22.

Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) were applied, and the chi-square and Fisher's exact test were used to find out the association between career-making, socio-demographic characteristics, and parenting styles of higher secondary school

students. Pearson's correlation was used to assess the relationship between parenting style and career decision-making among higher secondary school students.

RESULTS

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (n=170)

Variables	Number	Percentage
Age in years		
16	9	5.3
17	66	38.8
18	71	41.8
19	24	14.1
Mean age ±SD	17.7 ±0.8	
Sex		
Male	97	57.1
Female	73	42.9
Ethnicity		
Brahmin/Chhetri	66	38.8
Janajati	48	28.2
Madhesi	29	17.1
Muslim	10	5.9
Dalit	17	10
Religion		
Hinduism	162	95.3
Buddhism	2	1.2
Islam	4	2.4
Christianity	2	1.2
Residence		
Urban municipality	134	78.8
Rural municipality	36	21.2
Types of family		
Nuclear	128	75.3
Joint	42	24.7

Table 1 depicts the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. Most of them (41.8%) were 18 years old. The proportions of males (57.1%) were higher than those of females (42.9%). Most of (38.8%) were from the Brahmin/Chhetri ethnicity. Almost all respondents (95.3%) follow Hinduism as a religion, and most respondents were from urban residences (78.8%) and belonged to a nuclear family (75.3%).

Table 2: Respondents’ Perception of Mother and Father Parenting Styles (n=170)

Parenting Styles	Mother			Father			t-test	p-value
	Mean	SD	CV	Mean	SD	CV		
Permissive	34.12	6.17	17.86	35.05	5.89	16.38	12.97	<0.001
Authoritarian	31.34	5.77	18.41	32.95	6.15	18.66	16.29	<0.001
Authoritative	38.55	5.15	13.35	39.39	5.58	14.16	8.93	<0.001

CV = Coefficient of Variation

Table 2 shows the mean scores of parenting styles practiced by mothers and fathers as perceived by respondents. The results indicate that authoritative parenting was the most dominant style for both parents (mother: 38.55 ± 5.15; father: 39.39 ± 5.58), followed by permissive and authoritarian styles. The coefficient of variation showed greater variability in authoritarian parenting

for both mothers (CV = 18.41) and fathers (CV = 18.66) compared to the other styles. The paired t-test revealed statistically significant differences between parents: fathers were perceived as more permissive than mothers (t = 12.97, p < 0.001), while mothers were significantly more authoritarian (t = 16.29, p < 0.001) and more authoritative (t = 8.93, p < 0.001) than fathers. All differences were

statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 3 : Respondents’ level of career decision (n=170)

Career-Decision level	Number	Percentage
High (Score > 41)	25	14.7
Average (29- 40)	115	67.6
Low (< 28)	30	17.6
Total	170	100

Table 3 depicts that the majority of the respondents (67.6%) have average career-decision levels. The mean career-decision score of the respondents was 34.68±7.07.

Table 4: Relationship between Parenting Style and Career-Decision making of Respondents (n=170)

Parenting Style	Correlation(r) with Career Decision-Making	p-value
Permissive parenting style	-0.097	0.598
Authoritarian parenting style	0.640	0.046
Authoritative parenting style	-0.104	0.175

r = Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient, p-value significant at ≤0.05 level

Table 4 shows the relationship between parenting styles and respondents' career decision level. The findings from the Pearson correlation analysis indicate that authoritarian parenting has a strong positive and significant correlation with respondents' career decision-making (r = 0.640, p = 0.046). In contrast, authoritative parenting shows a weak positive correlation (r = 0.108, p =

0.160), which is not statistically significant. Similarly, permissive parenting exhibits a weak negative correlation with career decision-making (r = -0.041, p = 0.598), which is also not significant. These findings suggest that adolescents who perceive their parents as authoritarian are more likely to make better career decisions. In contrast, permissive and authoritative parenting styles

do not significantly influence career decision-making.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study showed that in the perception of respondents, authoritative parenting style is most dominantly practiced by both mother and father (Mother: Mean score $\pm$ S.D. 38.55 $\pm$ 5.15 and Father: Mean score $\pm$ S.D.39.39 $\pm$ 5.58). These findings are consistent with the study done in Dakshina Karnataka, Udupi districts of India¹ by the use of the Parental Authority Questionnaire and with the study done in Sweden, Italy, Greece¹⁵ by the use of Parenting Style and Dimension Questionnaire, which showed that the authoritative parenting style, according to both boys and girls perception, is most frequently adopted by both fathers and mothers.

The findings of this study revealed that most respondents (67.6%) exhibited an average level of career decision-making, with 14.7% having high levels and 17.6% exhibiting low levels of decision-making. These findings are consistent with the findings from Bhutan, where 78% of students demonstrated average career decision-making skills.¹⁰ However, the proportion of adolescents with high levels of career decision-making in this study is notably higher than the 11.33% reported in Bhutan. This discrepancy could be attributed to variations in the educational system, career counseling access, or cultural factors.

The findings of this study revealed the significant relationship between parenting styles and career decision-making of the respondents. Authoritarian parenting was positively correlated with better career decision-making outcomes, while permissive and authoritarian parenting styles showed no significant impact. The findings align with Sidenreng¹⁶, who reported that authoritative and authoritarian parenting significantly influenced career decision-making, while permissive parenting showed no effect. Another study reported that adolescent who perceived their parents as authoritative reported higher level of career decision making self efficacy and were more likely to engage in career

exploration activities.¹⁸ Similarly, contrast with Good⁹ found a positive correlation between authoritative parenting and career decision-making self-efficacy but negative correlations for permissive and authoritarian parenting.

The findings of the study showed that fathers were perceived to be more permissive than mothers, the difference was statistically significant ($t=12.97$, $p<0.05$). This finding is supported by a study by Aiyappa ($t = 9.34$, $p < 0.01$) found that Indian college students were more likely to perceive their father as permissive. This present finding contradicts the traditional saying of the father as a "strict father" in the Asian context Cenkseven-Önder ($t = 7.21$, $p < 0.01$), wherein fathers are said to exert a high degree of authoritarian control because authority figures do not typically display much closeness and affection towards children.

This present study revealed a positive correlation between authoritarian parenting and career decision-making, while both authoritative and permissive parenting styles showed a negative relationship with career decision-making ability of the respondents. This contrasts with a study conducted in the USA, which found that students who perceived their parents as supportive and encouraging reported higher levels of career decision-making ability.¹⁷ The contrasting results could be attributed to cultural differences in parenting norms and expectations of the respondents.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that authoritative parenting was the most commonly perceived parenting style, followed by permissive and authoritarian styles among the respondents. However, authoritarian parenting showed a positive correlation with career decision-making, suggesting that greater structure and guidance may contribute to improved decision-making during high school when the career decision is made. In contrast, permissive and authoritative parenting styles demonstrated weak or negative correlations with career decision-making outcomes. The majority of respondents exhibited an average level of career decision-making ability. An authoritarian

parenting style can be recommended so that children become more capable of making career decisions. Further studies using the face-to-face interview technique can be conducted for insightful results.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST: None

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