



Paternalistic Involvement in Career Choice Aspiration and its Impact on Self-Esteem

Muhammad Javed Amjad¹, Muhammad Umair Farooq² & Abid Hussain³

¹ Lecturer, Department of Social Work, Government Graduate College Bhakkar, Pakistan

² Assistant professor, Department of Social Work, Government Graduate College Bhakkar, Pakistan

³ Lecturer, Department of Social Work, Government Graduate College Bhakkar, Pakistan

ABSTRACT

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The major purpose of the study was to determine the paternalistic involvement of parents in students' self-esteem and career aspirations. The quantitative research method was used to examine the paternalistic involvement of parents in self-esteem and career choice. The Social Context Questionnaire (Skinner, Regan, & Wellborn, 1986) was adopted as a measure of paternalistic involvement, whereas the Rosenberg (1965) self-esteem scale was adopted as a measure of self-esteem. Using a convenient sampling technique, responses were obtained from 379 students (male and female) studying at the University of Sargodha. It was found that paternalistic involvement and self-esteem were strongly negatively correlated. Moreover, paternalistic involvement and career choice had a strong negative correlation. The study demonstrated that girls face more paternalistic involvement from their parents, which leads to lower self-esteem among them as compared to boys. Moreover, paternalistic involvement creates dependency and weakens decision-making power among female children. Keeping in view the aforesaid findings, parents should adopt alternative ways to accomplish their own desires and understandings without restricting the liberty of adult children, even though it may involve inconvenience, expense, and apparently irrational acts. In addition, parents should respect their ideas so that children can abstain from deviant behaviour.

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Corresponding Author's Email: javedtalokar@gmail.com

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Introduction

The term "paternalism" is derived from Latin-English, which means kinship, and explores

its root meaning: it is a particular behaviour of a superior towards the inferior, which is most commonly a child son or daughter). This precise behaviour of parents varies from culture to culture because kinship relationships are different in every society, and the nature of the paternalistic approach varies with relationships (Encyclopaedia, 1968). Formally, paternalism is defined as “the policy or practice on the part of people in authority of restricting the freedom and responsibilities of those subordinate to or otherwise dependent on them in their supposed interest” (Oxford, 2013). In simple words, restricting, overriding, or interfering with the freedom or autonomy of someone in taking decisions for his or her own good (or for another's good) (Dworkin, 2005) From the term paternalism, the image that comes to mind is a father, who is explained as “pater” in Latin, who has authority to make decisions for his children rather than making their own choices, with the view that “Father knows best about their children” (Andre & Velasquez, 1991).

In Pakistan, the patriarchal family system is dominant; mainly, the father has authority to make decisions, and his decisions have more weight than others about the future prospects of the children. In this way, children’s right to make choices may be threatened (Saleem, Almadi, & Saleem, 2013). It is common practice that parents do not give their children sufficient freedom in their lives to make decisions (Anamika, 2013). Parents pursue their inherited norms and beliefs based on their potential, life experiences, and interests (Kathleen et al., 2001). Focusing on the putative value of choice, paternalism is unacceptable due to regulating coercion and oppressing children (De Marneffe, 2006). Every individual is a unique case in all aspects (or at least partially). However, paternalism threatens the value of own perception for taking initiatives and judgements for own sake (Merry, S.M., 2007). The reason to oppose paternalism is not on the grounds that it fails to provide favourable opportunities in one’s life, but that it infringes on an individual's right to live his life (Wilson, 2013).

Paternalistic practices are most common; however, the question arises: are they acceptable morally? Indeed, paternalism involves conflict between two values: the value of freedom for making own choices in life and the value of promoting and protecting the well-being of other people (Glod, 2008). When someone makes a free choice that seems harmful for themselves, whether we are justified to interfere, the problem of paternalism appears. Most of the researchers agreed that paternalism is justified when dealing with an individual who has a limited understanding of freedom of choice, limited cognition, ignorance of real facts, effects of any chronic disease, or influence of drugs (Arneson, 2005; Marciano, 2014; MIT, 2012). Paternalism is also sometimes justified when dealing with a child who lacks the cognitive and emotional capacity to understand what is best for him or her. Paternalistic involvement is also justified in temporary interferences with the autonomy of a person to determine whether that person is acting voluntarily, has made an appraisal of facts, and is competent or not (Arneson, 2005). The question arises: is paternalism justified in a case where incompetence or irrational thinking is found? Taking an example of a hang glider who refused to wear safety tools because it neglected the feeling of flying like a bird or a bike rider who did not wear a helmet because it interfered with enjoying a cool breeze in the summer (Wilson, 2013), The realization of freely chosen activities depends on the values, background, and temperament of an individual (Glod, 2008).

According to the parent-child context, parents use their authority to provide education to their children. In recent decades, great emphasis has been given to the right to education for every individual in Pakistan (Saleem, Almadi, & Saleem, 2013). The realization of freedom in education is a newly distinguished perspective, along with the right to education. (F. Coomans, 1995). A child has not only the right to be educated but also the right to choose a field or subject according to his or her interest and willingness. Most parents do not guide, help, and educate their children for job, career, and life skills due to their limited knowledge and advanced skills (Williams, 2011). However, it is an admitted fact that parents want to choose an appropriate career for their children so that they may be successful in their lives. Marciano (2014) argued that parents are sometimes extremely demanding, but it is human instinct to learn by error and trial. Generally, parents do not consider children's interests and force their own opinions and choices to follow. This paternalistic involvement leads to risking children's careers instead of benefiting them (Anamika, 2013). In some cases, parental involvement plays a significant role in the education career of a son or daughter, but in most cases, it impairs the normal functioning of a child.

Paternalistic involvement is not compatible with helping an individual build his identity and character (Merry, S.M., 2007). It is undoubtedly correct that a person can develop his personality through autonomous decisions and recognize his identity through his own efforts without any external pressure (Vansteenkiste et al., 2005). The laissez-faire approach believes that a child can be given freedom to do whatever he wants for the sake of development. In contrast, the rational approach believes that an adult who is in a better position to take rational decisions does not require excessive paternalistic involvement (Ashby & Schoon, 2010). Additionally, rational choice theory demonstrates that people become stable and rank the preferences that are not influenced by contextual factors (Payne, Bettman, & Johnson 1993). Thus, the opportunity to make a huge set of choices never makes an individual worse off. It is evident that educational performance is positively correlated with students' own choice of subject selection (Williams et al., 2002). Furthermore, independence to choose creates awareness among children to believe in their own fate, which positively affects their mental state (Botti et al., 2004). Such a type of self-consciousness refers to a self-image that is probably developed in earlier stages of life. Similarly, the development of self-image coincides with the idea of self, which is the assimilation of an individual's desirable standards, characteristics, skills, and behavior. However, self-esteem may be revealed through a person's self-confidence and motivation to experience new challenges (Lawrence, 1996).

Children's own choices increase their health and life satisfaction, whereas the absence of choice makes them hopeless and helpless (Langer 1975; Schulz & Hanusa 1978; Seligman 1975; Taylor & Brown 1988). Freedom of choice is holistic because it provides experience in the process of choice, understating of various options, rejection of non-favoured options, increasing self-esteem, exercise of autonomy, feelings of responsibility, expression of self, and developing constructive personal traits (Chang, 2007). Therefore, understanding the impediments to freedom of choice (i.e., paternalistic involvement) is an important element to comprehend for study and to make recommendations about.

2.0 Literature Review

Historically, Max Weber (1946) coined the idea of paternalism. Thomas M. and Buckmaster L. (2010) illustrated in their research paper that paternalism may be justifiable in cases where high-stakes decisions are involved, the decisions cannot be compensated, and it is possible to find failure in the reasoning of affected people. Furthermore, it is justified that if paternalistic intervention can be justified in terms of the values and preferences of people, then it gives weight to the acceptability of people that interventions do not undermine their autonomy. Little attention has been given to the concept of paternalism and what forms are acceptable or appropriate. In response to such a question, this study suggested some principles such as accountability, discrimination, efficacy, and proportionality that provide a framework for appropriateness or numerous forms of paternalistic interventions. Social learning theory explains the correlates of parenting practices and the aversive behaviour of a child (Bandura, 1963). With this view, the reinforcement process determines whether the unpleasant behaviours will increase, decrease, fade away, or persist over time. Behaviours remain constant when reinforced by circumstances, and behaviours that are not based on personal desire will decrease. This argument is associated with coercion theory.

According to this principle, Patterson's (1982, 1989) coercion theory states that the overreaction of parents to promoting discipline and regulating coercive behaviour may lead to the development of antisocial behaviour in children. Particularly, it is more likely to emerge external problems when the child is forced to respond according to parents' demands. Parents always expect their children to follow their instructions, beliefs, norms, and values in choosing a career (Steinberg, 2001). Several researchers show that children's education and occupation are highly influenced by the education, expectations, and occupation of their parents (Noreen & Khalid, 2012; Kathleen et al., 2001). Nevertheless, social learning theory argues that the experiences and exposures of children directly and indirectly shape their behavior. The social learning model suggests that children learn different strategies to manage their emotions, engage with others, and resolve disputes with others, not because of their own experience but because of the way their reactions were responded to. Parents-child relationships and family environments are the primary sources of such experiences, particularly for adolescents (Williams, 2011).

Piagetian theory demonstrated that a kid makes his career at an early age. In this regard, a child has to face obstacles for career choice because parents do not ask about his area of interest. This is due to a dearth of information and understanding about career in his early years of life, so he has to encounter various interventions by others. Parents play a vital role in developing confidence in children for career choices and emphasise thinking positively for construed decisions. Subsequently, this involvement and support lead to the enforcement of career direction and likenesses for getting admission (Angela & Bardick, 2004). Doyle (1986) explored that mostly students learn institutional norms, whereas low-achieving students often feel difficulty understanding these norms and learning appropriate behavior. The response of these students relies on the teachings of their parents in response to any authority or interpersonal problems. Social

learning theory postulates that children learn by observation and imitating their parents (Bandura & Walters, 1963). Those parents used coercive control, such as shouting, screaming, hitting, and slapping adolescents; such acts are more likely to create deviant behaviour and violate school norms. Fan and Chen (2001) revealed that parental expectation and aspiration have a stronger impact on children's educational achievements, while parental supervision has a subsidiary effect.

Extending this view, Steinberg (2001) stated that parental involvement has no influence on the achievement of adolescent students. Moreover, Baldwin et al. (2007) said that high levels of parental expectations, actions for enhancing learning opportunities, and continuous encouragement at home are positively associated with higher levels of students' college enrolment and aspiration. Merry, S. Michael (2007) conducted a study on the well-being of children and the limits of parents. The author considered the interests of children in education and argued that they have an interest in their own well-being. In this regard, it was attempted to examine parental interest and the limits of paternalism. The article pointed out the tensions that appear due to the conflicting situation between parents and children. A child needs supervision and guidance until he reaches the age when he is able to select various options and is sufficiently aware of the consequences of his selected choices and actions. For this purpose, the author suggested that the state should also play its role in protecting the child and developing the capacity to be autonomous and a means of self-reliance. The author concluded that all the decisions relevant to the child must be taken on the child's behalf.

According to Vansteenkiste et al. (2005), autonomy is genuinely a western concept, and practically, it is not applicable in spheres of eastern culture. This is undoubtedly a base for the current study in context to the autonomy section because culture plays a significant role in the development of personality and career as well. The study showed that when autonomy is given to adults in choosing studies, more positive results can be seen in the form of concentration, active behaviour in study, and time management (Vansteenkiste et al., 2005). Contrary to this view, imposing something or controlling the autonomy of the individual had a negative effect on time management, study behaviour, concentration, and anxiety about lower performance. This study provides evidence that regulating autonomy for an individual leads to success and positive results (Grolnick, 2003). Research conducted by Sartor and Youniss (2002) demonstrated that parental involvement affects the achievement of adolescents by using standardised achievement tests to measure psychometric tests of self-concept, achievement, personal attributes, and parental involvement, which were rated by the selected students. Parental involvement was rated as a form of interest and encouragement, which was a major factor in achievement.

Similarly, Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) listed the involvement of parents in the context of good parenting, which includes providing a secure environment, parent-child discussion, intellectual stimulation to adjust to the environment, good models for constructive educational and social values, a higher level of aspiration related to personal achievement, and good citizenship. Furthermore, the effect of parental involvement in terms of attainment is not directly proportional; rather, it contributes to shaping the self-concept of adolescents (Sartor & Youniss, 2002). The research by Gonzalez-DeHass, William, and Doan-Holbein (2005) illustrated a close relationship

between parental involvement and variables of students such as academic achievements, attendance, sense of wellbeing, homework, attitude, grades, and timing of study at home, educational aspiration, reduced dropouts, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and self-regulation. Similarly, a study by Flouri (2006) also demonstrated the same results: parental involvement, emotional support, and their control affect in a positive manner the achievement of identity and social development. Support from parents also establishes self-esteem and self-concept (Hungs & Marjoribanks, 2005). Rhee et al. (2003) stated that as much as children have the ability to communicate with parents and express their feelings, they will have more positive self-esteem. The study revealed that Caucasian American students asserted to be more expressive in front of parents, whereas Asian students are reluctant to discuss their problems with their parents and tend to be very careful while talking with parents.

3.0 Methodology

Considering the nature of current study, quantitative research method was used to achieve the objective of the study. The quantitative method was used for verification of hypothesis that describes the characteristics of the population, measurable variations and casual relationship among the different variables. The respondents were students (male and female) studying in the University of Sargodha. To measure the paternalistic involvement one portion of an earlier version of Parents as Social Context Questionnaire (Skinner, Regan, & Wellborn, 1986) was adopted and to measure self-esteem, Rosenburg (1965) scale was adopted, however self-constructed scale was used to examine paternalistic involvement in career choice aspiration. Cronbach’s Alpha value was .791. The questionnaires were circulated to 500 students using convenience sampling. From them, 415 questionnaires were received after removal of incomplete questionnaire, 379 questionnaires were adopted for the data analysis.

4.0 Results

Table 01: Research Statistics

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	190	50.1
Female	189	49.9
Total	379	100.0
Family System	Frequency	Percentage
Joint	120	31.7
Nuclear	259	68.3
Total	379	100.0
Decision Maker	Frequency	Percentage
Mother	117	30.9
Father	262	69.1

Total **379** **100.0**

The given information reveals that among the total 379 respondents 50.1% (190) were male whereas, 49.9% (189) respondents were female. 68.3% (259) belonged to nuclear family system while, 31.7% (120) respondents belonged to joint family system. The acquired information explores that among the total 379 respondents 69.1% (258) had father as decision maker at home, while 30.9% (117) had mother as decision maker at home.

Table No: 02 Pearson Product-Moment Correlation between paternalistic involvement, self-esteem and career choice

Constructs	PI	SE	CC
Paternalistic involvement	1	-	-
Self Esteem	-.644**	1	-
Career Choice	-.744**	.446	1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

PI= parental involvement

SE= Self-esteem

CC= Career Choice

 Determining strength and direction of the variables

Cohen (1988)

$r=.10$ to $.29$ or $r=-.10$ to $-.29$ small

$r=.30$ to $.49$ or $r=-.30$ to $-.49$ medium

$r=.50$ to 1.0 or $r=-.50$ to -1.0 large

Hypothesis

H₀: there is strong negative correlation between paternalistic involvement and self-esteem.

H₁: there is strong positive correlation between paternalistic involvement and self-esteem.

H₀: there is strong negative correlation between paternalistic involvement and career choice.

H₂: there is strong positive correlation between paternalistic involvement and career choice.

Using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, Firstly the relationship between paternalistic involvement (as measured by PI) and self-esteem (as measured by SE) was investigated. There

was strong, negative correlation between the two variables [$r=-.64$, $n=379$, $p<0.01$; $b=-.658$, $sig=.06$]. It is found that null hypothesis H_0 is accepted against the H_1 . The relationship between paternalistic involvement (as measured by PI) and Career Choice (as measured by CC) was investigated. There was strong, negative correlation between the two variables [$r=-.74$, $n=379$, $p<0.01$; $b=-.815$, $sig=.00$]. It is found that null hypothesis H_0 is accepted against the H_1 .

Table No: 03 Means, standard deviations, t-values and significance (2 tailed) between Gender on Paternalistic involvement, Self-Esteem, and Career Choice (N = 379)

	Mean	SD	T	Sig. (2 tailed)
<i>Paternalistic involvement</i>				
Male	-2.49	.796	-6.267	.000
Female	.256	.776		
<i>Self-esteem</i>				
Male	.178	1.03	3.711	.000
Female	-1.83	.850		
<i>Career Choice</i>				
Male	.069	.929	1.528	.127
Female	-7.17	.872		

$p<.01$, $p<.05$

The result shows, at first, that male students ($M=-2.49$, $SD=.79$) face less paternalistic involvement than female students ($M=.2566$, $SD=.77$). Moreover, there is a significant difference ($p<.01$), among male and female students on paternalistic involvement scale. Thirdly, male students ($M=.17$, $SD=1.03$) have higher self-esteem than female students ($M=-1.83$, $SD=.85$). There is a significant difference among male and female students on self-esteem scale. Lastly, male students ($M=.06$, $SD=.92$) have better communication with parents than female students ($M=-7.17$, $SD=.87$). Additionally, there is insignificant difference ($p>05$), among males and female students on communication scale.

When we go deeper into the findings of the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis and the implications of accepting the null hypotheses (H_0) against the alternative hypotheses (H_1) for both the relationship between paternalistic involvement and self-esteem and the relationship between paternalistic involvement and career choice. The analysis involved a total of 379 respondents. The correlation coefficient between paternalistic involvement (PI) and self-esteem (SE) was calculated to be $r = -0.64$. The p-value, denoted as $p < 0.01$, indicates that the correlation coefficient is statistically significant. The negative correlation coefficient ($r = -0.64$) signifies a strong negative relationship between paternalistic involvement and self-esteem. This suggests that as paternalistic involvement increases, self-esteem tends to decrease among the respondents. The negative sign indicates that when one variable increases, the other tends to decrease. The p-value ($p < 0.01$) being less than the significance level of 0.01 indicates that this correlation is statistically significant, providing strong evidence against the alternative hypothesis (H_1) and in favor of the null hypothesis (H_0).

Conclusion

The findings recommend that higher levels of paternalistic involvement are connected with lower self-esteem, indicating that when fathers are more involved in decision-making at home, their children incline to have lower self-esteem. In swift, the results of the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis direct significant negative correlations between paternalistic involvement (PI) and both self-esteem (SE) and career choice (CC) among the sample of 379 respondents. These findings reinforce the importance of considering the potential impact of paternalistic involvement on psychological well-being and career decisions among individuals. It is concluded that paternalistic involvement in students' career choice aspirations cannot be neglected. Though, paternalistic involvement varies with respect to gender among students but excessive paternalistic involvement also decreases the students' self-esteem. Particularly, girl students are more vulnerable having lower self-esteem and greater involvement of the parents. It leads to over-dependence and lack of decision making among girls. Parents need to provide space to girl child for making decisions for their life and also encourage children to express their opinions about themselves.

Recommendations

- Parents should adopt alternative way to accomplish their own desire and understanding without restricting the liberty of adult children even though it may involve inconvenience, expense and irrational act apparently.
- Parents should see the things with child's point of view and should respect their ideas so that child can be abstained from deviant behavior.
- A rational sense of understanding must be created in children for promoting rational choice. For this purpose, parents should provide opportunity to make own decisions in the matters of children's life.
- Parents should always be available to listen their children. The teen agers might be mean-spirited or outrageous or both. However, the calm and self-control of parents will reflect in children while communicating with others.

Muhammad Javed Amjad: Problem Identification and Model Devolpement

Muhammad Umair Farooq: Literature search and Methodology

Abid Hussain: Data Analysis and final drafting

Conflict of Interests/Disclosures

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