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Parental influence on adult children's choice of career

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Abstract

The current study examines the parental influence on adult children's choice of career as students. The study explores the different factors and perceptions affecting students' choice of a future profession, focusing on a comparison between how they perceive their parents' career and their own choice of career. This topic holds relevance in a world of uncertainty and occupational change following the technological developments. The study consisted of 120 undergraduate students. Each participant completed a questionnaire on the quality of the relationship with their parents and the association between how they perceive their parents' occupation and their own choice of career. The research findings show that a positive and optimal perception of one's parents' career anticipates positive perceptions evident in the student's own choice of career. Parents' income and education level also anticipate the future careers of their children. The research findings constitute a considerable contribution to understanding the family's influence as a foundation for student decision making regarding one of their most important life choices, the choice of the professional field they will study and occupy.

Keywords: Parental influence, adult children's, choice of career

Introduction

Throughout their life, people in general and the young in particular must reach significant decisions in different areas that affect their quality of life. One of these is the choice of a career or occupation in which they will engage during their professional life. Hence, it is important and interesting to examine the factors that affect this important choice. A notable question is whether this significant decision is affected by society, financial gain, satisfaction and self-enjoyment, physical and mental efforts, or other elements.

This study will examine the parental influence on their adult children's choice of career. Parents naturally play a considerable part in shaping their children's character and behavior, sometimes unconsciously. From an evolutionary perspective, parents' influence is manifested in the time and effort they invest in their children, which enhances the children's chances of dealing with life's challenges (Kalmijn, 2013). Moreover, according to Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, children emulate certain parental behaviors and actions. This requires parents who are in intensive contact with their children to demonstrate a large degree of responsibility (McKnight & McKnight, 2020).

Hence, it is only natural that a positive association will be found between parent involvement and their children's success. For instance, parental intervention at school is associated with good scholastic achievements and desirable outcomes in class (Banerjee et al, 2011). According to the expectancy-value model cited in Maayan's (2020) article, parents' outlook concerning their children contributes to the home climate, role modeling, and behavior patterns that affect the children's future behavior.

Career choice is, as stated, a major and extremely issue occupying young adults, as it shapes and can even determine one's life course. Hence, this choice is frequently given a prominent place, while considering personal interests and needs (Güner et al., 2019). Notably, optimal choice of a career should also derive from one's passion for a professional field, in addition to other considerations (Batmetan & Palilingan, 2018).

Considering parents' influence on their children, many of them also influence their adult children's choice of a future career, in a process that is only natural and not always conscious. Saleem et al. (2014) found that the parent's gender affects the adult child's choice of career. In our materialistic world, according to Heineck and Riphahn (2009), one's parents' income also appears to impact one's choice of career. This is true of parents' available resources and fields of occupation as well (Vila et al., 2007). Chen (2021) provides initial evidence that young adults' choice of career is associated with the quality of the relationship

with their parents and that when the parents' job is perceived as stable it facilitates the choice of a similar career.

However, the research literature in general and in Israel in particular does not include sufficient updated knowledge on the factors that affect the young generation's choice of a career. In recent years the world has been undergoing revolutionary changes and uncertainty in the form of developing digitization, technological innovation in many areas, and vicissitudes such as financial crises, a pandemic, and others, which are affecting the formation of new professions and even the young generation's choice of a career. Moreover, many studies also indicate the general loss of parental authority (Omer, 2000, 2008; Benbenishty, 2011) – the question that arises is do parents still have an influence on their adult children's career choices?

Hence, the purpose of this study is to examine the different perceptions and factors that affect students' choice of career or future occupation. The article will explore whether there is an association between how young adults perceive their parents' profession and their own personal choice of career. The question raised in this article is: Does the relationship between young adults and their parents affect the former's choice of career and how? Is young adults' perception of their parents' profession congruent with their choice of career? To provide a response to this issue, the effect of factors such as age, gender, income, level of education, and others shall be examined. The topic is particularly interesting in the context of the many changes within society, beginning from epidemics, through the development of artificial intelligence, to wars such as that being waged in the Ukraine.

Literature review

Parental influence and the effect of gender

One common factor shown in the research literature to affect the career choices of young adults is their parents' gender. Many studies indicate that parents have a greater influence on their same-sex children. Mothers tend to communicate more with their daughters and thus have a greater influence on them, while fathers have a greater influence on their sons (Profeli et al., 2013). Chen (2021) shows that fathers are more concerned for the professional development of their sons than of their daughters. It was also found that male students are more likely to be familiar with skills related to their father's job than to other jobs (Jungen, 2008). In addition, Profeli et al. (2013) showed that mothers are more inclined than fathers to intervene in their daughters' career through good supportive communication. These findings

emerged from the article by Riphahn and Heineck (2009), which indicated that education and career-related encouragement provided by mothers has more of an effect on girls than on boys.

Mothers' jobs can affect the future career choices of their daughters. Women raised in a home where the mother was gainfully employed tend to choose jobs such as supervision, with longer hours and higher pay (McGinn et al., 2019). Beside the mother's professional and employment status, another influential factor found is the mother's level of education, which affects the shaping of their daughters' career choice (WSaleem et al., 2014). The article by Bosco and Bianco (2005) found that the more educated and advanced the father, the less traditional and more advanced the daughters' career choice, however mothers in particular were found to be the most important counselors of their children in the process of preparing and developing career plans (Schroder et al., 2011). Saleem et al. (2014) add that fathers tended to support career choices such as computers and technology, versus mothers who were found to strongly influence their children's choice of a general career course and an academic life, without supporting a specific occupational area.

Parental influence and effect of financial situation

The financial situation at home was found to affect children's career choice. Many parents with financial resources and adequate means can invest in their children's success from a young age by increased exposure to a variety of enrichment and development areas, and further on even support them financially in academia (Bae & Wickrama, 2015). Students from families with a high socioeconomic background who believe that one's financial situation is a major and important factor tend to choose business studies more than do other students (Saleem et al., 2014).

Bianco and Bosco (2005) add that the mother's good income was found to be a factor that supported the family's daughters in seeking a non-traditional occupation, unlike education and children. Finally, it can be seen that students whose parent had a flourishing family business tended to choose to continue the business, where the financial aspect was the main factor influencing this choice (Schroder et al., 2011).

Many parents attribute considerable significance to choosing a stable career with a good income, such as a government job, and directed their children to such career channels (Zhu et al., 2022). Furthermore, Vila et al. (2007) show that parents with a diverse social life, family orientation, and personal development, encourage their children to earn an education and

develop themselves and are less directed at jobs aimed only at accumulating money. In contrast, parents with a high socioeconomic background tended to intervene and even to limit their children's careers, primarily among those financially dependent on them, directing them at more profitable occupational fields (Saleem et al., 2014).

Interestingly, low parent socioeconomic status, particularly of the father, was found to predict sons' choice of a career in medicine. Additionally, medical students with a low economic background tend to choose to specialize in family medicine, more than do students from a high economic background (Twombly, 2017). Moreover, students from a low socioeconomic background who have higher financial aspirations than their parents choose study tracks while assessing cost and effect and reducing the financial risk. Accordingly, these students tend to choose a study course that combines work and reduced tuition, while students from a high economic background chose more costly study tracks and elite schools (Casey, 2022).

Parental influence and the parents' occupation

Studies show that parents' modern occupations, exposure to local jobs, the international job market, and diverse work skills might also affect children's choice of career (Saleem et al., 2014). Schroder et al. (2011) found that children of parents who have a family business, self-employed, tended to engage further on in self-employed jobs more than working as employees. Similarly, Lingappa et al. (2022) show that children of self-employed parents who have an entrepreneurial and advanced approach displayed a greater preference for independent fields of employment than for work as employees, demonstrating the difference in approach and in belief in human abilities.

Casey (2022) showed that students strive to choose a more advanced career than that of their parents, both concerning the level of the school and concerning income levels, with better social and occupational work performance. Moreover, students from homes where the mother worked in a field that required work outside the home found that these students have more egalitarian gender attitudes. They, and mainly female students, were inclined to choose a career that on one hand was related to jobs that require investing time outside the home but with a high income but on the other they wished to have their own home and family, similar to their mothers (McGinn et al., 2019). Saleem et al. (2014) show that fathers' high-ranking administrative jobs had a significant influence on their children and particularly their daughters, and that their adult children were highly likely to make similar career choices as

those of their father in the future. In general, when fathers' job features included autonomy, management, and complex roles, they were associated with clear preferences by male and female adolescents in their future career choice (Schroder et al., 2011).

Parental influence and the quality of the parent-child relationship

In recent years it seems that the quality of the parent-child relationship has been found to affect adult children's career choices. Chen (2021) showed that individuals who found it hard to reach career choice decisions usually originated from families that display an inverted family interaction and relationship – very close or very distant family relationships. Bae and Wickrama (2015) indicated that the lack of parental emotional abilities, uninvolved or disconnected parenting, and lack of parental supervision, can predict poor academic achievements by children, which might affect their career choices. Then again, from the study conducted by Profeli et al. (2013) it appears that when families have good relationships and when children have close relations with their parents, these children might display more loyalty at work. Close parent-child relationships lead to choosing more stable careers than among those who reported distant relationships (Chen, 2021). Adolescents who feel close to their parents tend to be concerned when the parents do not agree with their career choices and these children often choose a career that fits their parents' wishes. However, when adolescents feel emotional disconnection and distancing by their parents, they tend to persist in their professional choices irrespective of their parents' approval (Jungen, 2008).

Parental influence and the parents' attitude to their job

Parents' attitude to their job was found to affect their children's perception of the workplace, which has an effect on decisions that involve choosing one's future profession (Bosco & Bianco, 2005). Parents who are business owners and make bad entrepreneurial decisions accompanied by frustration and tension, might leave a negative impression on their children as students and might even cause them to prefer working as an employee. In contrast to self-employed parents, working as employees is perceived as diverse and sometimes even as providing a higher and more secure income (Lingappa et al., 2022). Accordingly, children who chose not to remain in the family business wished to form something new and different than their parents. Striving for independence and seeking innovative approaches appear to be the main differences between the founding parents and their children (Schroder et al., 2011).

Parents with a negative work experience, for instance a perception of the job as coming at the expense of the home, inflexible work schedules, and jobs with no occupational security, might result in children who display poor academic capabilities, standard career aspirations, lower trust in their occupational future, and difficulty choosing a profession (Profeli et al., 2013).

Social learning and emulation affect the decision-making process involved in choosing a profession. Hence, children are strongly affected by their parents' work experience, feelings, and satisfaction with their job. These impressions affect adult children's professional choice (Schroder et al., 2011). Parents' positive experiences of their profession and occupation lead to high motivation by adult children to choose a prospective field of work (Profeli et al., 2013).

Parental influence – values and work environment

Values that comprise one's worldview are a major factor affecting the choice of a profession (Robertson et al., 2002). There is a very wide and varied array of professions and possible options. Each of the different professions reflects a range of values that attest to one's character and conduct. Busque Carrier et al. (2022) bring the four-factor model of work values, which presents different values manifested in professions: self-realization and fulfilling work tasks; satisfaction with meaningful work relations; work values of reward and compensation; status that promotes personal success and management of others.

Sawitri and Creed (2022) show that when parents and their children concur with regard to career-related values they have congruent aims and similar operations, and adult children are inclined to choose a similar career as their parents and to develop self-confidence in their job. Parents serve as role models for their children regarding work-related worldviews. Hence, parents' diverse values affect the establishment of their adult children's worldviews and work values (Profeli et al., 2013).

Many parents wish their children to have a comfortable work environment. Zhu et al. (2022) show that many parents believe that a long-term job with a stable salary and without excessive demands is ideal for their adult children, particularly in periods of future change such as marriage, having children, and buying a home. Vila et al. (2007) show that children who come from a family background where much significance is ascribed to developing a family are encouraged to turn to the fields of law, computer sciences, medicine, and engineering. Parents consider these fields comfortable and significant. Parents who see the

importance of work for one's occupational stability, a government job, defense services, work in the community and in society, employment in the computer and maintenance fields, wished their children to choose a similar occupation, primarily for reasons of employment stability (Chen, 2021).

The current study investigates the different perceptions and elements that affect students' choice of career or of a future profession.

. The article will explore whether there is an association between students' perception of their parents' profession and their own personal choice of profession. The question that arises in this article is whether students' relationship with their parents affects their future choice of profession and in what way. Is students' perception of their parents' profession congruent with their own choice of profession? To provide a response to this issue we shall relate to factors such as age, gender, income, level of education, and others. This topic is particularly interesting in the context of the many changes that society is undergoing at present.

We focused on parental influence in three areas: the quality of adult children's relationship with their parents and psychological separation from them, considerations taken into account when choosing a job and a career, and the impact of sociodemographic measures.

In light of the research literature, the research hypotheses were as follows:

1. A positive association will be found between the perception of the parents' job and the quality of the son or daughter's prospective occupation. The higher the quality of the parents' job, the higher the respondent's perception of the quality of their own choice of profession, and vice versa – the lower the quality of the parents' job as perceived by the respondent, the lower the respondent's perception of the quality of their own prospective profession.
2. A positive relationship with one's parents will be found to affect the congruence between the quality of the respondent's occupation and his or her perceived quality of the parents' job.
3. Background measures of the respondent and parents and the quality of the respondent's relationship with the parents will predict the congruence between the parents' job and the respondent's job.

Methodology

Sample

The research participants consisted of 120 students at universities and colleges throughout Israel. A correlational research design was utilized, where the sampling method was a convenient sample. The demographic distribution of the research respondents is set out in Table 1. The sample included a female majority, where most of the respondents were living in a city, unmarried, and had no children (75.8%; n=91) and a full matriculation certificate. Furthermore, the age range of the respondents was from 18 to 59 (M=25.59, SD=5.03), with a range of 12-19 years of education (M=13.69, SD=1.87). Regarding the parents' measures, about half the fathers had an academic degree, as did the mothers. Concerning the parents' income, most of the respondents reported that their mother's earning capacity was relatively low to moderate (71.7%), versus the fathers, most of whom had a moderate to high earning capacity (59.3%).

Table 1 Demographic distribution of the research respondents

	N	%
Gender		
Women	101	84.2
Men	19	15.8
Place of residence		
Small town or agricultural town	40	33.3
City	80	66.7
Marital status		
Not married	75	62.5
Married	45	37.5
Matriculation certificate		
Partial	3	2.5
Full	117	97.5
Father's education		
Not academic	53	44.2
Academic	67	55.8

Mother's education

Not academic	50	41.7
Academic	70	58.3

Tools**1. Questionnaire on the quality of children's relationship with their parents and psychological separation from them**

– The relationship between adult children and their parents and the perceptions regarding psychological separation of children from their parents will be measured with the Psychological Separation Inventory (PSI; Hoffman, 1984). The purpose of the questionnaire is to assess perceptions regarding psychological separation from one's parents when leaving for academic studies and to examine the nature of the relationship between students and their parents.

The tool is comprised of 47 closed-end items that relate to four dimensions: functional independence, attitudinal independence, emotional independence, and conflictual independence.

Since the original questionnaire was very lengthy, comprising 47 items, we decided to remove several questions that were not relevant for the current study. In the current study, very good internal reliability was obtained for the measures of relationship with the father ($\alpha = .81$) and with the mother ($\alpha = .74$).

The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient ranged from 0.8 to 0.90 for the three subscales.

2. Questionnaire on considerations taken into account when choosing a job and career

– The considerations and factors involved in choosing a profession will be examined using the questionnaire "Considerations employed in choosing a job and career", published in 2014 by Carmit Vahaba and Yaniv Belhassen (Belhassen & Vahaba, 2014) in Hebrew. The questionnaire was developed based on studies by Öztin (2009) and Roney and Richardson (2007). The purpose of the questionnaire is to detect students' major considerations when choosing a job and a career.

The questionnaire consists of 20 closed-end items that relate to different aspects of work: work terms, challenges, interest and motivation, and others. Sample items: "A job that is enjoyable", "Good chances of promotion", "Mobility". Participants must note to what degree each of the considerations are important for them when choosing a job. The

questionnaire was administered 3 times: to the father, the mother, and the student. Answers were provided on a 4-point scale of significance, from “very slightly” to “very much”, where in the third administration, eliciting the student’s views, the rankings were from “not important for me at all” to “very important for me”. The Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient was 0.84.

3. **Sociodemographic questionnaire** – included general information such as age, country of birth, education level, marital status, and health status. Also included were questions on the parents’ current job.

Procedure

The study was approved by the institutional ethics committee of Ariel University. The participants volunteered to participate in the study and received no compensation for doing so. The questionnaires were administered to the respondents through Google Forms and sent to them on social media (WhatsApp, Facebook). At first, the participants signed an electronic consent form that noted the research aims and gave an assurance that the respondent’s confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained, while allowing them to stop their participation at any time and providing ways of contacting the researchers. Then, the respondents completed the research questionnaires, with no time limitations. Also, the participants completed the questionnaire in their free time, such that the researchers were not present.

Statistical processing

To check the reliability of the questionnaires, the Cronbach’s alpha measure was used. To explore descriptive data related to the research variables, means, standard deviations, minimum and maximum were examined for the variables’ values.

Calculation of the dependent variables was carried out as follows: Since the study examined how parents’ jobs affect their adult children’s professional choices and jobs, the dependent variables calculated expressed the congruence between the respondent’s perception of the parent’s job and of their own future career. For this purpose, a transformation was conducted on the means of the original dependent variables (quality of parent’s job / quality of respondent’s job), by subtracting the mother’s mean from the adult child’s mean (to check the congruence between the mother’s job and the child’s job) and by subtracting the father’s mean from the adult child’s mean (to check the congruence between the father’s job and the child’s

job). The variable calculated ranged from negative to positive, where a negative score meant that the respondent perceives the parent’s job as “better” than his/her own anticipated employment; a score of 0 means full congruence between the parent’s job and the adult child’s job; and a positive score means that the respondent perceives his/her own occupation as “better” than that of the parent.

The research hypotheses were explored by Pearson correlation matrices as well as a series of stepwise linear regression analyses, due to the multiple predictors, with the aim of identifying the main predictors that contribute significantly to the explained variance of the dependent variables.

Findings

Descriptive statistics

For the descriptive data on the research variables see Table 2. It is evident from the table that the mean for the quality of the respondent’s future profession is slightly above the center of the scale, while the quality of the parents’ profession is slightly below the center of the scale, where the distribution of the data is homogeneous. Hence, the research respondents were inclined to evaluate their future profession as moderately positively beneficial and the quality of their parents’ job as moderately negative. In addition, the means for the quality of the relationship with the mother and father were in the center of the scale, where the data distribution was homogeneous. This indicates a moderate quality of the research respondents’ relationship with their parents. Finally, regarding the congruence measures, it appears that the means were close to “0”. This shows a relatively close congruence between the adult child’s profession and the parents’ professions. In addition, the score range shows that, compared to both the mother and the father, most of the respondents tended to believe that their job would be better than that of their parents (as evident from the maximum scores compared to the minimum scores).

Table 2 *Descriptive data: means, standard deviations, minimum and maximum, regarding the research variables (N=120)*

	M	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Original scale
Quality of job: Respondent	3.31	0.39	2.39	4.00	1-4
Quality of job: Mother	2.64	0.62	1.00	4.00	1-4
Quality of job: Father	2.73	0.60	1.00	4.00	1-4

Quality of relationship with the mother	3.03	0.55	1.35	4.47	1-5
Quality of relationship with the father	2.81	0.66	1.00	4.65	1-5
Congruence between the quality of the respondent's job and of the mother's job	0.67	0.65	-0.67	2.50	--
Congruence between the quality of the respondent's job and of the father's job	0.59	0.62	-0.44	3.00	--

Preliminary analysis

Measures of father and mother – discriminatory validity test

Before examining the research hypotheses, a Pearson correlation was conducted between the quality of the mother's job and of the father's job, and the respondent's perception. This confirmed that these are indeed two distinct variables. Though a positive significant association was found ($r=.55$, $p < .001$), its intensity did not show that these variables might be identical ($r < .70$). Accordingly, there was no statistical justification to merge the parents' results and therefore the set of statistical analyses will present the research findings for each of the parents separately.

Examination of the research hypotheses

The research hypotheses posited that: a positive association would be found between the quality of the parents' job as perceived by the respondent and the perceived quality of the respondent's future job (Hypothesis 1); an association would be found between the quality of the respondent's relationship with his/her parents and the congruence between the quality of the individual's job and his or her perceived quality of the parents' job (Hypothesis 2); the background measures of the respondent and parents and the quality of the respondent's relationship with the parents would predict the congruence between the parents' job and the respondent's job (Hypothesis 3).

Hypothesis 1: Association between the quality of the parents' job and the quality of the respondent's

To explore the first hypothesis, a Pearson's correlation matrix was conducted. Table 3 shows that significant positive associations were found between the quality of the parents' job and the quality of the respondent's job – such that the more optimal the father's and mother's jobs as perceived by the respondent, the more optimal the anticipated quality of his/her own future job. Therefore, the first research hypothesis was confirmed.

Table 3 Pearson correlation matrix to examine the association between the quality of the parents' job and the quality of the respondent's future job (N=120)

	Quality of job: Respondent
Quality of job: Mother	.23*
Quality of job: Father	.28*

* $p < .05$

Hypothesis 2: Association between the quality of the respondent's relationship with his/her parents and the congruence between the quality of his/her job and his or her perceived quality of the parents' job

To explore the second hypothesis, a Pearson's correlation matrix was conducted. Table 4 shows that a significant negative association was found between the quality of the respondent's relationship with the father and the congruence between the quality of the father's job and the respondent's job – such that the better the relationship with the father, the greater the congruence (close to “0”) between the quality of the father's job and the quality of the respondent's job. No other significant associations were found. These findings partially support the second research hypothesis.

Table 4 Pearson correlation matrix to examine the association between the quality of the respondent's relationship with the father and mother and the congruence between the quality of the parent's job and the respondent's job (N=120)

	Congruence between the quality of the mother's job and the respondent's job	Congruence between the quality of the father's job and the respondent's job
Quality of the relationship with the mother	-.08	-.18
Quality of the relationship with the father	-.16	-.33***

*** $p < .001$

Hypothesis 3: Background measures of the respondent and parents and the quality of the respondent's relationship with the parents will predict the congruence between the parents' job and the respondent's job.

The third research hypothesis presents a reexamination of the first and second research hypotheses, while adding the background variables as factors that affect the congruence between the quality of the parents' job and the quality of the respondent's job.

Due to the multiple predictors, in order to examine these hypotheses, two stepwise linear regression models were conducted. The first regression model was intended to predict the quality of the congruence between the mother's job (as perceived by the respondent) and the quality of the respondent's future job, and the second model was intended to predicted the quality of the congruence between the father's job (as perceived by the respondent) and the quality of the respondent's future job. The predicting variables entered in the two models were: gender, age, place of residence (small town or city), the respondent's marital status (not married versus married), number of children, years of education, matriculation certificate (partial versus full), parents' academic education, earning capacity of each parent (as perceived by the respondent), and the nature of the relationship with the father and mother (separately). For details of the findings, see Tables 5 and 6.

A look at Table 5 shows that the final model for predicting the congruence between the quality of the mother's job and the quality of the respondent's job included two significant predictors ($F_{(2,115)} = 19.27, p < .001$) and explained some 23.8% of the variance in the congruence. The mother's earning capacity and her education level negatively predicted the congruence, meaning that the lower the mother's earning capacity as perceived by the respondent, the more he or she estimated that their future career would be better than that of the mother. In addition, if the mother did not have an academic education, the respondent estimated that his/her job would be better than that of the mother.

Table 5 *Stepwise linear regression to predict the correspondence between the quality of the mother's job and the quality of the respondent's job*

	B	SE _B	β	t	p
The mother's earning capacity	-0.20	0.06	-.31	-3.60	<.001
The mother's education level (1=academic)	-0.38	0.11	-.30	-3.40	.001

A look at Table 6 shows that the final model for predicting the congruence between the quality of the father's job and the quality of the respondent's job included four significant predictors ($F_{(4,113)} = 16.19, p < .001$) and explained some 34.2% of the variance in the congruence. Similar to the above model, in this case as well the father's earning capacity negatively predicted the congruence. Surprisingly, in this case as well, the mother's education level (and not the father's) predicted the congruence. In addition, it also emerged that the quality of the relationship with the mother (and not the father) negatively predicted the congruence. Finally, in this model the respondent's gender also predicted the congruence, meaning that the lower

the father's earning capacity as perceived by the respondent, the more he or she estimated that their future career would be better than that of the father; if the mother did not have an academic education, the respondent estimated that his/her job would be better than that of the father; and sons were more inclined to estimate that the quality of their employment would be more similar to the quality of the father's job than were daughters, who were inclined to believe that their employment would be better than that of their father.

Table 6 *Stepwise linear regression to predict the congruence between the quality of the father's job and the quality of the respondent's job.*

	B	SE _B	β	t	p
The father's earning capacity	-0.25	0.05	-.42	-5.08	<.001
The mother's education (1=academic)	-0.24	0.10	-.20	-2.40	.018
Quality of relationship with the mother	-.016	0.07	-.17	-2.18	.031
Gender (1=men)	-0.28	0.13	-.17	-2.18	.032

These findings clarify to a certain extent the findings of the second hypothesis and show that the second research hypothesis was not confirmed. This, as the quality of the relationship with the parent did not predict the congruence between the parent's job and the respondent's job (the quality of the relationship with the mother was indeed found to predict the respondent-father congruence, but not as hypothesized).

In light of these findings, an additional series of regressions was conducted using slightly different dependent variables. Since the study related to the respondent's future employment, a decision was made to examine a model that predicts the respondent's desire to earn a high wage throughout his/her career, as well as the respondent's consideration of a good initial pay level when choosing a profession.

The regression model for predicting the respondent's desire to earn a high wage throughout his/her career was found to be insignificant ($F_{(13,104)} = 0.85, p > .05$). In practice, none of the predictors contributed to the explained variance, so a standard regression model was conducted. This indicates that the predicting research variables are not associated with the respondent's desire to earn a high wage.

A similar state of affairs was evident when predicting the respondent's consideration of a good initial pay level when choosing a profession, where this model was insignificant ($F_{(13,104)} = 0.78, p > .05$). In this case as well, none of the predictors contributed to the explained variance, so a standard regression model was conducted. This indicates that the

predicting research variables are not associated with a good initial pay level as a consideration when choosing a profession.

Finally, a decision was made to examine whether an association would be found between the respondent's desire to earn a high wage throughout his/her career and taking into account a good initial pay level as a consideration when choosing a profession, and the congruence between the quality of the parent's profession and the respondent's profession. For this purpose, a Pearson's correlation matrix was conducted. A look at Table 7 shows a positive association with relatively weak power between the respondent's desire to earn a high wage throughout his/her career and the congruence between the quality of the parent's profession and the quality of the respondent's profession – the more the respondent expressed a desire to earn a high wage throughout his/her career, the more he/she was inclined to estimate that the quality of his/her job would be higher than that of his/her father (when controlling for the respondent's gender). No associations were found with the congruence between the mother's job and the respondent's job.

Table 7 *Pearson's correlation matrix for exploring the association between the respondent's desire to earn a high wage throughout his/her career and a good initial pay level as a consideration when choosing a profession, and the congruence between the quality of the parent's profession and the respondent's profession (N=120)*

	Congruence between the mother's job and the respondent's job	Congruence between the father's job and the respondent's job
The respondent's desire to earn a high wage throughout his/her career	.13	.19*
A good initial pay level as a consideration when choosing a profession	.11	.18

* $p < .05$

Conclusion and discussion

The purpose of the study was to examine different student perceptions of their parents' fields of occupation and the association with their own choice of occupation or designated profession.

First, significant positive associations were found between the quality of the parents' job and the quality of the student-respondent's job, such that the first hypothesis whereby there is an association between the quality of the parents' job and the quality of the respondent's future job was confirmed. This perception shapes children's professional choice

– whether to choose a similar career to their parents or not to do so. Accordingly, the research findings show similar data: the more optimal the father and mother’s jobs as perceived by the respondent, the more optimal the anticipated quality of his/her own future job. We found support for this in the study by Profeli et al. (2013), which showed that perceiving the parents’ workplace positively led to a positive influence and optimistic view by the children when choosing their future career. It is evident that when the respondent perceives his/her parents’ job as positive, enjoyable, and optimal, he/she will be inclined to perceive that his/her own future chosen occupation will be optimal and positive. Moreover, the literature review presented by Bosco and Bianco (2005) shows that when parents made bad work decisions and conveyed vocational difficulties, their children were inclined to perceive their parents’ job as unstable and difficult and avoided choosing a similar career.

The second and third hypotheses sought to examine the congruence between the student’s choice of career and the student’s perception of his/her parents’ career. The congruence was examined by the distance from 0 – the point of full congruence between the perception of student’s job and of the parents’ job, namely the student perceives his/her parents’ job as similar to his/own professional choice. The current study did not find full congruence (0) but found a very close congruence (00.4) – sufficient congruence. A positive association, meaning an increase in X, will lead to a rise in the congruence distance, meaning low congruence (high discrepancy) between the respondent’s perceived quality of his/her parents’ job and of his/her own choice of career. The opposite is true as well, a decline in X will lead to a decline in the congruence distance (low discrepancy), meaning high congruence between the respondent’s perceived quality of his/her parents’ work and of his/her own choice of career. A negative association means an increase in X, which will lead to a decline in distance from the 0-point, indicating higher congruence between the respondent’s perception of his own job and the perception of his/her parents’ job, and in contrast – a decline will lead to an increase in the congruence distance and to a higher discrepancy between the respondent’s perception of his/her own occupation and that of his/her parents’ occupation. Hence, the distance from 0 attests to little congruence, showing that the respondents perceive their choice of career as more optimal than that of their parents.

The second research hypothesis was that there is a congruence between the respondent’s relationship with his/her parents regarding the quality of his/her future occupation and the perceived quality of their occupation. First of all, this hypothesis was found to be significantly negatively associated only with the quality of the respondent’s relationship with his/her father. Thus, the better the relationship with the father, the lower the

discrepancy in the congruence between the quality of the respondent's occupation and the quality of the father's occupation, and the greater the congruence (close to 0). Hence, the respondent's choice of career was close to the father's career if the quality of their relationship was optimal. These findings were not found to be significant for the quality of the relationship between the respondent and the mother, therefore the hypothesis was not fully confirmed.

The third research hypothesis aimed to measure different background dimensions of the respondent and parents and the quality of their relationship, as predicting the congruence between the respondent's perception of the parents' occupation and of his/her own occupation, such that this hypothesis reexamines the first and second hypothesis with the addition of background measures that will further explain the congruence between the quality of the parents' job and of the respondent's job. In the final model for predicting the congruence between the perceived quality of the mother's occupation and the perceived quality of the respondent's occupation, two significant negative predictors were found, the mother's earning capacity and her level of education, such that the lower the mother's earning capacity as perceived by the respondent, and the more her education is not academic, the higher the lack of congruence between the perception of the respondent and the perceived quality of the mother's occupation. Hence, the respondent estimated that his/her occupation would be better than that of his/her mother. It seems that students from a lower socioeconomic status would have a more judicious choice of study course and would be inclined to minimize their financial risk, while working towards the goal of reaching a higher socioeconomic status, unlike that of their parents. According to this explanation, the low socioeconomic and education status of the parents leads to students' perception that they will reach a higher status and level of pay.

The final model for predicting the congruence between the quality of the father's occupation and the quality of the respondent's occupation included four significant predictors such as the father's earning capacity, the mother's education level, the quality of the relationship with the mother, and gender, such that in this model the father's earning capacity negatively predicted the congruence. The lower the father's earning capacity as perceived by the respondent, the greater the discrepancy in the congruence between the perceived quality of the respondent's work and the perceived quality of the father's work, or in other words, the respondent estimated that his/her occupation would be better than that of his/her father if the father's earning capacity was perceived as low.

In addition, the study found that the measure of mother's education was a significant predictor of negative congruence between the perception of the adult child's job and of the

father's job. It seems that when the mother did not have an academic education the respondent estimated his/her choice of career as being better than that of the father. Namely, the lower the mother's education, the greater the discrepancy in the congruence between the child's perceived quality of his/her occupation and of his/her father's occupation. A possible explanation is that many students desire a more advanced career than their parents academically, for instance high-ranked schools, high income, better job performance, and social and occupational progress, and therefore students were inclined to think that their choice of career would be better than that made by their parents, or in this case, by their father. Furthermore, gender was found to be a significant predictor and the findings show that men were inclined to estimate the quality of their occupation as more similar to that of the father than were women, who were inclined to believe that their occupation will be better than that of the father. A possible explanation is that the father's work features, which include autonomy and complexity, are associated with clearer preferences by boys and girls when making a career choice.

In addition, as part of measuring the different predictors of the congruence, the variable "quality of the relationship" was entered. This variable was measured in the first hypothesis and found to be partially confirmed, supposedly indicating a significant negative association between the quality of the relationship with the father and the congruence. But surprisingly, when this variable was entered in the regression model in this hypothesis, it was not found to be significant, while "quality of the relationship with the mother" predicted the congruence between the respondent and the father, in contrast to the hypothesis. Accordingly, it may be concluded that the second hypothesis was not confirmed. As a result, the quality of the relationship with the parent did not directly predict the congruence between the parent's occupation and the respondent's occupation. Hence, it may be concluded that the father's earning capacity, the mother's education level, the quality of the relationship with the mother, and gender were found to be significant predictors.

Notably, the statistical analysis conducted in the third hypothesis is an explorative analysis – i.e., the analysis tells us which variables will be entered in the model. Therefore, when the variables were entered in the model, we could not anticipate which of them would be significant, and this is why we did not formulate a direction in the third hypothesis.

We also explored another dependent variable – good initial pay level, examining which of the background variables would predict taking into account a good initial pay level as a consideration when choosing a career. The results of the model for predicting a good initial pay level were not significant. A possible conclusion is that the background variables

are not associated with the respondent's desire for high wages. This finding contradicts several articles cited in the literature review, which attest to a positive or negative association between one's choice of career and income. The parents' high socioeconomic status seems to affect their children's choice of career, such that these children tend to choose more lucrative professions (Vila et al., 2007), where it is also evident that parents with certain professional beliefs provide their children with less encouragement to choose an occupation that is financially lucrative (Saleem et al., 2014). Moreover, a high likelihood of a high prospective income in the family business was found to have a major impact on children's considerations when choosing to continue in the business (Schroder et al., 2011). All these point to an association between initial pay level and choice of career, rather than to there being no association.

Consequently, the association between good initial pay and the congruence between the quality of the parent's job and the respondent's job was examined. A weak positive association was found, such that the more the respondent expressed a desire for a high wage throughout his/her career, the greater the discrepancy between the perceived quality of his/her occupation and the quality of his/her father's occupation – i.e., there was a lower congruence, whereby the quality of the respondent's occupation was perceived as better than that of the father. No associations were found with the congruence between the mother's job and the respondent's job. Despite an extensive search, no studies were found on the quality of the father's job only, so we turned to similar studies showing that students significantly aspire for a more financially advanced occupation than their parents (Casey, 2022). Additionally, Schroder et al. (2011) show that many adult children choose not to continue the family business due to the desire to produce more innovative and advanced ideas and developments than their parents. Namely, children perceived their own future professional choice as more innovative, advanced, and lucrative than that of their parents.

In summary, this study examined students' different perceptions regarding their parents' occupations, and to what degree these influenced the students' personal professional choices. It seems that a positive perception of the parents' job is associated with a more positive perception of the student's own choice of career and occupation. Students who perceive their parents' job as positive, comfortable, and stable, will be affected by this and choose a similar career. In addition, of the various variables the following were found to be significant: the mother's earning capacity and level of education, the father's earning capacity, the quality of the relationship with the mother, and gender, such that the mother's low earning capacity and level of education predicted a more optimal and positive perception by the

respondents when choosing their own career than their perception of their mother's occupation. In contrast, with regard to the father it was found that the father's earning capacity, gender, mother's education level, and the quality of the respondent's relationship with the mother predict a more optimal and positive perception of the respondents when choosing their own career than their perception of their father's occupation. All this leads to the conclusion that most students perceive their future professional choice as better and more positive than their parents' career.

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