



The Role of Culture in Student' Career Aspirations

A Preliminary Study

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Highlights

- Career aspirations have factors and consequences that affect student welfare.
- This study investigates the role of cultural background in students' career aspirations.

Abstract

Background: A person's future job expectations are a type of career aspiration that students should have. A good career plan will lead to the satisfaction of life's requirements. The values are transmitted by parents as well as the cultural context of playing a role in one's career aspirations. *Study aims:* The purpose of this study is to study a systematic review of the influencing factors and the impact of career aspirations on students with collectivism and individualism cultural backgrounds to identify the gaps that occur in the two cultures. *Method:* The PRISMA strategy is used as an approach in a systematic review. Selection of articles using inclusion criteria; (1) research articles in the last 10 years (2013-2023); (2) articles in English; (3) available in full text; and (4) using quantitative and qualitative methods. Article search using SpringerLink, Scopus, ScienceDirect, EBSCHO, JSTOR, Proquest , and Google Scholar databases. The keywords used are Aspirations and Careers, with a combination of Teenagers and Students. *Conclusion:* The basic review found that there were differences in the career aspirations of students with cultural backgrounds. The role of the family in determining student careers is stronger in collectivism culture than individualism. Personal interests are considered as the main thing in career aspirations in adolescents with a cultural background of individualism.

Keywords: Career Aspirations; Culture; Systematic Review

INTRODUCTION

Students as generation successor nation and agent of change need own knowledge and attitude in orientation career to be taken; as job opportunities are becoming more competitive. Students in the emerging adult range start to develop own task for achieving independence and launching a career, i.e. with choosing and preparing a career (Papalia, Olds, & Feldman, 2009). The ideal student will be confronted with the workforce and have to decide whether to pursue further education or the workforce (Papalia & Feldman, 2014). Students must receive orientation before choosing a career they will pursue in the future. This is related to career aspirations, which are personal goals for someone chosen career and employment situation (Schwarzbaum & Thomas, 2008).

Choosing a career path and obtaining the education necessary to realize one's career goals is a crucial task in the career development process as a person moves from adolescence to adulthood (Super & Savickas, in Sawitri & Dewi, 2018). Numerous studies have already demonstrated the significance of aspirations careers for students. For instance, Patton and Creed (2007) found that aspirations careers and hope careers were related to career constructs such as performance in school, career decision-making self-efficacy, confusion careers, and maturity careers. Young people's career aspirations are crucial to their development because they have been linked to psychological health and can have an impact on issues with physical, socioeconomic, and psychological inequality that can last into adulthood (Robertson, 2014; Bubic & Ivanievic, 2016). Low career aspirations may ultimately make it more difficult to make career decisions. No one gets a good job or even loses their job. Low career aspirations may ultimately make it more difficult to make career decisions. Career aspirations are a crucial topic for studies on students who are just entering adulthood because this is the time when people start dreaming and view aspirations as goals for acquiring knowledge and skills to prepare for the future as well as for determining success and achievement in the career in the years to come (Arnett, 2000; Schoon & Polek, 2011).

The fact that there were 8.42 million more unemployed people in August 2022, a rise from the previous month, furthered the students' low career aspirations. Comparing this figure to the previous 8.40 million in February 2022, it was determined that there had been an increase. 10.2% of high school students have not made up their minds about their career aspirations and have no interest in choosing a field to specialize in, according to research by Rowan-Kenyon et al. (2011). In addition, 13.5% of grade 11 students said they were unsure of their career goals. Additionally, a recent study by Dar (2019) found that 58.33% of adolescents had moderate levels of career aspirations, compared to 17.83% of adolescents who had low career aspirations.

The findings of Sawitri et al.'s study (2021) also demonstrate that career aspirations mediate the relationship between positive parenting and career exploration, such that people who have experienced more positive parenting have a tendency to have more ambitious career aspirations and, as a result, engage in career exploration to a greater extent. The Preston and Salim (2019) study, in which career decision self-efficacy is a full mediator between parenting and career exploration, produced similar findings. Goal orientation is an antecedent variable of career aspirations that is moderated by perceived career congruence, according to research on other career aspirations by (Sawitri & Creed, 2015). Self-efficacy in career decision-making is predicted by parental support and mastery goal orientation together (Erlita & Alsa, 2015). Adolescents describe their career choices as a dynamic interaction of their developmental stage and the current environmental conditions as they get older (Howard and Walsh, 2011).

The social cognitive career theory's point of view can be used to study career aspirations, especially when examining career and academic behavior (Lent et al., 1994). This theory may serve as a thorough theoretical framework for understanding the dynamic interactions between various factors, including the individual, the environment, behavior, and career selection process. Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory was modified, extended, and applied to the fields of academic and professional development to create this theory (Lent et al., 2002). According to Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory, behavior is influenced by cognitive processes as well as psychological and physical characteristics of an individual as well as external environmental factors. These three elements interact to move one another. According to socio-cognitive theory, people are proactive and self-regulatory in addition to being reactive to outside influences (Bandura, 1999). Therefore, people change from being "subjects" to "products" and "producers" of their surroundings (Bandura, 2000; Wood & Bandura, 1989). Bandura (1999) holds that although not directly, external circumstances can have an impact on a person's functioning through their sense of self-efficacy.

In addition, Lent et al. (1994) advanced the social cognitive career choice theory model, which demonstrates that individual factors (such as personality and intelligence) and contextual background variables (environmental factors that take place before the active period of career decision-making, such as socioeconomic status, parental influence, and others) will influence the learning experience. Individual interpretations of these experiences then have an impact on how self-efficacy (beliefs about one's capacity to plan and carry out actions successfully) and outcome expectations (beliefs about the results of specific actions) are formed. Additionally, self-efficacy encourages optimistic outcome expectations. Both factors, both separately and jointly, are linked to career interest (liking activities) and career goals (intention to engage in particular activities).

Adolescents with parents who practice good parenting tend to have more ambitious career goals (Preston & Salim, 2019; Sawitri et al., 2021). Numerous significant antecedent variables, including career self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and adolescent-parent career congruence, have been studied in relation to career aspirations (Creed et al., 2013; Sawitri, 2020). Previous studies have demonstrated that perceived parental support strengthens the relationship between learning goal orientation and self-efficacy in making career decisions. According to research done by Garcia et al. (2011) on college students, those who received enough freedom and support from both parents tended to have high self-confidence when it came to choosing a career path, which motivated them to explore careers (Sianipar & Sawitri, 2015). This is due to the fact that parents can provide support to help children achieve their personal best (Alissa & Sari, 2019). According to other studies' findings (Gushue & Whitson, 2006; Pakpahan & Kustanti, 2018; Preston & Salim, 2019), parent-child relationships, such as parenting style and parental social support, are related to career decision-making self-efficacy. According to research findings, parents have a significant impact on their children's career aspirations. Nevertheless, no study has been done that demonstrates the precise impact of culture, particularly parental influence in the context of culture, on students' aspirations. According to Akosah-Twumasi (2018), cultural values have an effect on the variables influencing young people's career decisions. Parents' values and the cultural setting have an impact on how their children view and pursue their careers.

Hofstede (2011) identified a number of cultural dimensions that have an impact on people's behavior in society. Individualism and collectivism are two of the dimensions mentioned in this study. These two cultures have different social structures. An individual is viewed as a "interdependent entity" in collectivist cultures as opposed to a "independent entity" in individualism cultures. Individualism cultures base decisions on the wishes and desires of the

individual, whereas collectivism cultures base decisions on the "group" (such as family, significant others, and associates), with the ultimate goal being to maximize group advantage. To determine the influencing factors and the effects of career, this study will conduct a systematic review. The purpose of this study is to conduct a systematic review to discover the influencing factors and the impact of career aspirations on students from collectivism and individualism cultural backgrounds in order to determine the differences between the two cultures.

METHOD

A systematic literature review (SLR) approach is used in this research method. According to Siddaway et al. (2019), a systematic literature review is one that is conducted meticulously and methodically in order to find, pick, and evaluate pertinent research as well as gather and analyze the data that has been gathered. According to Galvan and Galvan (2017), the systematic literature review method is still relevant enough to present the most recent findings on particular ideas and subjects. A systematic review uses the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis) strategy as its methodology. Articles were chosen based on the following inclusion criteria: (1) research articles from the past ten years (2013–2023); (2) English-language articles; (3) full-text articles; and (4) articles utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods. Google Scholar, SpringerLink, Scopus, ScienceDirect, EBSCO, JSTOR, Proquest, and other databases are used for article searches. The reason for using this database is that it is a search engine that has a lot of loaded articles and can be recommended. The keywords "aspirations" and "careers" as well as "collectivism" and "individualism" are used. Without the use of any additional key phrase combinations, researchers only use these keywords as search terms. The investigation's findings showed that there are a lot of references that could be used as research materials. Because they couldn't find any relevant literature in Indonesian for their intended study, researchers turned to English-language works instead.

Researchers have collected qualitative descriptive data and then synthesized it using a technique called meta-synthesis, which integrates data to produce new theories and concepts at a deeper, more thorough level (Perry & Hammond, 2002). A synthesis of meta-aggregation is the method used, and it aims to address research questions by compiling the findings of numerous earlier studies. To create an analytical framework, certain themes are developed from research topics. The obtained articles are then compared and summarized against one another, resulting in a synthesis of various research findings according to the pertinent themes.

RESULT

Numerous pieces of literature were produced by the process of looking for articles, but only seven of those works served as the basis for this study. The search term "aspirations" and "careers" and "collectivism" and "individualism" turned up 689 articles. In addition, the articles were screened for duplicate content, duplicate titles, duplicate abstracts, and duplicate keywords. As a result, 54 articles were processed, 143 articles could not be accessed completely, and 492 articles were not reprocessed because they did not fit the context of career and cultural aspirations. Seven of the 54 articles that were re-screened with attention to the entire text and yielded the final result were consistent with the study's objectives, while the remaining 47 articles were not processed again because they did not provide individualism and collectivism cultural dimensions consistent with the study's specifics.

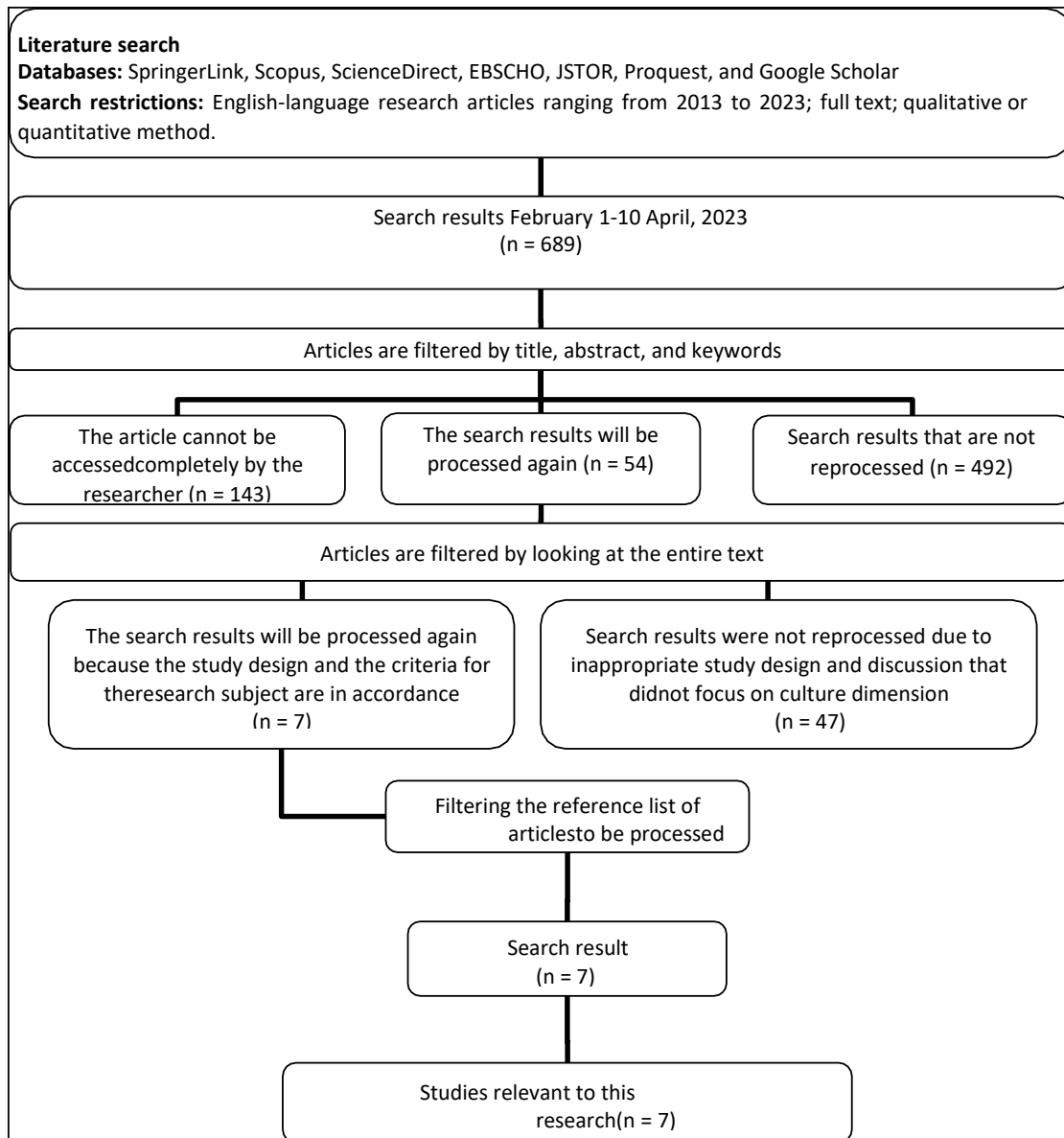


Figure 1. Stages of Search for Research Articles

Seven articles were identified as suitable for further study after a review of articles that met the research criteria. Table 1 summarizes the main points of the seven articles reviewed. Table 1.

Table 1.
Summary of Article Reviews

No.	Author's name	Culture Identified Values	Research Method	Results
1	Cheung et al., 2013	Collectivism (China); Individualistic (US)	Quantitative	The influence of teachers, parents, and peers is significant in choosing a career for students in China
2	Cheung & Arnold, 2014	Collectivism (China)	Quantitative	Strong influence from significant others. There is the strongest dependence on the teacher
3	Choi & Kim, 2013	Collectivism (South Korea); Individualistic (US)	Quantitative	South Korean students' career aspirations influenced job prospects; US students are influenced by self-interest.
4	Fan et al., 2012	Collectivism (Hong Kong); Individualistic (US)	Quantitative	Hong Kong students are more accommodating to people's views on careers; US students' career aspirations are influenced by personality traits
5	Fan et al., 2014	Collectivism (Hong Kong); Individualistic (US)	Quantitative	Family orientation has a stronger influence on students in Hong Kong than in the US; US students are more independent in their career views, and family opinions are perceived as disturbing.
6	Guan et al., 2015	Collectivism (China); Individualistic (US)	Quantitative	Chinese students consult for career aspirations, desire to please others, willingness to compromise; US students score high on career aspirations with an internal locus of control.
7	Hui & Lent, 2018	Bicultural in Asian Americans	Quantitative	Career interest is influenced by family support. Adherence was stronger for Asian-born than US-born students

The findings obtained from the various articles mentioned in Table 1 differ. Significant others' influence on students, particularly parents, differs between Collectivism and Individualism cultures. In a collectivist culture, students are more attached to their families, whereas in an individualist culture, students are more attached to themselves.

DISCUSSION

The results of the literature review show that student career aspirations vary depending on cultural background. In cultures that value collectivism over individualism, the family plays a bigger part in determining students' career paths. Students in collectivism cultures exhibit how their environment affects their career goals, and there is a propensity to comply. Due to the presumption that teachers have a higher level of education than parents, they have the most significant influence (Cheung et al., 2013). Even Chinese students feel the need to seek advice when determining their career goals (Guan et al., 2015).

Students from individualistic cultural backgrounds tend to be more independent in their career decision-making and prioritize their personal interests as the most important factor in their career aspirations. In collective societies, parents are expected to support their children's endeavors and give them the tools they need to be economically responsible and productive. In a

culture that values individuality, parents encourage their kids to follow their interests and pursue careers that suit them. In fact, it was discovered that students in individualism cultures had very strong senses of independence, as evidenced by the emergence of perceptions from students about how their families' opinions interfered with their career aspirations (Fan et al., 2014). According to Guan et al. (2015), US students have a high internal locus of control over their career decisions.

Young people in collectivist societies are more influenced by their relationships within the family when it comes to their career aspirations because they make an effort to live up to their parents' expectations by following a predetermined career path (Gunkel et al., 2013). This is consistent with research by Sawitri et al. (2014) showing that young people value parental support for their career goals and that alignment in career orientation even leads to high self-efficacy in choosing a career. According to Kim et al. (2016), adolescents raised in a collectivism culture have a tendency to put family goals ahead of their own interests. According to Akosah-Twumasi et al. (2018), young people raised in individualistic cultures have strong intrinsic motivation to choose a career, but interpersonal factors like parental guidance are low on their list of priorities, so they prefer to choose their own careers.

CONCLUSION

According to the study's findings, students from different cultural backgrounds had different career aspirations. The values that parents instill in their children and the culture of their families have an impact on students' perspectives on their career aspirations. It has been discovered that culture affects students' career aspirations. The dependence of students on the judgments of teachers and parents is evident in a collectivism culture that is more relation-oriented. In contrast, independence is valued highly in an individualistic culture, leading to students who are more focused on their own ideas and interests than on academic goals.

One can delve further into all of Hofstede's suggested cultural dimensions for ideas for additional research on the influence of culture on student career aspirations. such as additional cultural dimensions like indulgence, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and the roles of men and women. There is a need to develop studies using qualitative methods because this literature review did in fact find more research using quantitative methods.

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