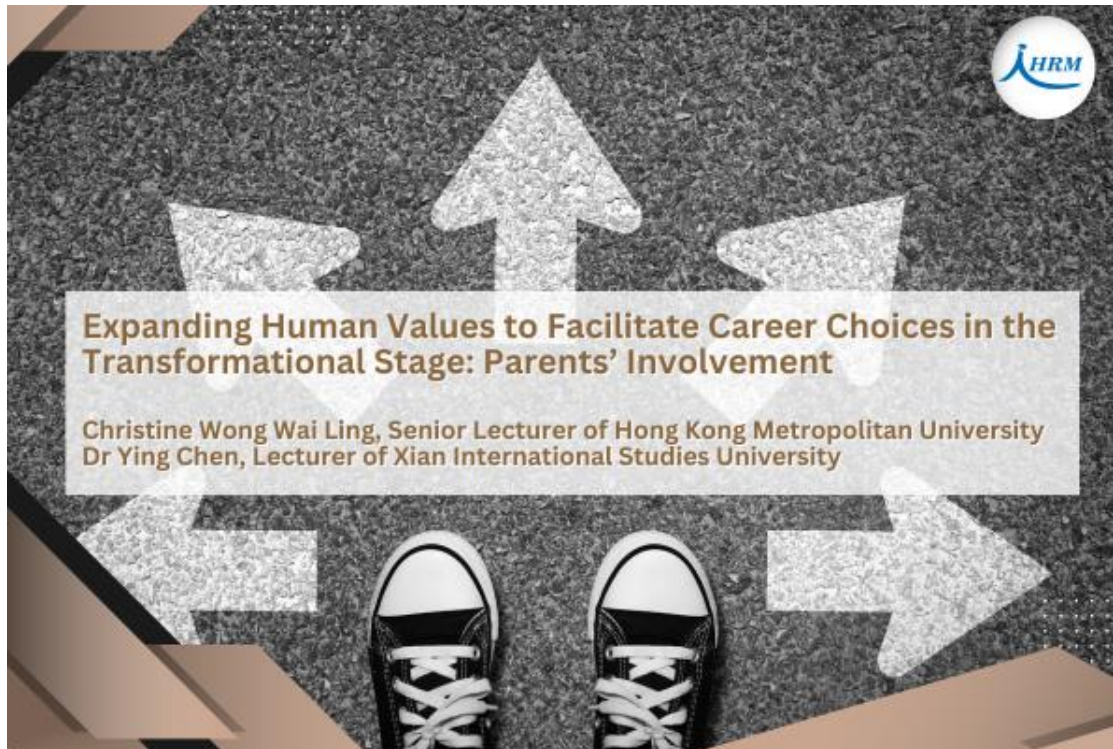




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What are the motivations affecting adolescents' choice of career?

The 'choice of a career' is of a broad sense and that includes almost the whole trajectory of the career pathway, from starting of personal interests to the choice of subjects in schools, to choosing majors in higher education, job seeking and career planning. The factors driving choices of jobs are multifaceted. Employee welfare, employers' brand, corporate culture, social status, work-life balance usually rank the top of the list in many employee turnover surveys. These preferences reflect and are people's basic human values. In the career pathway, how important are parents' influences on their children's values and decision-making?

Previous studies found that parents have significant direct and indirect positive influences on their children (Simunovic et al., 2018; Rozek et al., 2017; Desjardins & Leadbeater, 2017). Such influences have significant impacts on their children's academic performance (Dewar, 2019), personality traits (Wang et al., 2019), attitude to schools (Heaven & Newbury, 2004) as well as occupational domains (Ratelle et al., 2005; Coleman et al., 1966).

Expanding Human Values to Facilitate Career Choices in the Transformational Stage: Parents' Involvement

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Parents' Influence on Adolescents' Career Domains

Indirect influence of parents means the interventions from parents, their special efforts in encouraging children to engage in activities such as providing plenty of musicals at home, having science discussions, visits to galleries and art exhibitions, encouragement on finding a job and so on. These interventions can orientate children and adolescents, intentionally or unintentionally, arousing children's interests and curiosity for further exploration in the fields.

These parents' interventions and mediation efforts have an essential role to play in affecting children's occupational aspirations, consideration of educational and professional possibilities. The home environment laid the foundation of a child's personality. Research found that parents' influence was the most prominent in affecting their children's career choice (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017; Nguyen et al., 2023).

Parents' influence can be passed onto their children via direct influence such as values transmitted through parents' genes and actual parenting so that their children make the choices that they do.

Most Olympic medal winners found their interests and started training in their early age. The recent Hong Kong DSE Examination results show examples of significant childhood

accomplishments. One student received straight-in offer from the HKUST because of his extraordinary performance in programming financial trading games. Another student at his present age of 9 took the exams of two advanced math subjects and received top scores in both. These individual achievements started at early age, very likely under the influence of their parents.

Human Value Models and Career Domains

Some classical models such as the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) (Lent et al, 1994) and Schwartz's value model (1992, 2012) shed lights on personal career development.

The SCCT consists of three interrelated components of career development: i. development of basic academic and career interests; ii. choices of education and career; and iii. academic and career attainment. Garcia-Perez et al. (2019) found that the stronger the perceived family support, the greater the adolescents' beliefs about their own ability to succeed in the related subject, the more of the students' desire to persevere in their studies and professional performance.

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A longitudinal 35-year research by US National Academy (Rozek et al., 2017) confirmed that parents could cultivate their children's interests in the STEM subjects and communicate their importance with their children. Qualitative research of Craig et al. (2018) examined the influence of parents on students' entering STEM career. Such influence started in the very early stage of parenting in students' childhood through experience, stories and self-identity.

Schwartz's theory (1992, 2012) defines some broad values based on the underlying human intentions and motives. These broad values include: Self-Direction, Stimulation, Hedonism, Achievement, Power value; Security value, Conformity value, Tradition values, Benevolence and Universalism (Schwartz & Cieciuch, 2016). Schwartz found that humans had different values conflicting as well as balancing to arrive at a behaviour and decision that was the most desirable to oneself.

Organisational adaptability

By genetic algorithms, Schneider, et al. (2024) analysed the correlations between work values and basic human values. The study with 853 German samples reflected strong correlations of 11 work values to most of the social and individual work motives, environmental sustainability awareness, neuroticism and basic human values. Thus, human values imply further links and effects on people's organisational behaviours.

Implications and Suggestions

Career Decision-making and Work Behaviour

Regardless of whether young adults' career decisions are the results of their parents' values or interventions during schooling, parents have a significant role to play in adolescents' career decision-making and future work behaviour.

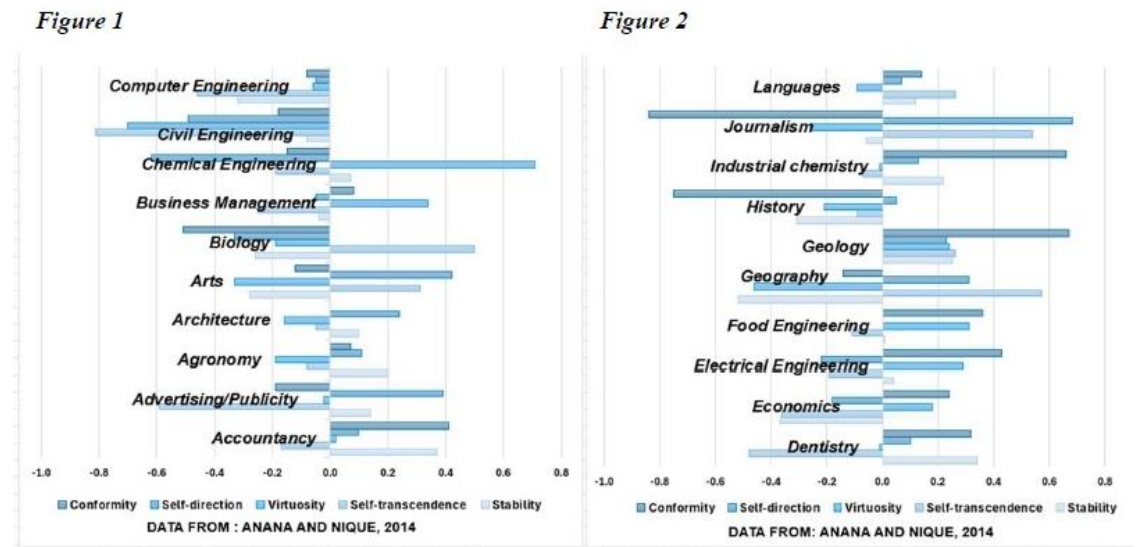
Career Exploration and Inspirations

Education institutes and governments are more and more aware of the importance of work experiences, internship and career activities. There is increasing collaboration between education and industries in the provision of working experiences to the youths. Final career choice and long-lasting motivation for taking a step further can be driven by environmental support especially from families and parents.

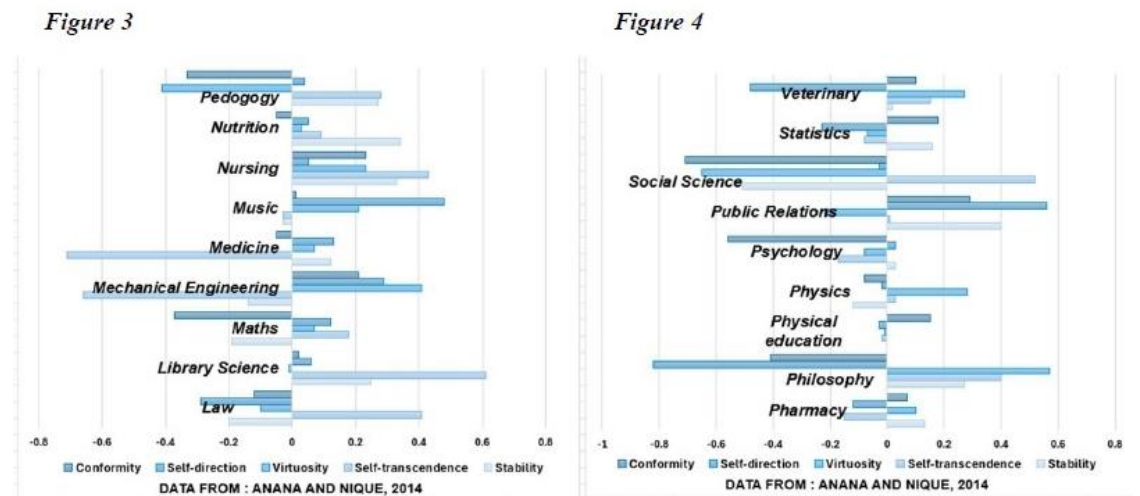
It was found that people spent about 12 hours daily on social media in 2017 (Potter, 2019). Media and AI influences on individuals are stronger than ever. Social media penetrates culture. Under the strong influence of media and metaverse, many young people enjoy living in the virtual world. Parents and family influences are reducing. Parents need to build relationship and trust with children in their early years of age allowing assistance in expanding children's positive human values so that young adults can have an easy transition into adulthood.

Parents can effectively guide their children by encouraging them to explore a variety of interests and activities in early stages of nurturing. Parents significantly influence their children's career perspectives through their own professional dedication and enthusiasm. Parents with stable income and professional training are more inclined to provide information on various careers, including occupational roles, market trends, and educational pathways, arousing children's sense-making exploration about career and interests. These families are more resourceful and can provide career information and guidance. For mitigating the disparity in socioeconomic status of different families, governments can facilitate better career services in the community for families in need.

Figure 1-4 Personal Values and Career Choices



Values of each Broad Category:
Conformity: obedient, polite, salvation, self-control; **Self-direction:** broad-minded, imaginative, excitement, freedom, world of beauty; **Virtuosity:** logical, intellectual, capable, ambitious, courageous, independent; **Self-transcendence:** equality, honest, helpful, wisdom, true friendship, responsible; **Stability:** pleasure, happiness, security, inner harmony, self-respect, social recognition, comfortable life.



Before parents guide their children, more career resources can narrow the occupational information gap and make support available for parents to expand children and adolescents' fundamental human values. Research has suggested that certain careers reflect certain values than others. With clear personal values deeply rooted, adolescents can naturally map themselves into and consider relevant curriculum and job characteristics (Figure 1-4), saving adolescents from anxiety, unnecessary struggle in career choices and future job changes.

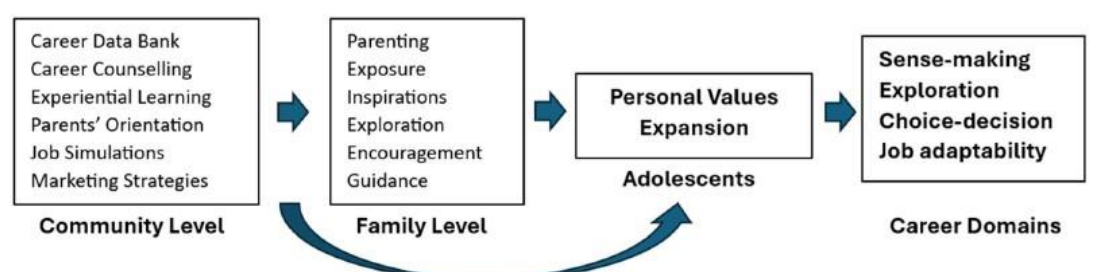
Development of Creativity and Independence

In the era of artificial intelligence, family education is adapting to new methodologies that emphasise the comprehensive development of children's abilities. The focus is on cultivating creativity, independence and emotional intelligence - the key human traits that differentiate us from machines. With the ever-evolving technology and job market, fostering a lifelong learning habit is crucial for children to remain adaptable and future-proof. Equipping children with the ability to collaborate effectively with AI is essential, as it prepares them to generate innovative solutions alongside intelligent systems. AI presents opportunities for personalized education, allowing family education to be tailored to the specific learning needs of each unique child.

Nurturing independence is the key, allowing children to make decisions that foster self-confidence and a sense of responsibility, crucial as they face differences in employment views between different generations. Supporting children's educational choices is essential for aligning their interests, learning and future career. Collaborating on career planning helps set clear goals and develop strategies for achieving them, while also preparing youths for the dynamic nature of career building and organisational adaptability.

Ultimately, parenting with respect and support on children's choices, even when their children diverge from parental expectations, is vital. This not only alleviates pressure on the young adults, but supports their pursuit of career aspirations. As indicated by survey data that 94.4% of recent graduates feel relieved when their job choices are supported by their parents. These strategies, when thoughtfully implemented, provide a comprehensive approach to guiding children towards a fulfilling career path. In Figure 5, Anana and Nique (2014) identified the association of the career choices with the value dimensions of conformity, self-direction, virtuosity, self-transcendence and stability.

Figure 5 Adolescents' Career Mapping



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Career Services for Parents

Career data bank for parents to delve into career information and resources can enable parents to first master the knowledge and be informative before guiding their children. Career talks and services for parents update them on the vocational needs, skills demand and the market trends. Personality assessments and career counselling for both youths and parents can be made easily available. Government may invest more on technology for youngsters' career development.

Job Simulations and Events

More career services centres with AI-powered job simulations will enable children and young adults some taste of different job types before they make course and career choice. Instead of targeting at the adolescents, higher education can involve parents as consumers in future marketing strategies, course promotion and curriculum planning. If STEM subjects are our future, more science museums and STEM experiential events in the community can cultivate curiosity and interests.

Conclusion

In summary, the formative influence of parents on a child's career trajectory is profound and should begin at an early stage of child development. With clear and mature personal values, provision of the essential career information and resources, career planning guidance from parents can prepare adolescents to manage environmental and technological changes. However, we should not stereotype children and youths with job types too early, imposing forced career. When the whole world is entering higher level of automation in all industries and everyday life, special efforts in expanding adolescents' personal values will enable the development of more right fits for future societal and economic needs.



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