

Research Article

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Teacher Professional Satisfaction and Career Choices of Their Children: A Dyadic Narrative Study

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Abstract

Professional satisfaction among the teachers in teaching learning activities and the career choices of their offspring is an issue of this study. Teaching is a kind of service and a very important job that shapes the next generation; it is not only a way to earn money. Teaching changes not the work people do at their jobs but also how children think about and choose their own careers. Studies that look at how a parent's job affects a child's career choice are scarce. This study used a narrative approach to examine how teachers with twenty and above years of experience and their children influence each other's career. Twenty teachers-child pairs were selected as the participants in this study. The pairs were chosen by sampling and data were collected through interviews treating each teacher-child pair as one dyadic case. The results showed no straight-line link between a teacher's job satisfaction and the child's career choice. Teachers said they feel happy when students succeed, when they help society when they have an identity and when they receive social respect. They also mentioned problems such as heavy administrative work, extra duties; money limits barriers to moving up and trouble balancing work and life. Children watched not the good social impact and commitment in teaching but also the heavy workload, stress, lack of time money issues and limits to progress. Still seeing parents act well in their jobs made children respect and like teaching more. The participant children of the teachers found that they select those professions according to 'what they enjoy, how confident they feel, how freedom they can have, and what the modern economy offers'. From the view of Social Cognitive Career Theory, a teacher's job satisfaction acts as a kind of learning for the kids. The study treated teacher satisfaction as a career lesson for children. It

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pointed out that having kinds of work not just the same job in every generation explains why children choose their paths. The research looked at teacher job satisfaction not as personal well-being but also as something that can keep the teaching field attractive, sustainable and relevant, to the next generations.

Introduction

Teaching profession holds social importance and directly involved with social values, recognition, skills, knowledge and the shaping of future generations. A teacher's role is not limited to the classroom; instead it is a duty that involves helping students grow intellectually socially and personally. For teachers who have worked in the teaching profession for years the success of students a sense of social contribution the prestige earned from the community and the professional identity all become important in giving work meaning and professional satisfaction (Toropova et al., 2021). In this sense the professional satisfaction of teachers is not decided by salary or material conditions but is a complex experience that involves the meaning of work the work environment, the professional identity, social relationships, respect and chances, for professional growth (Skaalvik & Skaalvik 2011).

According to Admiraal and Røberg (2023) factors like workload extra responsibilities, time pressure, not enough resources, low pay few chances for career growth and poor work-life balance lead to professional dissatisfaction among teachers. The job demands that teachers face and the resources available to them seem to affect how satisfied they are in their profession. The same study notes that research on teachers at points in their careers shows that job demands and job resources are closely tied to teachers' satisfaction, with their school their choice to stay in teaching and how they view the teaching profession.

Similarly, Sun et al. (2022) Showed that professional identity, psychological empowerment and work engagement are all tied to how teachers feel about their careers. This means that a teacher's professional satisfaction is not a personal feeling but the result of both a

teacher's own experiences and the school environment. The effect of a teacher's professional life goes beyond the teacher alone. Teacher-parents bring their work experiences, achievements, stress, exhaustion, social respect, economic conditions, professional goals and thoughts about the future into the home either directly or indirectly. Children can see a teacher's job not from what a teacher says but also from a teacher's everyday actions, attitudes toward work how a teacher uses time a teacher's wins and challenges and the emotions a teacher feels about a career. In this way a teacher's professional life can become a classroom, inside the family, where children learn about work and careers.

The research about how people grow in their careers sees the family as a part of the environment that shapes a person's career path. Whiston and Keller (2004) found that what parents do for work how support the family gives, how close the family is, how much independence is allowed and how the family functions can all have an effect on a person's career. Young and Friesen (1992) said that parents influence goes beyond giving advice; the way parents act what they expect from their kids how they talk and the everyday things they do can also shape a child's career. Also, Liu and others (2015) found that what parents do talks about careers making choices on their own developing interests, in careers and setting an example through their behavior are all important parts of career development.

Teachers and parents are considered role models for children in their jobs. When children watch how parents act at work how they feel about their jobs and what experiences they have with their careers they start to think about jobs and begin to think about what they want to do in the future. If parents are seen as committed to their work as

people who make a good difference, in students' lives and as people who are respected by others children might start to think that teaching is a good and respected job (Dietrich & Kracke 2009; Whiston & Keller 2004).

However, during this process of learning by watching children might also see their parents spending a lot of time looking at papers being busy with tasks that are not teaching related feeling stressed or tired and facing difficulties when it comes to growing in their jobs. The amount of work teachers has, the place where they work how they feel emotionally and how respected they are seeming to connect with how happy they're in their jobs and whether they stay in the teaching field (Skaalvik & Skaalvik 2011; Toropova et al., 2021). So, when parents show their jobs to children it is not one way. It can show both parts and hard parts of a job. This can change how children think about the job what they expect from it and whether they want to become teachers themselves (Dietrich & Kracke 2009; Whiston & Keller 2004).

Social Cognitive Career Theory or SCCT explains the relationship explicitly. According to Lent et al. (1994), career interest and career choice are shaped by a person's self-efficacy, outcome expectations, personal goals and the context that surrounds them. Therefore, a teacher parent's professional life can become an observational learning experience for children but this experience is not a direct cause of career choice such as, children may see teaching as a profession after watching a teacher parent's dedication to students and to society; however, because of their own interests, abilities, future financial expectations, lifestyle preferences or other job opportunities children may choose a different profession. Conversely after seeing a teacher parent struggle at work a child may still decide to become a teacher because of strong personal interest and confidence, in self-efficacy.

Viewed in this way there may be a relationship between teachers' experience and their children's career choice but it is not a simple or linear one.

Teachers' professional experiences and career-related behaviors can influence their children's career development. Children interpret that influence in relation to their own interests, abilities, aspirations and social context (Dietrich & Kracke 2009). Therefore, a simple conclusion such, as "if teachers satisfied their children become teachers" or "if teachers are dissatisfied their children do not become teachers" is not sufficient. Career choice is shaped through the interaction of interests expected outcomes and social and situational factors (Lent et al., 1994). On this basis the present study focuses on analyzing, within the teacher-child dyad how teachers experience their lives and how their children perceive remember and connect those experiences to their own career decisions.

The main feature of this study is the dual perspective. The study puts in one unit the meaning teachers give to their profession and the career perception that their children build from the same professional life. Of treating professional satisfaction and career choice as separate variables this dual perspective offers a chance to see how they are linked, shaped by family, experience, dialogue, role modelling and personal agency.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to explore the satisfaction of teachers who have 20 or more years of teaching experience. It also aims to understand how the professional experiences of these teachers influence their children's career perceptions and career choices. This exploration is done through a narrative perspective focusing on the relationship between teacher parents and their children.

1. To explore the term professional experiences of teachers including their satisfaction and dissatisfaction and how these experiences shape their professional identity.
2. To understand the challenges teachers face in terms of workload social respect, economic

conditions, opportunities for advancement and work–life balance.

3. To examine how the professional experiences of teacher parents their career advice and their role modeling affect their children’s views on careers.

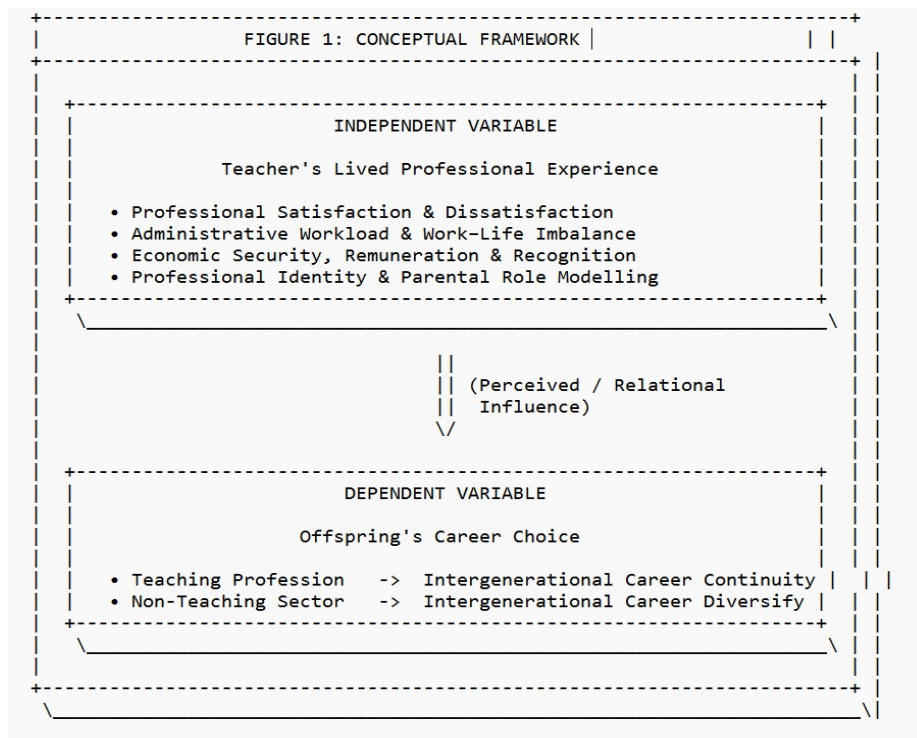
4. To identify what factors influence children’s career choices, such as interest, self-efficacy, autonomy, family influence and the availability of professional opportunities.

5. To provide policy and practical recommendations that can help make the teaching

profession more attractive and sustainable, for generations.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study shows how the teacher’s experience, family interaction the children's understanding of careers and the final career choice are all connected. It highlights how each element influences the others over time.



The framework shows that the key idea, behind this model is that the process is not linear or deterministic. A teacher's professional experience can shape a child's career perception. The final career choice is made through the interaction of personal agency and contextual opportunity.

Research Methodology

This study uses a narrative research approach. Data were gathered through -structured narrative interviews, with experienced educators who have been teaching for many years in many regions of Nepal. Teachers were asked to share their life

stories about how they entered the profession their long-term experience, what made them happy or unhappy their achievements, the challenges they faced their workload the respect they received from society their situation, their professional identity and their family life. Likewise, children were asked about their parents’ jobs what they saw of their parents’ work how they view the teaching profession what careers they hope for and what jobs they might choose themselves. The interviews with teachers and children were held separately so that each could speak freely without being affected by the other’s answers. The collected stories were examined using within-case

and, cross-case analysis, following the approach of narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2006). Confidentiality and anonymity were followed and used codes RT1 to RT10 for teachers and RTC1 to RTC10 for Children.

Results

Within-case and cross-case analysis of the narratives of 10 teacher–child dyads showed a familial and intergenerational relationship between teachers’ professional satisfaction and their children’s career choices. Although the teacher’s professional life became an occupational experience, for the children career choice was ultimately found to be interrelated with personal interest self-efficacy, career aspiration expected outcomes and available opportunities.

I. Meaning, pride and professional satisfaction derived from the teaching profession:

In the narratives of RT1–RT10 teaching was understood not as employment but as meaningful work, social contribution and professional identity. RT1 said: "When students return after succeeding, I feel that I have done something in my life". Similarly, RT6 said: "Being a teacher is more than a job for me. I feel proud that I have contributed to shaping the futures of students." These statements show that teacher satisfaction is deeply connected not to financial benefits but also to student success, social contribution and professional meaning. This finding aligns with Sun et al. (2022)’S conclusions regarding identity and career satisfaction.

However, an important divergence was observed in the RTC group. RTC4 said that seeing the respect given to parents created a positive perception of the teaching profession while RTC7 stated: "I respect my father’s profession but liking his profession and choosing the same profession myself are different things." It states a finding of the study; professional admiration does not necessarily lead to occupational imitation. According to SCCT, in order to transform perception into career choice, personal interest,

self-efficacy and expected outcomes must also be favorable (Lent et al., 1994).

II. Workload, Professional Challenges and Work–Life Balance:

Teachers said that the workload of paperwork reports and extra duties was harder than teaching in the classroom. The workload of tasks often left teachers feeling tired and drained. RT2 said: "Teaching in the classroom has always been enjoyable for me but the administrative workload outside the classroom often caused fatigue toward the profession." While, RT5 said: "Often than teaching itself the workload of paperwork reports and additional responsibilities felt like it consumed more time and energy." These statements match the findings of Admiraal and Røberg (2023) about job demands. The RTC group saw the workload from another angle. RTC2 said: "Even after father returned from school, he would still be doing schoolwork. So I felt that a teacher’s life is not easy." RTC8 also shared experiences of checking copies at home making plans and continuing school-related work.

Thus, while workload was a challenge for teachers for their children the same family workload could become the source of career information as the stress, from teachers’ workload spread into the family.

III. Social Respect, Prestige and Professional Identity:

Social respect became a source of teachers’ professional satisfaction. RT10 said: "Teachers are still seen with trust and respect in the community. That respect kept me in the profession." RT7 also stated that the respect from students and parents made him feel that the effort he had put in was valued. The children also seemed to have formed a view of the teaching profession because of their parents’ social respect. RTC1 and RTC10 said: "When I saw everyone in the village respecting my mother my respect for the teaching profession increased." However, RTC5 made it clear that respect alone was not enough when choosing a career: "Teachers do

receive respect. When choosing my career, I also have to consider income and future growth together with respect." This shows a generational difference. For teacher's social respect was a professional reward whereas, for the children respect was just one part of career evaluation. This finding connects to SCCT's outcome expectations (Lent et al., 1994).

IV. Economic Security, Remuneration and Career Growth:

The teacher group while considering the job security obtained from the teaching profession to be an aspect expressed mixed views about the limited economic attractiveness, promotion and career advancement opportunities. RT5 said: "Teaching provided stability but economically the opportunities seem limited compared to other professions." RT9 expressed the view that if opportunities for growth and economic progress were better the new generation would consider teaching a more attractive career. For the children income, career mobility and professional growth were clearly linked to career choice. RTC5 said: "My father's job was secure but for my generation career growth and income are equally important." RTC9 stated that he prioritized opportunities for skill development and advancement.

This shows a difference between security and growth. For the teacher's generation job security may be an achievement whereas the new generation may expect mobility, growth and opportunity along, with security.

V. Parental Career Advice and Occupational Messages:

Many teachers were found to believe that of imposing parental career advice on their own children they should share their experiences and let the children decide for them. RT3 said: "I did not tell my children that they must become teachers, I shared my experience and told them that they should decide based on their own interests." RT8 said that he explained both the good and the difficult parts of the teaching

profession while saying that the final decision should be made by the children themselves. It shows that parental career advice is based on experience and not on forcing a job. RTC1 and RTC3 also reported that they found the autonomy-supportive approach to be positive.

However, RTC10 said that after hearing difficulties about the teaching profession, from parents he started to think about choosing another field. This shows that parental career advice can work in two ways: the same professional experience can encourage children. Scare them away. This finding matches Young and Friesen's (1992) idea of unintentional parental influence.

VI. Role Modeling and Career Perception:

The everyday professional actions of teachers and parents became a career model for the next generation. RT6 said: "I tried to show through my work that it is possible to change a student's life." RTC6 stated that seeing his mother's hard work for students made teaching feel like a career. However, the negative side of role modelling was also clear. RTC8 said: "I saw my father's dedication but I also saw his exhaustion. From that experience I began to think of a career for myself." This shows the nature of role modelling. A parent's dedication can inspire admiration for teaching while the stress, sacrifice or workload that comes with that dedication can also lead someone to choose a different career.

Thus, children learn from role models not what kind of profession it has and what professional life it contained.

VII. Personal Interest, Career Autonomy and Career Diversification:

Personal interest, ability and career aspiration of the children appear to be reasons why teachers' professional experience does not always lead to the same career choice for their children. RT7 said, "I did not want to impose my profession on them. I wanted them to choose a career according to their abilities and interests." RT10 also said that just because a profession is good for oneself

does not mean it must also be good for one's children. RTC4 explained that although the parent's profession was respected the parent chose a path because the parent's own interest lay in another field. RTC7 and RTC8 clearly said that they did not reject the teaching profession but instead chose another path according to their interests. This shows a point: not choosing the teaching profession does not equal rejecting the teaching profession. Liu et al. (2015) also said that the link between influence and independent decision-making is strong. According to SCCT personal interest, self-efficacy, goals and outcome expectations are the elements of career choice (Lent et al., 1994). Therefore, it is wrong to view career diversification as a rejection, across generations.

VIII. Intergenerational Career Continuity and Diversification

Intergenerational continuity in the teaching profession and career diversification were compared as the final theme of the study. Although teachers expressed pride and happiness if their children became teachers, the notion that choosing a different career meant rejecting their profession was generally not observed. RT9 said: "My profession was good according to the experience of my generation, but today's youth have very different career opportunities." RT10 stated that the fact that their children did not become teachers did not mean they did not respect the profession. RTC9 also said that, in his generation, there were many career options, so he chose the field that suited him best. RTC5 chose a different career not because he disliked the teaching profession, but because he saw greater interest and future opportunities in another field.

So, career diversification appears as a more important interpretive pattern than intergenerational occupational continuity. However, since this study is based on qualitative research, it did not seem appropriate to draw percentage-based conclusions about teaching and non-teaching careers.

Discussion

Overall when looking at the stories from teachers and their children there were no direct link between how satisfied teachers were in their jobs and the career choices their children made. The experiences teachers had at work seemed to give their children a way to think about careers. First teachers said that doing work having a strong sense of who they are as professionals seeing their students succeed and making a contribution to society were the main things that made them happy in their jobs. The children also said they appreciated their parents' contribution to society and the respect they got.

Second teachers felt unhappy because of much work, lots of paperwork and having a hard time balancing work and personal life. For the children these were the things they saw about being a teacher. Third there was a difference between the teachers and the children in what they valued. Teachers cared a lot about respect from others. The children thought about more things like money moving around growing in their jobs and having a good future along, with respect when they thought about a good career. Fourth the influence of advice and role modeling is dual. I have seen that teacher's dedication can draw a child in yet the stress and sacrifice that come with teacher's dedication might push a child toward another job.

Fifth, personal interest, self-efficacy, autonomy and aspiration are key to choosing a job. So parent's profession alone does not decide a child's career. These results match SCCT. Teacher's professional life can give a child either doubtful outcome expectations yet the child reinterprets these feelings using their own thoughts and the chances that surround them. The biggest insight is the gap between respect and choice. Respect, pride and liking teaching are not the same as deciding to become a teacher. From this view teacher's professional life becomes a career curriculum. Children do not get direct career advice from parents; they also watch daily work, dedication, success, exhaustion, stress, pride,

money matters and professional challenges. Thus teacher's professional life can sometimes matter more, than a parent's career message.

Recommendations and Implications

Based on the study to improve teacher workload and work-life balance there should be a division between teaching and non-teaching responsibilities a reduction in unnecessary administrative workload and sufficient time allocated for professional development. Similarly, it is necessary to provide remuneration according to teachers' qualifications, experience and responsibilities along with transparent and merit-based career progression and to expand opportunities for professional autonomy, academic leadership, research, and mentoring and curriculum development.

Teachers should be established not merely as employees who follow instructions but as skilled professionals with knowledge, pedagogical expertise and social responsibility. By recognizing and honoring teachers' innovative practices, professional achievements and contributions to students' lives the teaching profession should be developed not only as one of "sacrifice and service " but also as an intellectually demanding, professionally rewarding and socially valuable career.

In addition, teachers' family life and intergenerational career perceptions should also be incorporated into teacher management policy. A family-friendly workplace, work-life balance, career counselling and opportunities for career exploration can help the younger generation make decisions based on their own interests, abilities, self-efficacy, aspirations, personality and available career opportunities while respecting their parents' professional experiences (Lent et al., 1994; Liu et al., 2015). Ultimately to make the teaching profession the first-choice career for generations it is necessary to strengthen remuneration, career progression, professional autonomy, a safe working environment, social

recognition, leadership, research engagement and continuous professional development in an integrated manner. Teacher well-being, collegial support and professional recognition should also be made aspects of teacher development.

Therefore, providing teachers with meaningfulness, respect, economic security, professional autonomy and opportunities for development is not merely an investment in teacher welfare; it is also an investment in the long-term sustainability of the teaching profession and, in shaping the career perceptions of future generations.

This study has some limitations. First limitation: the study only had 10 teacher-child dyads so the findings cannot be statistically generalized to all teacher families. Second limitation: purposive sampling focuses on participants whose experiences are directly related to the research objectives. Third limitation: because the data come from self-reported narratives, participant memory, interpretation and retrospective meaning-making may influence the narrative. Fourth limitation: because the study uses a dyadic design we cannot draw a causal conclusion that the teachers professional satisfaction cause the child's career choice. Instead findings should be understood as perceived, narrated and relational influence.

Conclusions

The results of this study show that there is no direct or deterministic link between a teacher's professional satisfaction and the career choice of a teacher's Children. For teachers the main reasons for satisfaction are student success, social contribution, professional identity and respect from the community. On the hand administrative workload, financial limitations obstacles to professional development and work-life imbalance are the main sources of dissatisfaction. Because these experiences happen all the time in family life a teacher's professional life becomes a career curriculum for a teacher's Children. A teacher's Children watches closely not the

dedication and meaning that a teacher shows but also the real aspects such as professional stress, financial constraints and workload.

The key conclusion of this research is that professional admiration and occupational choice are not the same. Even though children show respect and pride for a teacher teaching profession they may pick different careers based on personal interests, confidence, expected results and economic chances. Therefore, it is important to see why a child of a teacher chooses a job than teaching not as a rejection of teaching but as intergenerational career diversification.

Finally, this study gives an idea: the real professional life of a teacher today is the main base for how a teacher's descendants will see careers tomorrow. To bring the generation into teaching it is essential to give teachers a good salary, professional freedom, clear career paths, a nice workplace and work-life balance instead of just advertising. Investing in teacher's professional satisfaction will not help a teacher feel better but will also be crucial for the long-term health of teaching and, for what future generations will think about their careers.

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