Parental Involvement on Career Decision-Making among Students in Collectivist Cultures : A Systematic Literature Review on High School and Undergraduate Students in Asian Countries

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the impact of parental involvement on career decision-making in collectivist cultures. This study employed a systematic literature review method adapted from PRISMA framework guidelines. Qualitative data collection techniques were employed, followed by thematic analysis for data interpretation. The article was searched using six online databases: Scopus, Sage Journals, SpringerLink, ProQuest, Google Scholar, and ScienceDirect. A total of 14 articles were obtained, focusing on high school and undergraduate students in Asian countries such as China, Indonesia, and South Korea. The data analysis technique for this research used a thematic analysis approach. As a result, parental involvement, through emotional support, guidance, and direct participation, significantly enhances career decision self-efficacy but may also limit autonomy due to cultural expectations. Furthermore, these results also show that students' gender and parenting style were found to significantly influence career decision-making. The findings emphasize understanding cultural dynamics to guide educators, counselors, and policymakers in supporting students' career development. Further research is recommended to explore qualitative and mixed-method approaches to better capture the subjective and contextual experiences of students and parents in collectivist cultures. Additionally, examining comparisons between collectivist and individualist cultures could provide valuable insights into how different cultural frameworks influence career decision-making processes.

Introduction

Culture serves as the foundation upon which societal norms, values, and behaviors are built, shaping the way individuals interact with one another and their environment (Chatman & O'Reilly, 2016). It defines shared practices, beliefs, and expectations within a group, influencing everything from communication styles to life choices (Sackmann, 2021). According to Sagiv and Schwartz (2022), cultural dimensions help explain the variations in social behavior and attitudes across different societies. One of the most widely studied dimensions is the distinction between collectivism and individualism, which reflects how societies balance the needs of the individual versus the group (Singelis et al., 1995). Individualistic cultures, predominantly found in North America and Europe, promote autonomy, where personal achievements and independence are highly valued (Triandis, 1995). In contrast, collectivist cultures, such as those found in Asia, emphasize interconnectedness, where individuals see themselves as part of a larger social unit, prioritizing group harmony and shared goals, and personal identity is strongly tied to family, community, or other social groups (Brewer & Chen, 2007). Hofstede (1980) described

collectivism as a cultural dimension where people are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, such as extended families, that provide protection in exchange for loyalty.

Within collectivist cultures, distinctions can be made between horizontal and vertical collectivism (Kim et al., 1994). Horizontal collectivism refers to cultures where equality and collaboration among group members are emphasized (van Horn, 2015). Countries like China and South Korea display aspects of horizontal collectivism, where societal roles are more egalitarian (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). On the other hand, vertical collectivism is characterized by a hierarchical structure, where deference to authority and family traditions plays a dominant role (Sawitri & Creed, 2017). In societies with vertical collectivism, such as Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, and India, respect for hierarchy and elders is deeply ingrained, and decision-making is often influenced by one's position within the social structure (Singelis et al., 1995).

In collectivist cultures, parental involvement plays a crucial role in significant life decisions, including career decision-making (Sawitri et al., 2014). Epstein et al. (2009) emphasize the evolving nature of parental involvement in decision-making processes. They posit that effective parental engagement is not only beneficial for academic achievement but also essential for guiding children through important life choices. Epstein et al. (2009) identify six types of involvement—parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community—highlighting that parental participation in decision-making is vital for fostering resilience and self-efficacy in children. This engagement empowers children to navigate their career pathways while remaining attuned to family values and expectations.

Moreover, the concept of "filial piety" in many Asian collectivist cultures further underscores the importance of parental involvement in career decision-making (Yeh & Bedford, 2019). Filial piety, deeply rooted in Confucian values, requires children to respect and care for their parents, often including career decisions that align with parental wishes (Li et al., 2021). Hui and Lent (2018) demonstrated that students in collectivist cultures often perceive their career choices through the lens of familial expectations and societal norms. Unlike individualistic cultures, where adolescents are encouraged to make independent career decisions and view these choices as personal achievements rather than family-driven decisions (Sovet & Metz, 2014), students in collectivist societies often rely heavily on parental guidance, with parents are not just advisors but acting as key influencers in shaping career paths (Sawitri et al., 2014; Sawitri & Creed, 2017). This influence is particularly pronounced in vertical collectivism, where deference to parental authority is both culturally and morally expected (Verma, 2020). Parent guide their children toward professions that align with family values, social status, or economic security, often to maintain family honor and fulfill intergenerational expectations, which are central to maintaining harmony within these societies (Bhalla & Frigerio, 2020). As a result, children are more likely to pursue careers that fulfill their parents' aspirations, even if these may not align with their personal interests or talents (Sawitri & Creed, 2015). Additionally, studies have also shown that the intensity of parental involvement can affect students' career decision self-efficacy (Qudsyi et al., 2022), with some research indicating that high levels of parental control may lower self-confidence in making independent career decisions (Kwon, 2024; Zhang et al., 2019). However, positive parental engagement—characterized by guidance and emotional support—has been linked to higher motivation and perseverance in students pursuing their career goals (Mitchall & Jaeger, 2018; Schmid & Garrels, 2021).

Given these dynamics, it is evident that understanding parental involvement in career decision-making within collectivist cultures is crucial. As globalization continues to influence

educational and career landscapes, recognizing how cultural values impact decision-making processes is essential for educators, counselor, and policymakers. The unique features of collectivist cultures have attracted researchers to investigate how contextual variables influence student career decision-making in those settings. Despite the existing literature, there remain significant gaps. Many studies related to parental involvement and career decision-making have focused on correlational research and case studies (Sawitri & Creed, 2017; Jasmon et al., 2020). However, there is still a lack of studies that examine both variables within a collectivist context using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by systematically synthesizing findings from various sources, offering a comprehensive and structured analysis of parental involvement in career decision-making within collectivist cultures. Unlike previous research that primarily relies on isolated case studies or correlational methods, this study provides a broader, evidence-based understanding of existing patterns, theoretical frameworks, and practical implications. By employing the SLR approach, this research contributes a novel perspective, enabling scholars and practitioners to develop more culturally responsive career guidance strategies.

Research Method

This study used a qualitative approach with a systematic literature review adopted from PRISMA (Moher et al., 2009) and followed the approach outlined by Xiao & Watson (2019), which involved four stages: (1) determining the inclusion criteria; (2) identifying relevant literature; (3) screening for inclusion; and (4) assessing quality and eligibility. PRISMA serves as a framework to guarantee that studies are comprehensive during the conduct and reporting of systematic reviews and meta-analysis (Tam et al., 2019). The literature search was conducted by retrieving research articles from several databases, including Scopus, Google Scholar, Sage Journals, SpringerLink, ProQuest, and ScienceDirect.

The inclusion criteria are as follow: First, the article must focus on parental involvement and career decision-making as the main variables. Second, the research samples were high school and undergraduate students. Third, the article must be conducted in countries or regions characterized by collectivist cultures, such as Indonesia, China, Japan, South Korea, or other Asian nations. Fourth, only empirical and quantitative studies are included. Fifth, the articles must be published in international journals, peer-reviewed, written in English, available in full-text, and published between 2009 and 2024. Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria are: First, articles that primarily focus on parental involvement outside the context of career decision-making, such as general academic support or extracurricular activities. Second, studies with participants from elementary or middle school levels, as well as postgraduate students, are excluded to ensure consistency in the age group and educational level of the sample. Third, studies conducted in non-collectivist cultures such as America and Europe, or those that do not explicitly mention the cultural context of the research. Fourth, articles that discuss qualitative methods, mixed methods, psychometric studies, or literature reviews are omitted. Finally, articles not available in full-text, not written in English, and published prior to 2009 are excluded. The PRISMA flow diagram is shown in Figure 1.
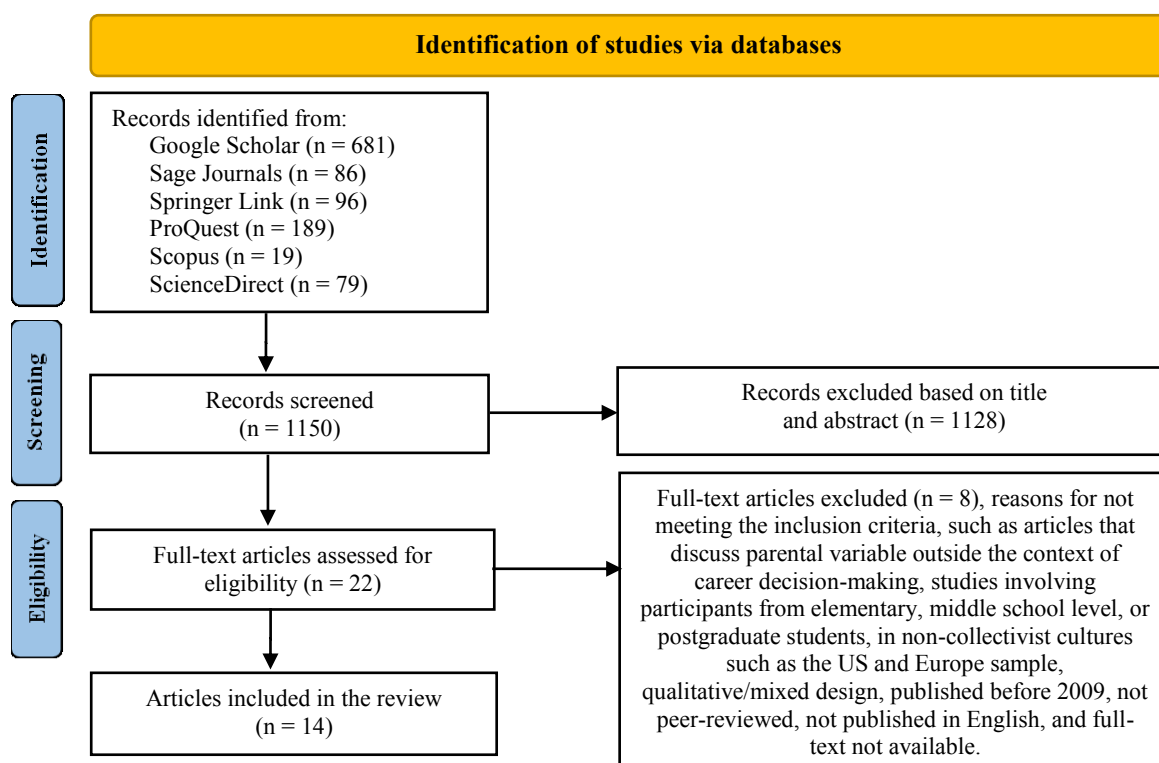
Figure 1. Flow diagram of the literature selection process with PRISMA

This study employed thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), which involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within the selected studies. The analysis followed the six-phase process: (1) familiarization with the data; (2) generating initial codes; (3) searching for themes; (4) reviewing themes; (5) defining and naming themes; and (6) writing the report. By employing thematic analysis, this study was able to uncover the recurring patterns and variations in how parental involvement is conceptualized and its impact on career decision-making in collectivist cultures.

Results and Discussion

        This review identified 14 relevant studies that explored the relationship between parental involvement and career decision-making among students in collectivist cultures. These studies were conducted across various countries in Asian region, including China (7), Indonesia (6), and South Korea (1), reflecting diverse collectivist environments. The total number of participants across all included studies amounts to 11,866 participants, with an average sample size of approximately 791 participants per study. The majority of the studies included participants who were high school and undergraduate students, typically between the ages of 15 to 22 years. This age group reflects a critical stage in life when students are making important career decisions, influenced by both their cultural background and parental involvement.

        The participants came from various educational levels, such as high school (Ramadhani & Suharso, 2022; Sawitri et al., 2014, 2015; Sawitri & Creed, 2015, 2017; Cheung et al., 2013; Sovet & Metz, 2014; Zhang et al., 2019), vocational school (Jiang et al., 2022; Xing & Rojewski, 2018), and university (Guan et al., 2016; Jasmon et al., 2020; Wong & Liu, 2010; Leung et al., 2011). All studies in this systematic review are quantitative research with survey methods. The analysis of fourteen studies related to parental

involvement in career decision-making in collectivist cultures among students can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of Articles included in Literature Review

No	Author	Year	Country	Findings
1	Guan et al.	2016	China	- Parental support positively influenced both career decision-making self-efficacy and career adaptability - Career decision-making self-efficacy mediated the relationship between parental support and career adaptability - The positive effects of parental support on career decision-making self-efficacy were stronger for students with low traditionality beliefs. For students with high traditionality beliefs, the positive impact of parental support was weaker, suggesting that traditional cultural values can limit the development of self-efficacy
2	Ramadhani & Suharso	2021	Indonesia	- Proactive personality partially mediates the relationship between parental involvement (support and action) and self-efficacy in career decisions - Parental support and action directly influence self-efficacy in career decisions, while proactive personality enhances this effect by encouraging initiative and exploration in career planning
3	Jiang et al.	2022	China	Supportive parental involvement can significantly enhance academic and career outcomes for secondary vocational students by fostering greater self-efficacy in career decision-making
4	Sawitri et al.	2014	Indonesia	- Parental career expectations have a direct and indirect (via self-efficacy and outcome expectations) influence on adolescents' career aspirations. - Adolescents in collectivist cultures are more likely to align their career choices and aspirations with parental expectations, and this alignment strengthens their career self-efficacy and planning behaviors
5	Sawitri et al.	2015	Indonesia	Higher perceived career congruence between adolescents and parents is linked to increased engagement in career exploration activities
6	Sawitri et al.	2016	Indonesia	Adolescents who perceive higher parental support tend to have greater career self-efficacy and make more confident career decisions, which further bolsters their career aspirations
7	Sawitri & Creed	2017	Indonesia	- Both HC and VC are associated with career aspirations indirectly via perceived congruence and self-efficacy. This suggests that collectivist orientations influence career aspirations primarily through how adolescents perceive their alignment with parental expectations and their confidence in handling career-related tasks - HC has a stronger impact on self-efficacy and

				career aspirations compared to VC. Adolescents with HC orientations see their parents as partners, making it easier to communicate career goals and develop confidence in their abilities
8	Jasmon et al.	2020	Indonesia	Parents' expectations significantly influenced the self-efficacy of students, which in turn impacted their career exploration. Career congruence between adolescents and parents was a stronger predictor of self-efficacy than parental expectations alone.
9	Wong & Liu	2010	China	- Three major parental factors significantly predict career choice intentions: parental support, parental career concerns about welfare and prestige, and parental barriers - Perceived parental support was the strongest predictor, whereas perceived parental barriers negatively influenced career choice intentions.
10	Cheung et al.	2013	China	- Collective efficacy from significant others (parents, teachers, and peers) had a moderate positive relationship with career self-efficacy and a low but significant relationship with vocational exploration and commitment. - The effects of collective career efficacy on vocational exploration and commitment were mediated by career self-efficacy - Parental contributions had the highest correlation with career self-efficacy, particularly in gathering occupational information and planning
11	Xing & Rojewski	2018	China	- Parental general psychosocial support significantly predicted career decision-making self-efficacy, explaining 38.3% of the variance. - Parental career-specific behaviors correlated with career decision-making self-efficacy but were not a significant predictor - Family structural variables, such as socioeconomic status and rural or urban residence, did not have significant influence
12	Leung et al.	2011	China	- Cultural-values conflict was positively associated with career decision-making difficulties among Mainland Chinese students but not among Hong Kong students, possibly due to Hong Kong's long-standing blend of Eastern and Western values - Parental expectations impacted career decision-making difficulties
13	Zhang et al.	2019	China	- Parental career support was positively associated with adolescents' CDSE via autonomy, while parental career interference had a negative association when lack of engagement was low - Autonomy served as a mediating factor, highlighting the role of supportive parenting in enhancing adolescents' CDSE - Lack of parental engagement weakened the positive

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				effects of career support and magnified the negative impact of career interference on CDSE, showing that active parental involvement is crucial for adolescent career development
14	Sovet & Metz	2014	South Korea	- There were significant effects of gender and parenting style on career decision-making outcomes in cultural contexts. - The authoritarian parenting style was associated with higher career decision self-efficacy and lower career decision-making difficulties

Based on the reviewed literature, research has consistently shown that parental involvement significantly influences students' career decision-making. The authors found that parental involvement in career decision-making typically takes three main forms: emotional support, guidance, and direct participation. This involvement has a significant impact on students' confidence, career aspirations, and self-efficacy (Sawitri & Creed, 2017; Zhang et al., 2019). Emotional support from parents provides students with a sense of security and confidence, which positively influences their career decision-making process (Wong & Lui, 2010). In collectivist cultures, parental emotional support reinforces the importance of family connections, encouraging students to pursue careers that align with family values and cultural expectations (Sawitri et al., 2014). Research indicates that emotional support from parent fosters self-efficacy and resilience, as students feel backed by their families' approval and guidance in their career paths (Jasmon et al., 2020). Emotional support, often demonstrated through verbal encouragement, listening, and empathy, reinforces students' sense of belonging and self-worth, empowering them to set and pursue career goals that they feel will make their families proud (Guan et al., 2016).

Parental guidance includes offering advice on career paths, setting realistic expectations, and modeling work values (Xing & Rojewski, 2018). This guidance provides students with direction and helps them feel more purposeful about their career choices (Sawitri et al., 2014). In collectivist cultures, this often means guiding children toward careers that harmonize with family or societal goals, strengthening students' sense of purpose (Sawitri et al., 2015). In some cases, parents in vertical collectivist cultures play a more directive role, while in horizontal collectivist societies, parents often act as advisors, supporting career choices that balance family and personal goals (Sawitri & Creed, 2015; Sawitri & Creed, 2017).

Direct participation, on the other hand, involves parents taking active roles in their children's career decision-making, such as organizing career-related resources, arranging meetings with professionals, or assisting with applications (Ramadhani & Soeharso, 2020). This hands-on approach allows students to access resources they might otherwise lack, which can enhance career decision self-efficacy and reduce uncertainty (Cheung et al., 2013). Xing and Rojewski (2018) observed that parental involvement, such as gathering occupational information, positively correlated with students' self-efficacy in career-related decisions.

Despite the positive influences, parental involvement in collectivist cultures may also pose challenges. Guan et al. (2016) noted that, while parental involvement fosters career adaptability and self-efficacy, students with strong traditional beliefs may feel constrained in exploring non-traditional career paths. The influence of hierarchical family structures, typical in vertical collectivist cultures like Indonesia, often places pressure on students to choose careers that reflect family honor and societal expectations (Sawitri et al., 2016). This dynamic can reduce students' sense of personal agency, potentially limiting their motivation to pursue careers that align with their individual interests. Similarly, Sovet & Metz (2014) studied

Korean high school students and observed that, while students highly valued their parents' input, those who pursued careers solely to meet parental expectations reported lower career satisfaction. The study highlighted that student in collectivist societies may experience role strain if they feel forced into careers that align with family values but contradict their own preferences.

Moreover, Jasmon et al. (2020) found that students from families with strong occupational preferences engaged in limited career exploration, often narrowing their options to a few "acceptable" professions. This restricted exploration contrasts with students from individualistic cultures, who are more likely to consider a wider range of options and prioritize personal interests over family expectations (Sawitri et al., 2015). As a result, students in collectivist societies might have less opportunity to fully explore their strengths and potential across diverse fields, reinforcing the pursuit of family-sanctioned careers. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) provides a lens for understanding these dynamics, suggesting that autonomy, competence, and relatedness are critical in promoting intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). In collectivist settings, students may experience high levels of relatedness and competence due to parental involvement but often lack autonomy, which can hinder their capacity to make independent career choices (Zhang et al., 2019). Studies show that parental engagement that supports autonomy enhances students' confidence in handling career-related tasks, while overly controlling behavior may undermine this confidence (Jiang et al., 2022).

Continuing from these findings, it is clear that parental involvement in collectivist cultures is a double-edged sword. On one hand, parental involvement such as support, guidance, and participation play a crucial role in building career decision self-efficacy, as highlighted by various studies. For instance, in cases where students feel aligned with family values and career goals, such as in Jasmon et al. (2020), there is a synergy between family expectations and personal aspirations, boosting students' career self-efficacy. This alignment can be particularly empowering, as it encourages students to pursue their goals within a supportive framework, creating a sense of purpose and a strong drive to excel.

Another example, research by Ramadhani & Suharso (2021) shows that parental involvement, when paired with a proactive personality in students, strengthens self-efficacy in career decisions and encourages active exploration of career paths. This form of involvement serves as a foundation for students to feel secure and motivated to pursue their goals, knowing they have the emotional and material backing of their families. However, this involvement can also limit students' independence and exploration, particularly in cultures with strong expectations of filial piety (Cheung et al., 2013). This cultural pressure to conform can lead students to make career decisions that align more with family desires than with their individual interests, resulting in internal conflict or diminished job satisfaction later on (Li et al., 2021).

Interestingly, Wong & Liu (2010) noted that while parental expectations strongly influence career choices in collectivist cultures, the level of parental involvement varies with socioeconomic background. For instance, students from higher socioeconomic families and better education are likely to receive more guidance and support for prestigious careers, while those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may face additional financial pressures to select careers that promise immediate financial stability. This socioeconomic factor, therefore, adds another layer of complexity, as students navigate both family expectations and economic limitations in their career choices (Wong & Liu, 2010). In contrast, Xing & Rojewski (2018) found that family socioeconomic status did not significantly influence career

decision-making self-efficacy, suggesting that while socioeconomic status may be a factor, its impact could be mediated by other variables.

Regarding predictors, there are variables related to parental involvement that the researchers conclude can predict either positively or negatively influence career decision-making among students. Here are two notable factors identified in the literature: First, gender can significantly impact career decision-making processes. Research has shown that parents might have different expectations and provide different types of support based on the gender of the child (Sovet & Metz, 2014). Female students may experience more support for specific career paths, while male may have more encouragement for independence, which can affect their self-efficacy and career aspirations. Additionally, cultural norms surrounding gender can shape the types of careers that are deemed acceptable or desirable for young women versus men, further influencing their career choices (Sawitri & Creed, 2017). Second, the approach parents take in raising their children can significantly impact career decision-making outcomes. Authoritarian parenting styles, for instance, have been associated with higher levels of career decision-making self-efficacy, whereas authoritative styles may promote better exploration and adaptability (Sovet & Metz, 2014).

The findings of this study provide insights into the role of parental involvement in the career decision-making process among students in collectivist cultures, particularly in Asian countries. Conceptually, the study highlights the importance of family-oriented values in shaping students' career choices, illustrating how cultural norms, such as filial piety and respect for parental authority, influence decision-making. These insights contribute to existing literature by emphasizing the unique dynamics within collectivist cultures, where parental guidance is often seen as essential to success.

Practically, the study's findings offer useful implications for educators, counselors, and policymakers in Asian countries. By understanding the weight of parental involvement in career decision-making, educational institutions can design more effective career counseling programs that engage both students and their families. This approach can foster better decision-making outcomes by incorporating a culturally sensitive framework that respects the importance of family input while also encouraging students' autonomy in their career choices.

Conclusion

The research findings concluded that parental involvement—through support, guidance, and participation—has shown significant positive effects on students' career aspirations, self-efficacy, and decision-making behaviors. However, these influences are complex and often moderated by cultural values, particularly in collectivist settings where family expectations strongly impact students' choices. Studies reveal that while supportive involvement enhances self-efficacy, excessive control can hinder autonomy, leading to potential conflicts between family expectations and individual interests.

In addition to cultural factors, other important predictors such as gender and parenting style also contribute to shaping career decision-making. These findings suggest that gender influences the types of support and expectations students receive from their parents, while authoritarian parenting styles tend to affect students' self-efficacy and career exploration by providing structure but potentially limiting autonomy. This review does not cover all Asian or collectivist cultures, but the findings contribute to expanding the literature by providing valuable insights into the interplay between cultural, familial, and other contextual factors in career development.

Recommendation

Based on the study's findings, the authors recommend that future studies should include qualitative and mixed-method designs to better capture the subjective and contextual experiences of students and parents in collectivist cultures. This approach can provide deeper insights into the emotional, psychological, and cultural nuances of parental involvement in career decision-making. Furthermore, future studies might consider conducting a comparative analysis of collectivist and individualistic cultures to examine various predictors and assess their impact on career outcomes.

In addition to these recommendations, it is crucial for education and counseling systems to take an active role in supporting students' career decision-making. Guidance and counseling teachers in schools can play a pivotal role by creating structured, family-centered programs that actively engage both students and parents. These programs could include:

1) Family counseling sessions**:** Schools should organize sessions where families can openly discuss career paths, balancing personal aspirations with family expectations. This helps create an environment where students feel heard and supported, reducing potential conflicts between their interests and parental influences.

2) Career exploration workshops for parents and students**:** Guidance and counselor teachers can facilitate workshops that educate both students and their parents on various career options, trends, and the importance of considering students' interests and strengths. These workshops can also help parents understand the evolving nature of the job market and the value of supporting their child's individual career aspirations.

3) Open communication channels**:** Guidance and counselor teachers should establish ongoing communication with parents to create a continuous dialogue around students' career development. Regular updates, meetings, and personalized advice can help parents stay informed and engaged without feeling overwhelmed.

4) Self-Exploration Tools**:** Counselors can provide resources, such as personality tests or career interest inventories, for students and parents to use together. These tools can guide discussions on potential career paths that align with both individual interests and family values.

By including trained facilitators in such programs, these sessions could foster an environment where students feel empowered to express their personal career interests, allowing for career choices that align with both family expectations and personal growth. For parents, it is essential to encourage them to actively listen to their children's aspirations, creating a balanced, supportive approach to career decision-making that values both cultural heritage and the student's individual needs.

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