

**INFLUENCE OF PARENTS ON CAREER CHOICE OF
THEIR CHILDREN AT THE UNIVERSITY OF
ZAMBIA**

BY

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**A Dissertation Submitted to the University of Zambia in Partial
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree of
Master of Education in Guidance and Counselling**

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DECLARATION

I, Chazangwe Linda Sinkombo do hereby declare that this dissertation presents my own work and that it has not been previously submitted for the award of a degree or any other qualification to the University of Zambia or any other University. All references have been adequately acknowledged.

Signature:

Date:.....

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

The University of Zambia approves this dissertation of Chazangwe Linda Sinkombo as fulfilling part of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Education in Guidance and Counselling.

Signature

Date

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents, my husband and my son Wana. They are my inspiration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the first place I would like to thank the Almighty God for his abounding mercy and love that he has continued to show in my life. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Daniel Ndhlovu for his tireless constructive guidance and encouragements throughout the course of this work.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Copyright.....	i
Declaration.....	ii
Approval.....	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v
Table of contents.....	vi
List of figures	ix
List of tables.....	x
Acronyms.....	xi
Abstract.....	xii

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background.....	1
Statement of the problem.....	7
Purpose of the study.....	7
Objectives.....	7
Research questions.....	8
Significance of the study.....	8
Delimitation.....	8
Limitation.....	9
Theoretical framework.....	9
Definition of terms.....	10
Summary of the chapter.....	10

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview.....	11
Historical background of career guidance.....	11
Influence of parents on career choice of children.....	12
Career guidance offered by parents to their children.....	17
Factors influencing career choice of children at UNZA.....	22
Summary of literature reviewed and identified gap.....	26

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Overview	27
Research design.....	27
Study Population.....	27
Sample and sampling techniques.....	27
Instruments for data collection.....	28
Reliability and validity of instruments.....	29
Data collection procedures.....	29
Data analysis.....	30
Ethical consideration.....	30
Summary	31

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Introduction.....	32
Influence of parents on career choice of children at the University of Zambia before admission.....	33
Source of knowledge about career choice.....	34
Level of knowledge on issues of career choices.....	34
Career choice students had before settling for the current choice.....	35
Knowledge of teachers on career choice.....	35
Factors influencing career choice of children at UNZA.....	
Knowledge of parents on career choice.....	36
Career guidance parents offered to their children before admission at UNZA.....	36
Whether parents offered guidance on career choice	36
Perceived parental encouragement towards self towards self-direction in career choice.....	38
Whether children valued contribution of parents towards career guidance...39	
Perceived barriers to career choice of children by parents.....	40
Effectiveness on influence of parents s career choice of children at UNZA.....	43
Factors influencing career choices of children at UNZA.....	44
Sources of knowledge about career choices.....	48

Level of knowledge on career choices.....	49
Career choices children had before settling for current ones.....	49
Knowledge of teachers on career choices.....	50
Summary of the chapter.....	51
New knowledge contributed by the study.....	51

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Introduction.....	53
How parents influence career choice of their children at UNZA.....	53
Career guidance parents offered to their children before admission at UNZA.....	55
Factors influencing career choice of students at UNZA.....	56
Summary of the chapter.....	62

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction.....	64
Conclusion.....	64
Recommendation.....	67
Recommendations for future research.....	67

REFERENCE.....68

APPENDICES

Appendix i: Questionnaire for students.....	74
Appendix ii: Interview guide for parents.....	80
Appendix iii: Focus group discussion.....	82

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Whether children valued contributions of parents towards career guidance.....	40
Figure 2 Perceived parental barriers to career choice of children	42
Figure 3 Factors influencing career choices of children at UNZA.....	45
Figure 4 Source of knowledge about career choices.....	48

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Education level of students.....	.28
Table 2 How parents influenced career choices of their children.....	33
Table 3 Knowledge of parents on issues of career choice.....	35
Table 4 Whether parents offered guidance on career choices.....	36
Table 5 Career guidance parents offered to their children.....	.37
Table 6 Perceived encouragements towards self-direction in career choices..	38
Table 7 Effectiveness of influence of parents on career choice of children at UNZA.....	43
Table 8 Level of knowledge on career choices	49
Table 9 Career choices children had before the current ones.....	50

ACRONYMS

UNZA: University of Zambia.

MESVTE: Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education.

ABSTRACT

The study aimed at investigating the influence of parents on career choice of their children at the University of Zambia. Three objectives guided the study, which were: to determine how parents influence career choice of their children at the University of Zambia, to establish career guidance parents offered to their children and to examine factors influencing career choice of children at the University of Zambia. In order to have in-depth understanding of the influence parents have on career choice of their children, a descriptive survey design using a qualitative approach was employed. A descriptive survey design using qualitative approach was employed. The study population comprised of all students at the University of Zambia in the three admitting schools and their parents. The sample size of the study was 54, consisting of 27 children and 27 parents. Random and purposive sampling techniques were adopted to select participants. Methods of data collection included questionnaires, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews guides. Questionnaires were used to collect data from children. To crosscheck their responses, focus group discussions were also used. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from parents. Data from interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed and then categorised into major themes after which it was analyzed thematically while that from questionnaires was analyzed qualitatively using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS software version20) and Microsoft office excel to generate frequencies and percentages which were presented in form of tables and graphs. Major findings of the study indicates that parents, especially those who were educated offered career guidance to children through interaction where they discussed about the world of work and choosing careers which are currently workable in Zambia. They guided children on career choices such as, Teaching, Business related courses, Nursing, Computer Studies, Army (Soldier), Zambia Air force, Police Service as well as Agriculture related courses. Study further revealed that the positive interaction which existed between parents have influence in career choice of their children. The study also showed that results children obtained at grade 12, availability of jobs and the education levels of their parents are also of influence towards their career choices. The study concluded that parents offered workable career choices to their children before admission to the University of Zambia with the view that these careers are of higher employment

chances than others. The positive interactions with children are of influence towards career choices. Results children obtain at grade 12 highly influence their career choices. Based on the findings, study recommends that all parents should emphasize on hard work and focus on the capabilities of their children and seek the help of career guidance personnel.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter consists of the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations, limitations of study and operational terms used in the study.

1.2 Background

Influence by parents on career choice for their children motivated this study after noticing enormous and complex challenges faced by children and youths of today. Thus, without proper guidance, these children may end up not fulfilling their goals in life. It is a fact that most young people have challenges of choosing an occupation and relating personal skills, interests and abilities to careers. Additionally, a sizeable number of school leavers today end up on the streets without being aware of their potentials. There is therefore, need to help them know themselves in terms of abilities, interests, values, beliefs potential. They should also be assisted to acquire skills they need in order to cope with the different circumstances they may encounter later on in life (Morsel, 2009).

Hayes (2003) states that career play a very fundamental and significant role in the life of the individual not only because they determine the pattern of income but also because they affect the individual personality and concepts in life. Career therefore is a choice pursuit, life work or success in one's profession occupied by a person throughout his or her lifetime. In a nutshell, career is the totality of work one does in his life time, it is person centred and of utmost importance to every individual as he or she prepares for the future. It is unique to each person and dynamic as it keeps unfolding throughout life.

On the other hand, career guidance consists of the services that help people successfully manage their career development. It is a comprehensive, developmental programme which is designed to assist individuals in making and implementing informed education and occupational choices. A career guidance programme develops an individual's competence in self-knowledge, educational and occupational, exploration and career planning (MESVTEE, 2013).

Clutter and Macmillan (2008) observed that the main purpose of career guidance is to help learners to choose a career, prepare for it, enter and progress in it as well as to relate their personal skills, interests and ability to careers. Its functions include; placing talent where it is needed by assisting learners to make their best possible career choice. Career guidance strengthens learner's motivation and meaning to education by ensuring that the learner's education, curricular and extra-curricular activities are useful and eventually result into something worthwhile. It also provides information about occupational opportunities and makes learners be aware of the world of work, and the range of available opportunities that exist. It encourages learners to make decisions on the type of life they would want to lead depending on their interests, values, abilities skills and motivation to learners. On the other hand, career guidance assist learners to know themselves in the light of interests, potential skills and abilities in relation to the world of work and the environment they live in. It also helps learners to understand the process of making choices and of the possible consequences of their decisions.

According to (Batshaw, 2003), one of the most important functions of education is to help learners make a variety of career choices that match their individual abilities, interests, aptitudes, personality and indeed develop in their chosen careers. Batshaw argued that understanding how to make career choice is a life skill that everyone needs. As such, it is worth noting that the decision an individual makes on a career has profound effects on one's life and career development.

Lindsay (2000) noted that career choice has become a complex science with the advent of information technology, the emergence of post industrial revolution and job competition. It was a common practice in the old days to find feudalism converting it into a family affair where the son of a blacksmith was destined to become a blacksmith and a feudal was born a leader. Industrialization and post industrialization has made it possible for a common person to be richer as long as he or she has due skills and knowledge. Today, one does not only make due career planning but also exhaustive career research before making a career choice so as to adjust with the evolving socio-economic conditions.

Wattles (2009) asserts that most students who are at secondary schools do not have accurate information about occupational opportunities to help them make appropriate career choice. He further observed that the influence home has on the child's learning is the fundamental concepts of life. Thus, it is of great need for each parent to prepare and get involved in the progression process of their children's career matters. In Zambia however, the situation is different in that parents are mainly involved in the education of their children up to grade twelve as most school records show. After grade twelve, most children end up fitting themselves in careers they have no much knowledge about or maybe careers they only heard from friends or the media, a situation which made the researcher wonder how parents influence career choices made by their children before they are admitted under any tertiary institution. It is therefore the major objective of the current study to examine on the impact parents have towards career choice children make with the view that parents are the first people to know and interact with their children before any sort of admission to tertiary education.

According to Kerka (2000) career choice is influenced by multiple factors including personality, interests, self-concept, cultural identity, globalization, socialization, role model, social support and available resources such as information and financial. In the same view, (Bandura et al, 2001) outlined that each individual undertaking the process is influenced by several factors including the context in which they live in, their personal aptitudes, social contacts and educational attainment. He alluded that factors influencing career choice can either be intrinsic or extrinsic or both. However, most people are influenced by careers that their parents favour, others follow the careers that their educational choices have opened for them, some choose to follow their passion regardless of how much or little it will make them while others choose the careers that give high income. The current study however, mainly focused on the most ignored factor among all factors influencing career choices of children. Thus, influence of parents as the main factor is of major interest in this study. In Zambia however, school leavers are seen in various careers and occupations which they find themselves into as they grow and interact. Thus, it is not known how parents influence career choices made by their children in tertiary institutions.

It is known that the role of parents and the family at large is of great importance in the education and career choices made by their children. Indeed, the first responsibility of educating a child rests with the parents and thereafter, becomes a shared responsibility with the school and the community at large. Children learn more from parents though schools usually ignore parental input in the education of their children and consequently their career choices. Parents as people who know interests, abilities and personalities of their children tend to have particular influence on decisions children make. However, understanding the influential factors that parents have on career choice of children is not clear despite the unique and critical impact parents hold in this matter. Thus, providers of career guidance take this matter unrecognized (James 2004).

Taylor (2001) observed that parental involvement in career related issues of their children is one of a series of factors that leads young people to engage in more intense and effective information seeking activities. This is from the fact that career conversations between a parent and a child play a huge role as they shape joint goals and shared meaning and regulate action in the children as they make decisions in their careers. Parents are seen to be most commonly consulted as influential sources of career information and advice among children and are critical in total transition from school to the world of employment as they have particular influence on the career path of children.

However, nothing yet is known on whether parents are involved or rather have any influence towards career choices made by their children before they are admitted in tertiary institutions. There is no evidence on whether parents initiate any kind of interactions, conversations with their children in relation to occupational choices made by their children. Thus the goal of the current study is to investigate on whether parents to children at the University of Zambia had influence on career choices made by children before being admitted at the institution.

Norma (2008), pointed out that choosing a career is considered a major life activity which enhances the quality of life, offers financial self-determination, improves self-esteem, gives feelings of contribution to society and offers a general satisfaction. Pursuing a career is an essential factor in gaining independence, achieving social inclusion and ensuring equal participation in all aspects of life.

Norma concludes that quality of career development determines children's career choices, nature and quality of individual lives thereafter. In the case of the current study, the above statements are true except the common trend while children lack proper guidance on which careers are workable at present. This comes as a result of poor choices made without full knowledge about what the career has to offer after studies.

On the other hand, a study in Tanzania by Muyoi (2009), indicated that parents influence children's career choices both intentionally and inadvertently. This is from the fact that by the time children move to adolescence, they begin seriously considering their futures, often looking to their parents either as role models or for career advice. A parent's approach to this can either inspire teenagers to explore a diverse set of potential occupations or to stick to a path they think their parents will approve of. As such, it is not surprising that people are the third or fourth generations of their families to work in the same profession. As such, they have an insider glimpse of their parent's occupations, making it easier for them to break into the industry.

Muyoi further outlined that if the jobs of parents gives children great satisfaction or provides a comfortable lifestyle, these children see the perks early on and may favour these careers over others. To the contrary, the current study confirms that if parents complain about their jobs or struggle to support the family on the income their jobs provides, children are more likely to seek more fulfilling or higher paid roles. For example, parents who encourage their children to take music or dance lessons or sports sometimes influence them to commit to those activities full-time. Unlike a mere trend of following what other family members did, children may develop their own careers. Thus, the earlier a child is introduced to an interest area, the more time he or she has to explore it and strengthen his or her skills. Thus, some people choose the career simply because by adolescence they have been involved in it so long it feels like second nature.

On the other hand, Natalie (2000) elaborates that those activities parents choose for their children also influences career selection. The more disciplines a child attempts, the better he or she knows his or her strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, can also quickly learn what they like and what they do not like, and what they can envision themselves doing for their lives. In support of the above

views, data from the longitudinal study of American youth revealed that in families where parent never encourage children to attend college, just 4% of the children decided to pursue higher education. This is in contrast to families where parents encouraged children to attend college, with 41% of those children choosing to do so. Parents play an important role such that even their ideas about gender, race, socio- economic background and other characteristics do influence children's career decisions. For instance, if a parent suggests the family's origins are too humble for the child to consider a political career; such a child is likely to choose a less prestigious occupation.

Furthermore, parents sometimes influence children to pursue activities they think will win their approval. For example, some parents do punish their children for not earning distinctions or criticize them for pursuing art instead of a practical profession like law or medicine. In such cases, children might feel obliged to select a prestigious or high-earning occupation to earn their parents' respect or making them proud. On the other hand, when parents make it clear that they have no specific expectations for their children's career choices, children often feel free to explore a greater variety of professions, choosing on the basis of their own preferences instead of those of their parents Morsel (2009).

Zambia is not an exceptional in this matter. For instance, most studies with regards to career and involvement of parents towards the education of children though were done on children with visual impairments, for example; that of Mathatha (2013) on career development of children with visual impairments, Ndhlovu (2005) on the involvement of parents in the education of learners with visual impairments and that of Chilumunda (2010) on factors limiting career choices among school leavers, among others. However, none of these studies focused on the influence of parents on career choice of their children. As a result, it was not known how parents influence career choice made by their children before they are admitted to tertiary education. The premise of this study therefore was that parents are the first people to interact with their children and they know better what their children can and cannot do thereby leading to how they influence career choices children make in life.

In order for the researcher to understand the influence parents have on career choice of their children in tertiary institutions, the University of Zambia (UNZA) was chosen. The University of Zambia has ten schools whose names are in line with career paths.

These are: School of Education, Law, Humanities and Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Engineering, Mines, Agriculture Science, Veterinary Medicine, Medicine and Business Studies.

In each school, there are a variety of programmes representing distinct career paths. Realizing that parents are the first teachers of their children, the question was how do parents influence career choice of their children at UNZA?

1.2 Statement of the problem

Despite parents being the first teachers of their children (Jocelyn 2002), how parents influence career choices of their children at the University of Zambia was not known. This study therefore sought to fill up the knowledge gap by investigating influence parents have on career choice of their children at the University of Zambia.

1.3 Purpose of the study

This study aimed at investigating how parents influence career choice of their children at the University of Zambia.

1.4 Objectives

This section outlines objectives which guided the study as follows;

- i) To determine how parents influence career choices of their children at the University of Zambia.
- ii) To establish career guidance offered by parents to children before admission to the University of Zambia.
- iii) To examine factors influencing career choices of children at the University of Zambia.

1.5 Research Questions

- i) How do parents influence career choices of their children at the University of Zambia?
- ii) What career guidance did parents offer to their children before admission at the s of Zambia?
- iii) What other factors influence career choices of children at the University of Zambia?

1.6 Significance of the study

At the time when most school leavers wonder on which career to choose, a study of this nature is relevant. This study is expected to add on the existing literature on influence of parents on career choice of their children in higher learning institutions and colleges in Zambia. This study may also be useful to the Ministry of Education in strengthening policies on career guidance and parental involvement in career choices made by children. It is also hoped that this study may provide data that can be beneficial to school administrators and guidance teachers to help them provide quality career guidance services to their pupils with the involvement of parents. The study may also provide information to both learners and parents on how critical parents when it comes to career choices of their children. It may also help students realise the importance of career choice as they enter the world of work after studies.

1.7 Delimitation of the study

According to Cresswell (1994), delimitations of a research study are useful in addressing how the study is narrowed in scope. The study focused on three admitting schools of the University of Zambia, which are School of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences and the School of Natural Sciences since it is from these schools that students in the other schools of the institution emanate from before being quartered into various programmes. The University of Zambia was a better study site for it has various schools which comprise of several programmes which easily linked into career choices by students. Therefore, the University as a site provided the researcher a variety of information from

respondents of interest in the study. Thus, the three admitting schools out of ten schools of the institution brought about the general outcome of the study.

1.8 Limitations of the study

The study only focused on the three admitting schools while the institution is made up of ten schools. Therefore results from this study may not be generalized to represent all the 10 schools of the institution. However, it was hoped that results of this study may give an insight of what the picture is like in the University as an institution.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

According to Berk (2007), attachment is the strong affectionate tie we have with special people in our lives that leads us to feel pleasure when we interact with them and to be comforted by their nearness in times of stress. Traditionally attachment was the foundation of the infant-mother relationship. However, contemporary theorists like Bluestein (1995) indicated the importance of continuous and secure relationships between parents and children till late adolescence, when career exploration is a major activity (Sharf, 2002). This is supported by many researches and shows the importance of parents in responding sensitively to their children in order to promote higher motivations in schools and better decisions with regards to careers (Berk, 2007). In having a secure attachment with their parents, adolescents identify themselves more with their parents and by so doing , they will involve their parents more in decisions and choices. They are also more likely to listen to their parent's opinions. Thus, teenagers remain attached to parents and seek their advice, and do so in a context of greater freedom (Berk, 2007).

This research was therefore premised on the attachment theory of Bluestein (1995), which shows the importance of continues and secure relationships between parents and children till late adolescence, when career exploration is a major activity. The theory further defines the importance in parents' sensitive and response to their children in order to promote higher motivations in schools and better decisions with regards to career choices. By so doing, children identify themselves more with their parents and may involve them more in decisions, choices and listen to their opinions as they seek their advice.

1.1.0 Definitions of terms

In order to facilitate communication, the terms used in this study are defined as follows;

Parent: A person who begot a child or children or a guardian of a child or children at UNZA.

Career: Activities and positions involved in vacations, occupations as well as related activities associated with an individual's life time of work.

Children: In this study, this refers to students at UNZA.

Career guidance: Provision of services and activities to individuals of any age and at any point throughout their lives to help them make educational, training and occupational choices.

Summary of the chapter

The foregone chapter comprised of an introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitations, theoretical framework and operational definitions in the study. The next chapter presents the reviewed literature on how parents influence career choice of children in tertiary institutions.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

This chapter presents a review of relevant literature on how parents influence career choice of their children. The following themes derived from objectives were used in the review of literature; factors influencing career choices among students in tertiary institutions, how parents influence career choices of their children in tertiary institutions and career guidance parents offer to children before admission to tertiary institutions.

2.1 Historical Background of Career Choice

The history of career guidance has its roots in the late 1800s and the dawning of the 20th century. Before the 19th century, little was available inform of career guidance for those looking to find a job. Back then, career guidance was known as vocational guidance. It was used as a means to end poverty during the time when society was uproar over a demising economy. This new profession was described by historians as a progressive social reform movement aimed at eradicating poverty and substandard living conditions spawned by the rapid industrialization and consequent migration of people to major urban centres at the turn of the 20th century. This turn, saw a rise migration, resulting in an increased need for a more organized effort to help people find jobs (Whiteley, 1984).

Moen (1991) pointed out that at the time when career guidance begun, the number of counsellors was minimal and career counselling programme was still in its developmental stages such that most work prospects developed from close community contacts such as family, friends and perhaps churches. Moen confirms that vocational guidance movement was the precursor to career guidance and it began in 1907 at a time when Frank Parsons, the founding father of vocational guidance first created the methodology of career guidance. In 1908, Frank began the Vocational Guidance Bureau of Boston with a mission of aiding people to discover what careers were available. Parson's theories were rooted in first improving working conditions, then focusing on the individual worker's needs. His methodology mainly focused on making people in tune with their skills and interests, thus leading to a right fit for a career.

According to (Swanson, 1995), more women and veterans were in the workforce with higher education levels with the end of World War one. Technology development increased, opening new types of jobs and demands for certain skills. As such, higher emphasis on education and vocational guidance was placed in most countries. However, even though types of jobs have changed considerably in the past century, some of the fundamentals of career guidance remain the same in that the central themes continue to be developing an awareness of personal skills, interests and learning about career requirements. However, career guidance today is seen as an on going process to the extent that age is no longer the driving force it once was.

2.2 Influence of parents on career choices of children

According to a survey by Muddy (2000) in France, only 10% of high school students got any career guidance at school. More than half could think of no one at school who helped them with career exploration or their student career planning. Many adolescents' career decisions are influenced by the media or by their peers with little thought of what they might personally be interested in or motivated to do. If they are college bound, they may simply keep changing majors until they find something they like. However, as parents, you know that you affect your child's career development and choices, the same way you know that the career choices young people make will affect their job satisfaction, where they live, how much they earn and who their friends may be. In view of the above, in the early years, hundreds of studies were conducted to try and understand the different factors that influence a young adult's career choice. While confirming the influence of other personal and environmental factors, such as, personality, school and the role of peers and teachers on career aspirations, researchers unanimously proved that a large number of variables influencing students' occupational goals were linked to their family environment. These include; level of parental education, family size, employment and socioeconomic variables like parental income.

In addition, the majority of papers published on this subject consistently ranked parents as the most important and influential individuals regarding career decisions, as compared to teachers, peers, counsellors and others. however, Parents often wonder and worry about what their children will do when they grow

up after many years of investing into their formal and informal education, thus, they always hope that their children launches into a successful career. As such, the importance of their influence towards career choice of their children is consistently critical (Ferry 2006).

The current study similarly support the views that parents are of great importance in career choices of their children and that children seek advice from their since they trust them more than any other people. Although schools, peers, and the community in which the children come live in all have an impact on the children's self-identity and career choice, the expectations and perceptions of parents on vocational fit for their children have been found to be the key players in shaping career choices of these children. This study with the view that all parents always want the best out of their children, confirmation if that these parents support their children and encourage them to work hard while at secondary school so that they may obtain good results to help them access a good career. This could be a career of their interest and capability.

Creamer and Laughlin (2005) conducted a longitudinal study in Maryland Catholic University in Ireland on parental influence on careers of learners with visual impairments. Findings indicated that influence of parents on career choices of children was so strong that it overrides the influence of teachers, faculty, and career counsellors, who may know more about the career field in question but were not as well-known and or trusted as the student's parents for this type of decision. Thus, apart from peers, the parents are the most influential people in children's lives. Researchers went on saying, although peers are of great influence in many cases, most studies indicates that when it comes to choice of subject and career, adolescents are more influenced by parents. Children's own aspirations are influenced by their parents' aspirations or expectations to the extent that those who perceive their parents to have high educational aspirations for them choose careers in line with parent's expectations.

In Zambia however, support and encouragements from parents influence vocational outcomes in children through positive conversations, verbal and nonverbal reactions, in which parents convey their ideas, hope and trust in their children which in turn affect what children think, say and perceive about various careers. To the contrary however, children do not really follow careers of their

parents but do get advice from parents and later make their own decisions on which career to settle for. For example; children to Nurses may not really choose nursing career but might go further to being Doctors instead.

Additionally, a case study by Mathatha (2013) on career development of learners with visual impairments at Lions and Magwero Special Schools in Zambia indicated that of all the various factors to career choices of children, parents draws a huge portion as they are believed to know their children first and better than any other person. As such, parents' advice is seen easily taken by the child due to that natural trust and attraction which exist between children and their parents. Thus, this is similar as far as this study is concerned in that parents are seen to be of greater influence for some children get inspired by what their parents are doing or did especially if they were successful in life.

Ellie and Williams (2009) of Boston College of Business Science in a survey on value of parental involvement on career choices of students in the rural areas of Peru confirmed that parents influence career choices of their children both intentionally and inadvertently such that by the time children move into adolescence, they seriously begun considering their futures, often, looking to their parents either as role models or for career advice. A parent's approach to this can either inspire teenagers to explore a diverse set of potential occupations or to stick to a path they think their parents will approve of. As such, it is not surprising that people are the third or fourth generations of their families to work in the same profession. By so doing, they acquire an insider glimpse of their parent's occupations, making it easier for them to break into the industry. To the contrary, if parents complain about their jobs or struggle to support the family on the income their jobs provides, children are more likely to seek more fulfilling or higher paid roles. For example, parents who encourage their children to take music or dance lessons or sports sometimes influence them to commit to those activities full-time. The earlier a child is introduced to an interest area, the more time he or she has to explore it and strengthen his or her skills.

In support of the above views, data from the longitudinal study of American youth (2008) revealed that in families where parents never encourage children to attend college, just 4% of the children decided to pursue higher education. This is in stark contrast to families where parents encouraged children to attend college,

with 41% of those children choosing to do so. Parents play an important role such that even their ideas about gender, race, socio- economic background and other characteristics do influence children's career decisions.

A longitudinal study by Nazima (1999) in Australia among first years medicine students at Northridge University on the involvement of parents on career aspirations of children indicated that out of the one hundred students which were sampled, 75% showed that parenting style, support, responsiveness and guidance may even have more influence than family demographics. This proves how children from impoverished, low educational and disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds can have great academic achievements and proceed to more fulfilling and prosperous careers. This fact strongly encourages open engagement and involvement of parents in their children's academic pursuits. An authoritative parenting style (a demanding and responsive child-rearing style which includes a high level of parental involvement, high expectations and standards, adequate support, guidance and encouragement) is seen to be associated with better career choices as it balances clear, high expectations with emotional support and recognition of an adolescent's autonomy. Authoritative parents set standards, promote independence and provide a warm family climate, which results in self-confidence, persistence, social competence, academic success and psychosocial development. This in turn leads to more active career exploration on the part of children and greater career choice and satisfaction.

The current study however shows that parents in their own ways influence children on which careers to undertake as they grow up. This may happen unconsciously through the way they take and view various careers or people in those careers. Parents know that children through reading or the media have an idea about careers but may not know how and what to consider when choosing any form of career. These parents observe and know the capabilities and let children know that they can still weigh parental ideas on career choices as they explore in life and later put together ideas from home and those from books or the media for a concrete decision in life. However, little is known by parents themselves on how huge their impact is on career choices made by their children and this was what brought about this study. Thus, with the findings of this paper, with children may know and value the influence parents have towards their career choices.

Gander and Gardner (1998) conducted a comparative study in Japan's Tokyo University on effects of parental involvement on career choices made by their children in both disabled and non-disabled adolescents. Findings were that children frequently interacted with their parents as they approach adolescence. In turn, parents influenced them through indications that they were expected to take over the family business or follow the parents' profession hence, career aspirations and choices later on. Thus, parents had various intentions regarding the career development and choices of their children. The researchers further discovered that parental involvement in the education of their children was one determinant of parental influences in the children's career choices. This is seen when involvement of parents influenced what the child learnt about work and the work experiences. The study also reflected parental attitudes about school and work which in turn had a long term impact on their children's decision, plan and career choices later in life.

The current study however, is of the favour that parents talked to their children about career matters as they discussed about the world of work using examples from people they know and are doing fine in those careers. That helped children open up to various views on careers available. This study therefore recognizes the fact that some parents have limited knowledge of available careers but they still reminded their children that good grade at grade twelve gives them the chance to pursue a good career like teaching.

Ferry (2006) conducted a correlational study on factors influencing career choices of hearing impaired children in the rural areas of Pennsylvania. Findings indicated that parents frequently interacted with their children, by so doing, and as the school leaving age drew nearer, the aspiration and career choices levels of their children tended to move closer to the occupation levels of their parents even though earlier were closer to the occupational goals common in their various schools. Thus, it can be deduced that parental-child interaction results into career advice which children get from their parents and later on be able to make a decisive action upon which choices to go for.

In a similar view, using the inventory of parent and peer attachment (IPPA), to examine how parents influenced career choices of children, Ketterson and Blustein (1997) in Perth Community Colleges found that parents who were

closely connected and attached to their children influenced career choices of their children through discussions where they shared what careers they wanted their children to pursue in future. Thus, parents who enjoyed their work and constantly shared their enjoyment with children inspired them to take up careers with hopes of enjoying too. In turn, such children developed and made successful career choices and also learnt positive work values.

Zambia is not an exception in this outcome such that those children whose parents had much time in the education and career activities of their children are seen settling for careers they are aware of and have an idea on which industry the career will direct them to. On the other hand, children from those families where career and school activities were never a major topic due to lack of information or because parents were too busy with work and other family businesses, such children chose careers which they had no much information on. Parents are therefore the major tool towards children's career choices and how they influence these children in the choices of careers was the major concern of this research paper.

Super, (1957) states that parents feel their career goals worthy, and in most cases will expect their children to follow suit. Thus a student, who has no value in education, in order to raise themselves above their parent's level, will likely be viewed as ungrateful by their parents. In those cases the student needs to have found a job or career that started where their parent's level of ability has left off. When education, skill, abilities, and interests have not lead to the same level of income producing jobs, the discrepancy between aspiration and achievement has become a sore issue.

In Zambia however, children have the right to choose careers of their interest after all the advice given by parents. Parents actually positively advice, encourage and help children cope with careers of their choices. This later brings about satisfaction and good work culture as children join various industries.

2.3 Career guidance offered by parents to their children

Constantly changing patterns of work and education worldwide make it essential that every school student has access to career education and guidance that is future-focused and personalized. This has long term benefit for individuals and for

the country they live in. Career education and guidance is an inherent element of every school's provision of a rich and balanced education. It assists students to make decisions at key transition points and supports their successful transition from school to tertiary education or work. It also aims at developing the career management competencies that will equip students to manage their career pathways and opportunities throughout their lives.

Clutter and McMillan (2008) suggested that it is useful to understand some of the basic principles of career guidance, the processes involved in planning and building a successful career and how they can be harnessed by the parents as they support and guide their children on career and life journey. Therefore, parents play a huge role in the choices children make when they start looking for a career. They influence the level of education or training that their children achieve, the knowledge they have about work and different occupations, the beliefs and attitudes they have to working and the motivation they have to succeed. However, most of this is learned unconsciously especially that children and teenagers absorb the attitudes and expectations of parents as they grow up. Thus, parents' career guidance is important since they are primary counsellors, as much as teachers, peers and consultants do, if not more, parents play a huge role in drawing a study plan and shaping the career and future of their children. These parents have rich knowledge and experience and can encourage their children to choose a career or subjects that they have understood over their life and know the prospects in depth.

Perspectives of this study however, are that parents' exposure and expertise, may steer their wards in the right direction of career choice. More obviously, it has been a wish for every parent and child that efforts in provision of career education and guidance of young people in school education and homes where children come from can grow. Thus, the role of parents in their children's career education and guidance is being increasingly perceived as very important.

Clutter and Macmillan (2008) in their unpublished paper on seeking a career guide in London outlined various ways in which parents guide their children towards career selection. For instance, the attitude of parents matter the most in such a way that each and every parent has to stay positive when advising children about which career to select. Bringing up a positive gesture about your work place despite main changes and challenges involved may help children develop a

positive attitude and learn about varied set of industries. However, it is advisable that parents give children room for their own views and opinions on such choices as they keep encouraging them to gather information on various available career choices and later make informed choices. Parents can also inform their children on available opportunities through informal discussions about the world of work. For example, explain to them about the jobs which are well paying and let them know that as long as they work hard, they too can go for such paths.

In Zambia however, parents are seen guiding their children to consider careers of Teaching and Nursing as they are some of the well-known careers and both the educated and uneducated parents are aware of these careers.

Jocelyn (2000) asserts that parents offered career guidance to their children as they gave them the freedom to make choices and not to impose their own ideas. Thus, the goals of the parents here was to help their children find their own way based on their interests and skills and not to follow ideas of parents and interests which could prove counter-productive. By discussing interests, dreams and goals, parents got to know their children better which helped them guide them properly. In the same view, parents may try and step outside the way of the children and be able to observe, know them, and know their likes and dislikes, know how they work, play or interact with others of which may help as a parent to see your children in a different light and provide you with valuable information to assist them in career exploration. Parents can guide by being practical and realistic in their approach and be able to examine and find out whether the interests of the children are genuine and would suit them or were mere aspirations which were influenced by others. Thus, it is important for parents to encourage their children to explore their options through work experiences, also by talking to people in occupations that interests them. For example, industrial visits would be helpful in spotting and proving a platform to nurture their talents.

She emphasized that parents can offer career guidance to children by helping them identify the broad area of work that interests them, what sort of environment they would like to work in and then link it to their skills, interests, abilities and values. Additionally, parental support and encouragement do influence vocational outcome in children through interactions, such as, conversations, verbal and non-verbal reactions, in which parents conveyed their influence to their children,

which in turn affected what children thought, said and perceived about various careers.

A study by Jocelyn (2000) in Perth among rural community colleges on career guidance and parenting styles showed that parenting style, support, responsiveness and guidance may even have more influence than family demographics. This proves how children from impoverished, low and proceed to more fulfilling and prosperous careers. This encourages open engagement of parents in children's academic pursuits. An authoritative parenting style (demanding and responsive child-rearing style was found to be associated with better career choices as it balances clear, high expectations with emotional support and recognition of an adolescent's autonomy. Authoritative parents set standards, promote independence and provide a warm family climate, which results in self-confidence, persistence, social competence, academic success and psychosocial development. Parents, through their comments and statements, should encourage their children open up to all factors and ensure that this balance of opinion remains throughout the career development process. This further leads to more active career exploration on the part of children and greater career satisfaction

Fazarro (2006) conducted a study in Australia on how career information helped in career development and choices of children. Thus, findings showed that through career guidance, children have access to career explorations opportunities which make them gather necessary career information to make informed career decisions, set more realistic goals and experience better career outcomes. It has helped children identify curricular activities that enhanced their opportunities to achieve their career goals. Such guidance provides information that enlightens children on which subjects and skills are useful in future.

Additionally, researchers found out that parents unlike any other person provided the best career guidance to children as they interact at each stage of career development. Generally most parents recognize the importance of pursuing a career with good job opportunities as well as the importance of exploring and discovering all careers that may be of interest to their children. While some parents confidently plunge into career discussions with their teenagers, many parents from the older generations fear the communication gap and feel inadequate and ill-prepared to discuss and support their children's career

aspirations. Studies have found that in reality, however, parents' and children's views about career aspirations are more compatible than incompatible. Without parental approval or support, students and young adults are often reluctant to pursue or even explore diverse career possibilities.

To the contrary, views of the current study are that children still go for careers even without the approval of their parents.

Furthermore, Batshaw (2006) asserts that parents who are eager to support their children in the best possible way to help them acquire endless opportunities to explore career and work situations, both in the formal and informal setting. Therefore, encouraging children to take challenging classes, learning new skills, provide opportunities to instil confidence in family situations and informal contacts for exploration of occupational choices are some of the ways. Parental support and guidance can include specific career or educational suggestions as well as experiences that indirectly support career development, such as, family vacations, provision of resources, like books and modelling of paid and non-paid work roles. On an everyday basis, the simple sharing of workplace stories and modelling work behaviours allows parents to serve as a context for interpreting the realities of work while the secure and close family environment facilitates risk-taking and exploration all of which are needed in formation of a vocational identity.

The current study however indicates that parents still guide their children in choices of career and they use the capabilities and interests of the children in guiding on which choice to settle for. However, not all parents may have desired approaches in guiding their children and that is how children seek advice from peers or rather make their own choices. For instance, parents who never made it in life may have less visible examples to show their children about matters of career choices. Thus, conclusions from the reviewed literature may not be taken as a general assumption. Despite being influential in children's career choice affairs, parents still have to provide career guidance to children for clear focus. Thus, it is in the view of the current study that parents together with children may realize the importance of career guidance at parental-child levels.

2.4 Factors influencing career choice of children

According to Kerka (2000), career choice is influenced by multiple factors including personality, interests, self -concept, cultural identity, globalization, socialization, role model, social support and available resources such as information and financial. He further states that each individual undertaking the process is influenced by several factors including the context in which they live in, their personal aptitudes, social contacts and educational attainment.

Hewitt (2010) however, argues that factors influencing career choice among students can either be intrinsic or extrinsic or both. Hewitt further states that most students are influenced by careers that their parents favour, others follow the careers that their educational choices have opened for them, some choose to follow their passion regardless of how much or little it will make them while others choose the careers that give high income. Student's perception of being suitable for particular jobs also has been found to be influenced by a number of factors including ethnic background, year in school, level of achievement, choice of science subjects, attitudes and differences in job characteristics.

Research in career development, guidance and choices have been researched way back in the late 1800s (Super et al, 1976). Super and others describe career development as a lifelong process beginning at birth and that it is through this long period that the choices are finally made. According to this description, many individuals would seem to influence the career choices of a person in life. Although many people, including family, view career choice as a natural life for an adolescent, it is a major decision in establishing career path that may open up or close opportunities. It is an important turning point which involves making various career choices while in and after secondary school.

Various studies, for example; that of Bandura et al, (2001) suggested that adolescent's career choice are influenced by many factors, including life context, personal aptitudes, and educational attainment. This study was also in agreement with Seligman et al. (1988), whose study showed that even young children, as young as five years, can have career dreams.

In a study by Perrone et al. (2001) in Tanzania on role model influence on the career decision of college students, it was found that role model supportiveness, and quality of relationship contributed to the career choices of students. The study revealed that through identification with a role model, students developed career decision making skills. As students emulated behaviours, styles and attributes of their role models, they developed careers. Thus, by observing a successful role model in a specific career field, students believed they could also be successful in the occupation and as a result, preferred to pursue it.

Similarly, a survey in the United States of America by Swail and Krampit (2001) on influence of role models on carer choice found that as learners engaged into internship projects, they had an opportunity not only to apply classroom concepts to real world problems but also to observe and interact with professional role models. In turn, they get inspired to pursue similar careers to their role models. In the same view, in a qualitative study on how role model comes to be a factor in influencing career choices of students, a study in Britain by Vinnicombe et al. (2001) showed that students interacted with role models to see what worked and what did not work out them. As students observed and admired role models, they were helped in preparation for their own career roles and final choices later on.

A cross-sectional study on career choice in Ethiopia by Stebleton (2007) indicated that students had an external locus of control and believed that there were numerous external factors which influenced their Career choices. The external factors included: political and economic considerations, previous work experience and the influence of key individuals.

A case study by Natalie (2006) in Hong Kong community college, young adults through interaction with the family, school and community learn about and choose careers which ultimately became their careers.

According to Oyamo and Amoth (2008), studies in Kenya show that rural students tend to seek help from parents more than urban students and that parents more than teachers play a major role in career choices of students. Generally, the choice of a career is influenced by parents, friends, and counsellors however variations occur from one population to the other. Most children in secondary schools do not

have accurate information about occupational opportunities to help them make appropriate career choice.

Similarly, a study conducted Kerka (2000) in rural areas of Uganda showed that career choices are influenced by multiple factors including; personality interest, self-concept, cultural identity, socialization, role model, social support and available resources such as information and finances. Therefore, each individual undertaking the process is influenced by several factors including the context in which they live in, personal aptitudes, social contacts and educational attainment. Kerka further confirms that most people are influenced by careers which their parents favour, others follow those which their educational choices have opened for them, some choose to follow their passion regardless of how much or little it will make, while others choose careers that give higher income.

Further, Harwood (2008) reports that external influences that help to shape an individual's career choice are also influenced by significant others through social support from peers. Thus, young people through interaction with the context of family, school and community learn about and explore careers which ultimately lead to their career choice. It clearly shows that adolescent's own aspirations influenced by their parents' aspirations or expectations may result into a defined career choice in the child. Hence, parental support and encouragement are important factors that have been found to influence career choices. Otherwise, children may choose what their parents desire simply to please them.

Natalie (2006) asserts that, learning experience as a factor combines intellectual challenges, performance and educational reasons as influential factors to career choice of children. In her case study in Australia's Northridge University, it came out that the influences of learning experience maybe due to the fact that children learn about and explore various careers before they make their career choices and choose subject combinations that eventually lead to their career choices. This is the time when students decide on what they would want to pursue in future. She further pointed out that personal interests matter in career choices such that matching personal interests with career choice often leads to job satisfaction. Thus, students' interests tend to provide the main motives for their career choice. For instance, in teaching or nursing career, a student would choose that which have availability of advancement opportunities in it. Employment and self-

employment are outcome expectations which children tend to consider as they choose careers. Additionally, anticipated earnings and prestigious positions as factors imply that children choose certain careers with the view to earn huge income as well as to acquire prestigious positions in life.

Jocelyn (2009) further confirms that peer pressure also influences career choices in children. This could be as a result of overloaded curriculum, overworked teachers who do not have time to advice students and parents spending less time with their children.

This leaves children in the hands of their fellow peers to offer the necessary guidance. In her longitudinal study where the role of peer relationship in career choices was examined in learners aged 18 and above, findings showed that the formation and maintenance of close relationships influenced career explorations and choices later in life as adolescents slowly detached themselves from the security given by their parents, thus, develop a sense of security in their peers needed to engage in career exploration and decision making. Additionally, close peers relationships allowed them to discuss and explore careers in the environment, and eventually, make career decisions.

Hence, similar findings were reported by Patton and McCrindle (2001), that as children interact with peers, their advice is less important as compared to family members, teachers and career counsellors. However, despite efforts to attain gender equity, Africa still has a long way to go especially in career choices. This is from the observations made where in African cultures some religions specify careers to be pursued by males and females respectively. Thus, gender still stand as another influencing factor to career choices in children (Heward, 2009).

Clutter (2009) in his study among Nigerian students focused on educational factors that influenced career choice of students. His view in his study was that career choice was perceived to have been influenced by significance others such as peers, teachers, motivation speakers and guidance personnel. Findings from this study however revealed that parents are not influential factors in career choice of children since they spend little time with children at the time when children begin realising on which career to pursue. This is from the general observation that most parents are not involved in the education and other general academic activities of their children.

In Zambia however, parents interact with their children and during those interactive moments, they talk about careers which are workable in terms of job availability currently and parents especially those who are educated, use their own experiences or those of friends to explain to children more on career choices. Thus, the current study confirms that parents are a factor when it comes to career choices of children with the view that they are the first people to interact with their children and the influence they have towards career choices made by their children.

2.5 Summary of literature reviewed and identified gap

The chapter has reviewed international and local related literature on how parents influenced career choices of children in tertiary institutions, career guidance that parents offered to their children in tertiary institutions at the time of admission and other factors influencing career choice of children in tertiary institutions, and various issues on the subject have been brought out.

Available literature revealed that several factors which influenced career choices of children. These came out clearly as being; availability of resources, educational levels of parents, the interest of a child and the grades which the child obtains in grade twelve examinations. Peers and significant others also contribute to the choices of career as shown in reviewed literature. On the other hand, parenting style such as authoritarian play a part on how parents influence children's career choices such that they promote independence and that climate where self-confidence is built on. This further builds confidence and more ideas on choices in children as they grow. The family size also help parents to have positive focus on children's performances and later help on what career to pursue. Parents also encourage children to attend various career talks and read more about career information. This helps the children to have an idea about careers offered and what it takes to go for such careers. However, it still remained unknown how parents influenced career choice of their children at the University of Zambia.

The next chapter presents the methodology used in the study.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Overview

This chapter describes the methodology that was used in this study. The chapter describes the following themes; research design, target population, sample size, sampling procedures, research instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006:71), “a research design can be thought of as the structure of research.” In this case, a research design is a plan that guides the researcher in collecting, analysing and interpreting data. This study used a descriptive survey research design. Kerlinger in Orodho (2003) argues that descriptive survey is a method of collecting information by interviewing and administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals. Kerlinger has a view that it can be used when collecting information about people’s attitudes, opinions, habits or any of the variety of education or social issues. Further, Orodho in Kombo and Tromp (2006) suggests that major purpose of descriptive research is description of the state of affairs as it exists. Since the study sought to describe in detail influence of parents on career choice of their children at the University of Zambia, a descriptive survey research design was therefore appropriate.

3.2 Study Population

Kasonde (2013:35) points out that, “a population is a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement.”

Therefore, the study population comprised of all students at the University of Zambia and their parents in selected schools at the University of Zambia.

3.3 Sample and sampling techniques

The sample size comprised of 54 participants; 27 students and 27 parents. 9 students from each of the 3 admitting schools were sampled in this case.

According to Kasonde (2013), sampling technique is a research plan that explains how the respondents for the study are to be selected from the population. It is also a process that helps the researcher select respondents, places or things to study on.

Kombo and Tromp (2011) states that purposive sampling technique allows the researcher to use cases that have the required information with respect to the objectives of his or her study.

This study used a purposive sampling for selecting three admitting schools at the University of Zambia because they have typical characteristics for the study. Stratified random sampling was used to select 27 children, 9 from each admitting school. From each school, children were first placed in groups according to programmes and year of study and were stratified to have representation by each year of study then made a simple random selection from each programme. Parents were purposively selected as key informants.

3.3.1. Characteristics of the participants in the study.

Table 1. Education levels of children at the University of Zambia

	Frequency	Percent
First Year	5	18.5
Second Year	6	22.2
Third Year	6	22.2
Fourth Year	10	37.0
Total	27	100.0

3.4 Instruments for Data Collection

In this study, it was prudent to triangulate by employing three different tools for data collection namely; semi-structured interview guides, questionnaires and focus group discussion guides. This was done in order to ensure validity and credibility of the findings, (Cohen & Manion, 2000). Semi-structured interview guides were used to collect data from the parents. This allowed the respondents to open up and provide information on their influence on career choices of their children at the University of Zambia. This research instrument is comprehensive, systematic flexible and data collected is reliable since they consist of both open and closed-ended questions and questions are formulated before the interview. Questionnaires were used to collect data from children. Each child was subjected to questions of the same nature.

Kombo and Tromp (2011) argue that questionnaires enable the researcher to collect unbiased data and cover a wide area within a short period of time. Focus

group discussions guides coupled with a voice recorder were also used to close-check responses from children. This was used because a focus group discussion is an interactive event guided by an interviewer to stimulate participants, guide discussion and probe in order to obtain highly detailed and specific group data that meet the research objectives (Shedlin & Schreiber, 1994). All the data collection instruments appear as appendices.

3.5 Reliability and Validity of instruments

Multiple methods of data collection validated the research. This was so because methods complement each other with no overlapping weaknesses (Brewer & Patton, 2002). Combination of methods ensured that inconsistencies were removed. In order to validate the findings, the researcher used member checking and made use of the responses for verification of the findings (Patton, 1999).

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection refers to the gathering of information to serve or prove facts. It involves collection of views on the attitudes of the people about the state of affairs of the phenomenon.

Data collection is important in research as it allows for the dissemination of accurate information and development of meaningful programmes James (2004).

In order to facilitate data collection in this study, four introductory letters were obtained from the Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies of the University of Zambia. Letters were presented to the Deans of each of the 3 admitting schools which were sampled for permission to carry out a research in respective schools. On the agreed days, structured questionnaires were distributed to students of various levels of study while focus group discussions involving 9 students per group in 3 groups were also held on the agreed days at the agreed venue. Use of questionnaires brought about uniformity of responses. Lastly, interview schedules were conducted to parents at agreed time and place respectively. The process took two months. Voice recorder was used to record the interviews and focus group discussions. The researcher transcribed and translated data recorded on the voice recorder which helped in the accuracy of the data collected.

3.7 Data Analysis

According to Broom (2011), data analysis refers to the examining of what has been collected in a survey or experiment and making deductions and inferences. It involves uncovering underlying structures; extracting important variables, detecting any anomalies and testing any underlying assumptions. Data analysis also involves scrutinizing the acquired information and making inferences.

In order to interpret the findings of the research objectives, the obtained data was analysed using a qualitative approach. To show meaningful distribution of scores of frequencies as well as percentages, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS computer software version 20) was used. This helped to analyse qualitative data presented in tables and figures gathered from questionnaires to determine: how parents influence career choice of their children at the University of Zambia, establish career guidance parents offered to their children before admission to the University of Zambia and examining other factors influencing career choice of children at the University of Zambia. Data obtained through interview guides and focus group discussion guides were transcribed and then categorised into major themes, after which it was analysed thematically and later reported verbatim.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues need to be anticipated and dealt with by the researcher (Creswell, 2009). Thus, this study took into account possible and potential ethical issues. The measures undertaken to ensure compliance with ethical issues included seeking permission from all Deans of the three schools which were sampled. In the same view, measures were taken to ensure that identities of respondents were kept confidentially. As rightly identified by Wimmer and Dominick (1995), the principle of confidentiality and respect are the most important ethical issues requiring compliance on the part of the researcher. The basic ethical requirements demanded that the researcher respects the rights, values and decisions of the respondents. In addition, during research, the respondents' responses were neither interfered nor contested by the researcher. Furthermore, informed consent was obtained from respondents and all the people in charge of places where the study was done from. While carrying out the research, the right of self-determination was highly upheld to allow the respondents to decide will free whether to participate in the study or not. The researcher communicated to participants before

the administration of the instruments the purpose of the study in writing and verbally. The researcher also openly informed respondents that they had the right to withdraw and the effect of their withdrawal in the study was explained. Additionally, all respondents were assured of the benefits they may obtain from the findings of the study. Thus, respondents received equal treatment by the researcher.

3.9 Summary

The forgoing chapter presented the methodology that was used in the study. A descriptive survey design was used to describe the influence of parents on career choice of their children at the University of Zambia. 54 respondents participated in this study and were selected through simple random and purposive sampling procedures. They consisted of 27 parents and 27 children of which 9 children were sampled from each of the three admitting schools of the institution. Questionnaire, interview guides and focus group discussions guides were used as tools for data collection in this study. Therefore, responses obtained from interviews and focus group discussions were recorded and then grouped into thematic categories that were merged thereafter. While the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS computer software version 20) was used for analysing responses from questionnaire. The study took a qualitative approach. Ethical issues were also taken into consideration as outlined in the description above.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study which aimed at investigating the influence of parents on career choice of their children at the University of Zambia. The findings are presented according to the objectives. Objectives of the study were; to determine how parents influence career choice of their children at the University of Zambia, to establish career guidance parents offered to their children before admission at the University of Zambia and to examine other factors influencing career choice of children at the University of Zambia. The findings from the children are presented first then those of their parents.

4.1. Influence of parents on career choice of children before admission at UNZA

The study sought to determine how parents influenced career choices of their children before admission at the University of Zambia. To this effect, parents of children at the institution were interviewed while focus group discussions along with questionnaires were administered to children. Findings are presented in a manner that those of children come first and later, the response from parents respectively.

4.1.1 Views of Children

When asked on how parents influenced career choices of their children, 5 children as shown in table 2 below reported that parents influenced career choices of children through the support which they gave their children throughout their education process that is from the first grade up to the time when they enter tertiary education. In the same view, 5 children indicated that parents' encouragement influenced career choices which their children settled for. Within the same table, 11 children cited that the positive interaction which parents have with their children is what brought about influence on career choice of the children. On the other hand, 6 children indicated that parental support, encouragements and positive interaction were ways in which parents influenced career choices of their children.

Table.2. How parents influenced career choice of their children

	Frequency	Percent
Support	5	18.5
Encouragements	5	18.5
Positive interaction	11	40.7
All the above	6	22.2
Total	27	100.0

Findings above also came out during the focus group discussions where one child narrated that; during interaction, parents give children more working ideas about career choices using their experiences, observations from what their friends, neighbours and family members have achieved out of such particular careers. Another child explained that;

My father used to tell me that if I work hard at school, I can be anything in future because it can be easy for me to pursue any course and career of my choice and that which can make me happy throughout my life. He gave examples of my uncle who studied medicine and now is comfortable in life. The more I interacted with my father, the more I learnt many things about careers and was able to match my interest and capabilities with the career of my choice. Thus, I choose to study Economics and settled with it.

4.1.2 Views of parents

Concerning how parents influenced career choices of their children, the study revealed that parents took time talking to their children about what is workable and what is not workable in terms of career and employment matters. Thus, one parent disclosed that,

We parents play a significant role in this matter because we know what is good for our children after school. This is from the fact that we are experienced and have so many examples of what has worked on well for us or other people we know in our society. Thus, we influence the choices children have in their careers through positive guidance and suggesting various workable options.

Another parent pointed out that, each parent would want his or her child to pursue a career of high prospects so that they can be safe in future. However, that is never the case for some of the parents as some children can bear me witness if you happen to talk to any madam. Normally, only parents with knowledge in careers can guide their children. Those without knowledge, their children usually do not experience any parental influence at all. Mainly, these are parents who are uneducated in far remote areas and cannot even read or maybe, only know few common careers like teaching and nursing.

4.2 Knowledge of parents on career choices

The figure below presents the finding from the study on the knowledge of parents on career choices. Thus, findings from children will be presented first followed by those of parents.

4.2.1 Views of children

Pertaining to whether parents have knowledge on career choices, the table below shows that 11 children cited that parents has very good knowledge in career choices. In the same table, 10 children indicated that parents have good knowledge on issues of career choices. Findings in the table below further show that 4 children acknowledged that parents have fairly good knowledge about career choices. However, in the same item of parents and their knowledge on career choice, 2 of the sampled children indicated that the knowledge of parents in career choices is poor.

Table.3. Knowledge of parents on career choices of their children

	Frequency	Percent
Very good	11	40.7
Good	10	37.0
Fairly Good	4	14.8
Poor	2	7.4
Total	27	100.0

During the focus group discussion, children reported that parents to some extent have knowledge about career choices only that most of them do not know how to use this knowledge in helping their children. Thus, one child from the group lamented that;

It is very true madam that some of us only came to know some of the courses and programmes from here only after buying the application form. Personally, I choose special education without knowing what was involved in it but only followed the education concept of it. But I thank God that later with the help of my lecturers, the concept is clear and I have accepted the choice I made. My parents are not even aware of the details of what this programme is all about and I do understand them.

4.2.2 Views of parents

Most parents during the interview interaction disclosed that they have very good knowledge about career choices. However, some responses were in line with those of the students in various focus group discussions where some parents indicated that mainly, parents who are educated and those in urban areas and are exposed to information do have very good knowledge about career choices. As such, children of such parents are to the greater advantage and usually have varieties of choices unlike those of parents with less or no knowledge about career choices.

4.2. Career guidance parents offered to their children before admission at UNZA

To establish guidance parents offered to their children before admission at the University of Zambia, a self - administered questionnaire and focus group discussion were conducted with children while interactive interviews were done on parents. Thus, findings of sub-themes within this objective are presented as follows;

4.2.1 Whether parents offered guidance on career choices

Regarding with whether parents offered guidance on career choices to their children, findings in the table 4 below shows that 25 children acknowledged receiving guidance in career choices from parents. On the other hand, 2 children indicated that not all parents offered guidance in career choices of their children.

Table 4. Whether parents offered guidance on career choices

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	25	92.6
Some parents	2	7.4
Total	27	100.0

These findings appeared too in all the focus group discussions where children reported that not all parents knew how to guide children in career choices.

4.2.2 Career guidance parents offered to their children before admission at UNZA

The table 5 below depicts the study findings on career guidance parents offered to their children before admission at the University of Zambia. Patterning to findings in the aspect above, responses of students are presented first from the table then those of their parents follows as outlined below.

4.2.3. Views of children

With regards to career guidance parents offered to their children, table 5 below shows findings as indicated by 12 children that parents guided them in Teaching and Nursing careers. In the same table, it emerged that 2 children reported that parents guided them in Computer Science and Business related courses. Findings in the table further showed that 6 children cited that parents offered career guidance in peace and security related careers like; Police, Army and Zambia Air Force respectively. On the other hand, 7 children indicated Agriculture courses being careers parents guided them on.

Table .5. Career guidance parents offered to their children

	Freq	Percent
Teaching& Nursing	12	44.4
Computer Science & business courses	2	7.4
Police, Army& Zambia Air Force	6	22.2
Agriculture courses	7	25.9
Total	27	100.0

Furthermore, findings from all the three focus group discussions which were held with children showed that parents guided their children in various career choices they knew and had ideas about. One child narrated that;

Parents would want the best for their children and as such, they guide in career they know that children may always have chance being employed. Thus, careers like those of Police service, Teaching, Nursing and Agriculture are supported by most parents since recruitment for these careers mainly involves a good number of recruits, owing it that one can have higher chances of being picked.

4.2.4 Views of parents

Parents on the other hand confirmed the findings which emerged from the views of their children that they opted to guide children into careers which may get them a job fast and those which if they do not secure employment, they may still use the skills and begun their own business like in agriculture courses.

4.2.3 Perceived parental encouragements towards self-direction in career choice

Concerning the perceived encouragements which parents have towards self-direction in career choice of children, table 6 below shows the findings which emerged from students. Those from focus group discussions and that of parents are presented afterwards.

4.2.1 Views of children

Of the 27 sampled children as indicated in table 6 below, 1 child cited that parents encouraged their children to choose careers within their interests. On the other hand, 18 children reported that parents encouraged children to choose careers choices within their capabilities. Within the same table, 1 child indicated that encouraged on choosing careers which are related to grades obtained at grade twelve final examinations.

Table.6. Perceived encouragements towards self-direction in career choices

	Frequency	Percent
Job of own interest	1	3.7
Choices within capabilities	18	66.7
Choices in relation to grades obtained	1	3.7
All the above	7	25.9
Total	27	100

The findings above are in correlation with the responses obtained in the focus group discussions which were conducted among children and they reported that mainly, parents encourage children to focus and choose career choices within their capabilities and not follow what other people want them to pursue. One child confirmed that;

Madam, most parents tell their children that it is good and motivating to focus on careers they are good at doing in life. This is from their experience that people do better in things which they have interest and ideas into.

4.2.2 Views of parents

Parents during interviews explained that they never forced children into careers which they were not interested into. Instead, they encouraged them to work hard, obtain good grades at grade 12 final examinations and follow their dreams.

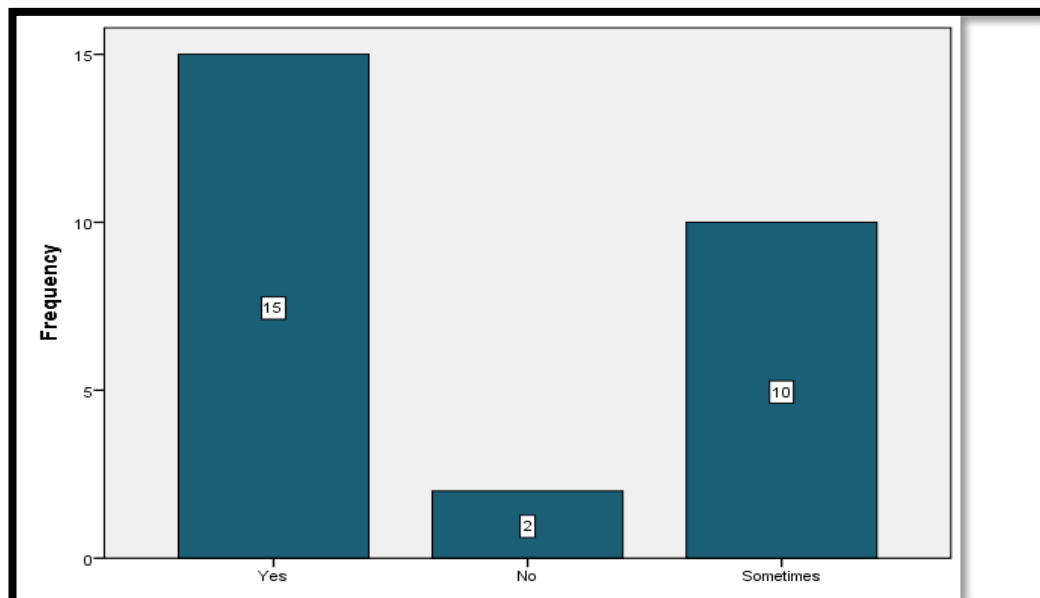
4.2.4 Whether children valued contribution of parents towards career guidance

Regarding to whether children valued the contribution of parents towards career guidance, the table below depicts findings obtained from children and views of parents follow after the table.

4.2.3 Views of children

The figure below shows that 15 children cited that children value contributions parents make towards their career guidance. In the same view 2 children reported that contributions of parents towards career guidance of children were not valued at all. On the other hand 10 children indicated that they sometimes valued contributions parents made towards their career guidance.

Figure1. Whether children valued contributions of parents towards career guidance



Similar revelations were echoed by most children during the focus group discussion.

4.2.3 Views of parents

All the parents in an interview reported that if their contributions resulted into a negative future, children complained and regretted. Thus, they ended up on training for other careers which pleased them later in life. One parent narrated that,

My son appreciated my advice about joining the army and he found happiness in it. I overheard him telling a friend that my advice was of value to him.

Another parent explained that in instances when children never valued guidance from parents, it was a good sign that they were not well guided and encouraged positively with good living examples about the career.

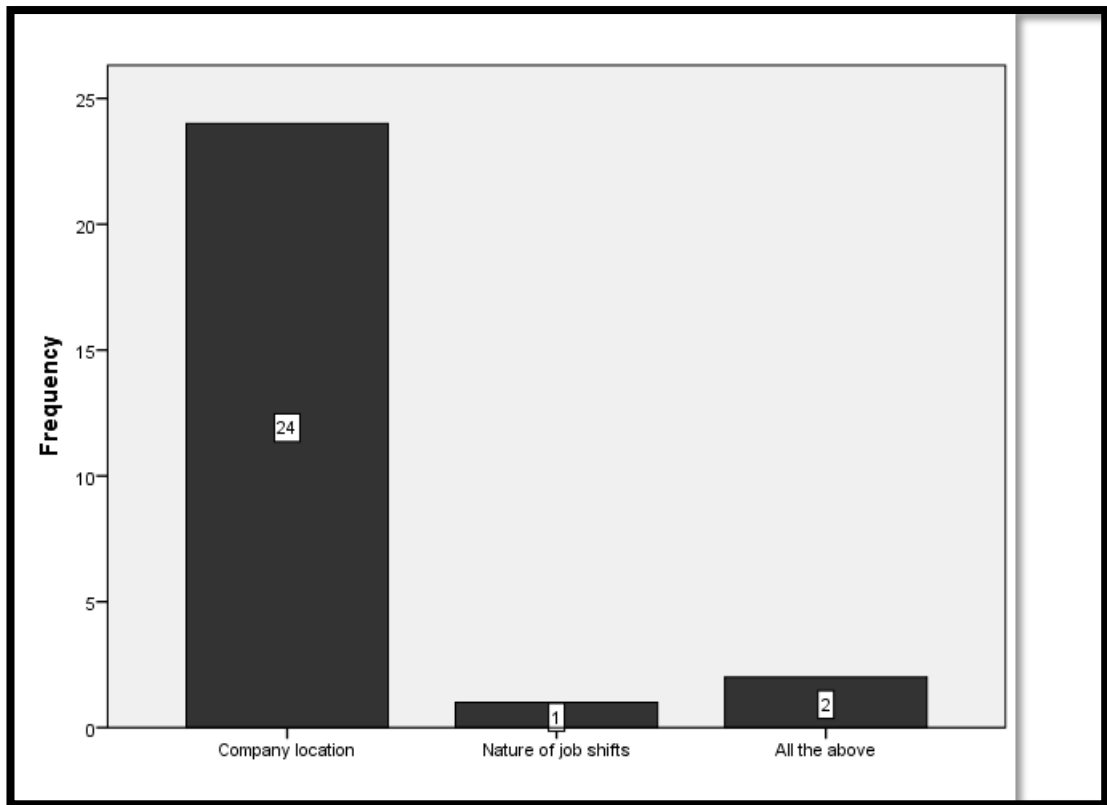
4.4.5 Perceived barriers to career choices of children by parents

With regards to perceived barriers parents have towards career choice of their children, both children and parents cited their views as presented below.

4.2.4 Views of children

Figure 2 below shows that 24 children in the study reported that parents have perceived barriers towards career choices of their children. For instance, location for the industries in which some careers are found. In the same view, 1 child cited that the kind of shifts involved in the jobs related to various careers worries parents as children make career choices. To the contrary, 2 children confirmed that both the location of the company and the kind of shifts involved worries parents as children make various choices in careers.

Figure 2 perceived parental barriers to career choices of children



Such responses were reflected in the focus group discussions where children from all the 3 groups acknowledged that parents have barriers in the environment or location of the company or industries in which the chosen careers are found. The nature of shifts involved in such a career also became a source of worry to parents as children made choices in various careers.

4.2.5 Views of parents

As parents we know what is good for our children. Therefore, we get worried when children choose careers which were not safe. One parent explained that,

They worry as parents when children make choices in jobs which were not safe like those with poor working conditions, risk taking jobs like; Police service, Army, Security Guarding and other jobs with night shifts.

Another parent disclosed that,

Parents always got worried for a child who goes for a career without a predictable future. That in some instances, constant and rapid technological changes causes

some careers to become extinct such that if one decided to train for that career, they may regret in future which all people would want to avoid.

4.4.6 Effectiveness in influence of parents on career choice of children at UNZA

Regarding the effectiveness in influence of parents on career choice of children, and children and their parents indicated different response as presented below.

4.2.6 Views of children

Table 8 below shows that 4 children reported that there was effective influence of parents on career choice of their children at the University of Zambia is effective. In the same line, 3 children indicated that the influence of parents on career choice of their children at the University of Zambia was very effective. To the contrary, 8 children confirmed that the influence of parents in career choice of their children at the University of Zambia was ineffective. Meanwhile, 12 children indicated that influence of parents towards career choice of children at the University of Zambia was very ineffective.

Table .7. Effectiveness on influence of parents on career choice of children at UNZA

	Frequency	Percents
Effective	4	14.8
Very effective	3	11.1
Ineffective	8	29.6
Very ineffective	12	44.4
Total	27	100.0

These findings were revealed by several students in various focus group discussions where they explained that parents are best teachers and advisers to their children. Unfortunately, most of them were not aware of the impact their influence had in the matter. One child noted that;

Lack of knowledge on how influential parents are in career choice of children were attributed to poor involvement of most parents in education of their children, starting from

primary to secondary school levels. This could be as a result of schools dominating in the educational affairs all the time. We also believed that only schools through teachers have workable ideas towards our education and all that goes along with it.

The other remarks were inclined to the fact that respondents explained that not all parents had the skills and knowledge about various careers and as such, students mainly knew more about careers through their peers and significant others even after they had already bought application forms from the institution. This is because most parents, especially those in remote rural areas and were uneducated only had knowledge in common careers.

4.4.7. Views of parents

During the interviews, parents mentioned that some of them were effective towards the influence of career choices of children. However, most children believed in their teachers, peers and technology. Some parents may not be educated but they had ideas concerning the education and future of their children. Major challenge was that of limited knowledge on other careers which institutions introduced currently as most parents only knew commonly known careers like teaching and nursing.

Another parent echoed that;

Other parents are effective and made close follow-up in the activities of their children of which helped their children and managed to explore careers.

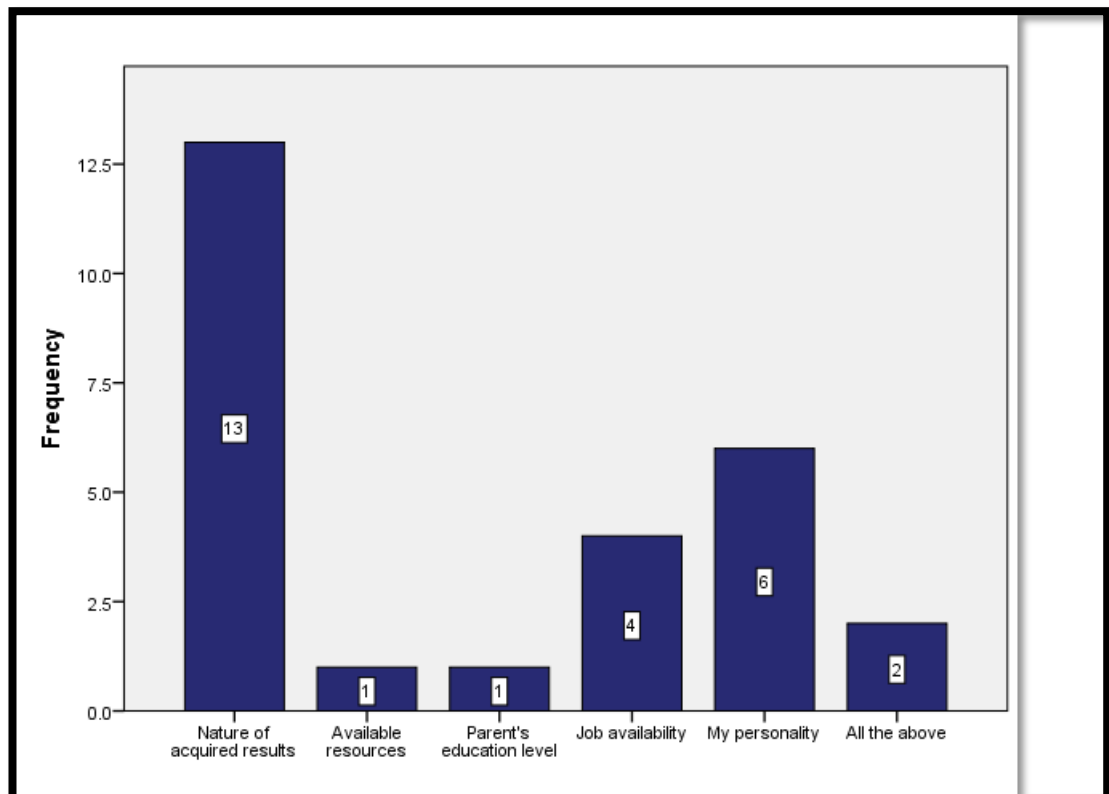
4.3 Factors Influencing Career Choice of at the University of Zambia

To examine factors that influenced career choice of students at the University of Zambia, data was collected from the children and their parents. The presentations are done in such a way that children's views are presented first followed by those of their parents.

4.3.1. Views of children

The figure below shows that majority of the children, 13 indicted that the nature of results they obtained at grade twelve influenced their career choices. Findings from the figure further show that, 6 children reported individual personality as a factor that influenced children’s career choices. On the other hand, 1 child confirmed that children’s career choices were influenced by the education level of their parents. Within the same figure, 1 child observed that resources available to someone for tertiary education influenced the choice of a career one settled for, while 4 children indicated availability of jobs currently as being the factor in their choice of careers. However, 2 children confirmed that nature of results obtained at grade 12 final examinations, availability of jobs, availability of resources, educational levels of parents and the individual personality all have a bearing to the choices of careers children made.

Figure 3 Factors influencing career choices of children at UNZA



The focus group discussions with children also revealed that several factors influenced the choices children made. One child lamented that;

Results which I obtained in my grade twelve final examinations are what defined my future now. I can confess to you madam that I grew up wanting to study medicine and other science related programmes, but it came out that I performed poorly in all the sciences and Mathematics that could only be selected in admission in the adult education. I regretted at first but now that I understand that if I just work hard in this same career, I can be anything I want to be in this world.

Another child in a different group pointed out that;

Being born from a poor family and despite having obtained very good results in grade twelve, I could not do the career of my interest. I wanted to study Water Engineering at Natural Resource Development College (NRDC), but my worry was that of where to source my tuition fees from. There can be bursaries offered to some students at the college but not every student has access to it like it is the case with the University Of Zambia where a good number of students benefits through bursaries. Thus, I opted to study Mathematics within the school of Natural Sciences and I like my career.

4.3.2 Views of parents

Parents reported factors they felt influenced career choice of their children as narrated below. One parent reported that,

There may be several factors influencing career choices of children depending on the background and socio-economic status of each child. Mainly, the nature of results a child obtains at grade twelve here in Zambia places that individual in a career which may accommodate such results. For example; while in grade twelve, my daughter wanted to be a medical doctor through the school of natural sciences at the University. To our disappointment, the institution and the school have higher requirements for admissions. As such, she had no choice but to go where her results would earn her a place at the

highest learning institution which is school of education in the department of adult education. Thus, the nature of her results crushed with her personal interests later on. In the same view, we over looked the issues of whether the career pursued could provide her with a job just after completion because sometimes as parents, we believe that each career has a job awaits as long as someone work hard and have a positive attitude towards the career.

Another parent reported with the same view that;

I will be honest to you that as my children were growing up, I took time to let them know careers which were working out for people despite their background and other factors. As such, availability of jobs after training for a career matters most because each person pursuing a career wishes to work as soon as they complete their studies. So, as a parent, I feel careers which are of high levels of job availability would be a factor to most children as they choose which career to go for. On the other hand, the interest of a child on what they would want to do in future can be one influential factor too. This is from the fact that it becomes easy for one to do what they enjoy doing unlike where they are forced by circumstances to pursue a career. Such would lead to poor performances and losing the job later in life.

Another parent lamented,

My dear daughter, I only heard from my son that his friend who was already at the University bought him an application form to enrol into the school of humanities and social sciences where he was to study demography which I had no idea of what job it may offer him afterwards. The only thing I know about the University of Zambia is that they train teachers, lawyers and doctors. Therefore, though I took time as I can remember talking about careers and how they are related to the world of work, my son finally got advice from his friends who were already training at the institution on which career to settle for.

Thus, he defended his choices that if he does not find any job fast, he can still use his skill to do his own business after all.

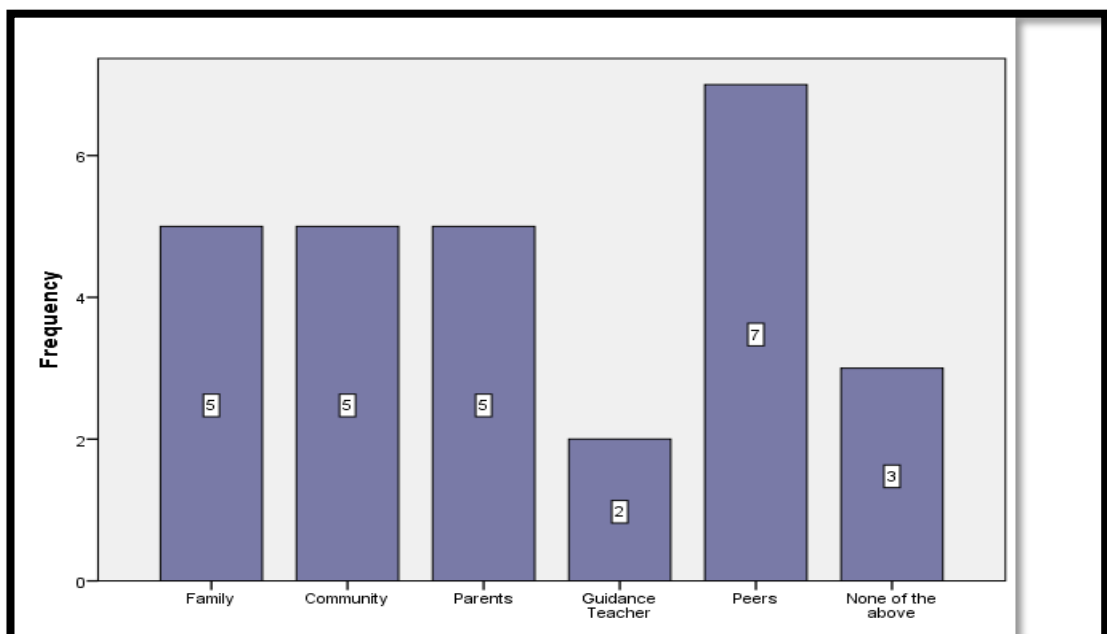
4.3.1. Source of knowledge about career choices

Pertaining to the sources of knowledge on career choices, findings emerged as presented in figure 5 below.

4.3.3. Views of children

Regarding to sources of knowledge about career choices of students 5 indicated having acquired the knowledge in career choice from within the family. In the same table of findings, 5 children cited that the community was their source of knowledge in career choices. Findings from 5 children further show that parents were the sources of knowledge in career choices. On the other hand, 2 children acknowledged having acquired knowledge in career choices from the guidance teacher. Findings further show that 7 children reported that peers were their source of knowledge. However, 3 children indicated that the family, community, parents, guidance teachers and peers were not their sources of knowledge in career choices.

Figure.4. Source of knowledge about career choices



Responses from all the three focus group discussions show that peers were a major source of career choices among the children.

4.3.4 Views of parents

This came out uniformly among the interviewed parents where one of the parents lamented that:

As parents, we strive to help children on career issues using the experiences from our careers and the other people in our communities. However, it has become a trend for children to learn from each other about careers. This has helped especially to those children whose parents have less to offer in terms of knowledge.

4.3.4. Level of knowledge on issues of career choices

With regards to level of knowledge in career choices, the table below shows that 4 children acknowledged having “excellent” knowledge in career choices.

Findings from the table further shows that 12 children have “very good” knowledge in career choices, while 11 children reported having “good” knowledge

Table .8. Level of knowledge in career choices

	Frequency	Percent
Excellent	4	14.8
Very good	12	44.4
Good	11	40.7
Total	27	100.0

4.3.5. Career choices children had before settling for the current career

As shown in table 10 below, 12 children had one career choice before settling for the current careers. Meanwhile, 15 children indicated having two career choices before having settled for the current careers.

Table.9. Career choices children had before the current one

	Frequency	Percents
One	12	44.4
Two	15	55.6
Total	27	100.0

This was echoed by various children during the focus group discussion where one child in particular pointed out that;

I would openly tell you that I had two careers in mind as I was growing up though none of them is what I finally settled for. I have wanted to study Law or Economics but later, I developed interest in teaching and decided to study Civic education so that I can be a teacher later on.

To the contrary, another child in another group confirmed that;

I have had one career choice since the time I started school and this is exactly what aim pursuing even now. I grew up admiring various television presenters and have wanted to be one in future. Thus, I carried on with the idea and now, in my second year studying Mass communication and very sure that will be exactly what I have ever wanted.

4.3.6. Knowledge of teachers in career choices

Regarding to knowledge of teachers in issues of career choices, during the focus group discussion children reported that teachers have very good knowledge about career choices. One child mentioned that;

Some teachers in these schools are aware of issues to do with career choices such that once in a while, they find time to talking to pupils about the world of work and which subject combinations would make someone manage to go through such a desired career choice. However, it is not all of them that have

much awareness on this matter madam. Others, maybe due to poor reading culture here in our country only fairly know more about career choices even when a pupils ask them about it, would also refer to the other fellow teacher.

Another child said that;

Like she said madam, it seems other teachers just do not have interest in such issues and would rather refer pupils to career teachers or masters who only exist by name and not actions in most of these schools in our country.

4.5 Summary of the chapter

The foregoing chapter presented the findings of the study on influence of parents on career choices of their children at the University of Zambia. Parents were reported to be of great influence in career choices their children made before admission at the University of Zambia because they took chance in supporting the children positively as they interacted with the on a parent-child basis. Parents encouraged their children to settle for careers of their interest in order for them to attain job satisfaction.

On the other hand, parents were of guidance to their children before they entered any tertiary institution. In this case, the children were guided in careers like Teaching, Nursing, Computer Sciences, Business related courses, Agriculture, Policy Service, Army and Zambia Air Force careers respectively. The chapter shows the main factors which influenced career choices of children in the current study as being the nature of results the individual child obtained at grade 12 final examinations, resources available in terms of finances to the children, the education level of the parents, the personality of the individual child and the availability of jobs to the children as the complete their studies.

4.6 New Knowledge Contributed by the study

The chapter presented findings of the study which sought to answer the following questions: How did parents influence career choice of their children at the University of Zambia? What career guidance did parents offer to their children before admission at the University of Zambia? And what factors influence career choice of children at the University of Zambia?

With regards to how parents influenced career choice of their children at the University of Zambia, results showed that positive interaction which existed between parents and their children had great influence on career choices of the children. However, some students pointed out that positive interaction, support and encouragements children obtained from their parents all influenced their career choices respectively. Findings from focus group discussions mainly disagreed on basis that most parents were too busy to interact and support their children in academic affairs and left everything for teachers and peers to handle.

Concerning the career guidance parents offered to their children before admission to the University of Zambia, the study revealed that mainly, parents offered careers like; Teaching, Nursing, Computer Science, Business, Agriculture, Police service, Army and Zambia Air Force respectively.

These revelations were supported by those from the interactive interviews which showed that parents guided mainly in common careers like teaching and nursing maybe, since these were the careers well known by most of them and had experience or knew people experienced in them.

As to factors which influenced career choice of children at the University of Zambia, findings from the study indicated that results which students acquired at grade 12 were a huge factor towards their choices of career. On the other hand, findings showed that the individual personality of the children acted as a factor in influencing their career choices.

The study further revealed that availability of jobs currently in our country proved to be a huge factor in the choice of careers in students. It was however cited that availability of resources and education levels of parents too, influenced career choice of children.

To the contrary, a few respondents indicated that all the factors above were of great influence on career choices made by children.

These findings may have emanated from the fact that grade 12 results are what guides one into any form of tertiary education in Zambian education regulations.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the study which aimed at investigating the influence of parents on career choice of their children at the University of Zambia. The discussion of findings is presented based on the objectives of the study which were; to determine how parents influence career choices of their children at the University of Zambia, to establish career guidance parents offer to their children at the University of Zambia as well as to examine factors influencing career choices of children at the University of Zambia.

5.2. How parents influence career choices of their children at the University of Zambia

Regarding to how parents influenced career choices of their children, it was observed that the positive interactions which parents have with their children from childhood up to the time when children complete school and prepare for tertiary education was very helpful and influenced children towards their career choices. Parents also encouraged and supported their children in all their academic activities in order to help them develop higher self-esteem and courage to do things they were capable of. Similar revelations were also noticed during the focus group discussions where one child narrated that during their interaction, parents gave children more working ideas about career choices in relation to their experiences, observations from what their friends, neighbours and family members have achieved in such particular careers.

This is in line with Bluestein's theory which assumes that the continuous and secure relationships between parents and their children till late adolescence the time when career exploration is a major activity. Thus parents through their continuous parental-child interaction influenced the choices children had towards career. Thus, the theory confirms the importance of parents in career choices of their children.

Therefore, mostly the study showed that parents influenced career choices of their children through positive guidance to higher prospects in terms of jobs which are

workable out of their experiences and what they see in the society they live in. However, this kind of influence depends on whether a parent is knowledgeable it takes to guide about career choices. As such, findings showed that parents who were uneducated and live in remote areas had no or less influence for they only had limited examples of careers to suggest to their children.

These revelations are in consistency with what a number of scholars have argued. For example, Gander and Gardner (1998) argued that aspirations of children are influenced by parents' aspirations or expectations such that those who perceive their parents to have high educational aspirations for them choose careers in line with parent's expectations. The support and encouragements of the parents tend to influence vocational outcomes in children through interaction such as conversation, verbal and nonverbal reactions, in which parents convey their influence to children which in turn affect what children think, say and perceive about various careers.

On the other hand, Ferry (2006), did a correlational study on parental influence on career choices of their visually impaired children in the rural areas of Pennsylvania. Findings indicated that parents frequently interacted with their children, by so doing, and as the school leaving age drew nearer, the aspiration and career choices of their children tended to move closer to the occupation levels of their parents even though earlier were closer to the occupational goals common in their various schools. Thus, it can be deduced that parental-child interaction results into career advice which children get from their parents and later on be able to make a decisive action upon which choices to go for.

To the contrary, findings from the current study indicated that parents only encouraged and supported their children in careers which children had interest in. They never advised them to follow path of what they did as parents but to do things they were capable of doing. Thus, the interaction which took place between parents and their children provided parents the chance to talk to their children about the world of work.

Additionally, similar kind of literature was indicated in a Zambian context by Chilala (2002) in Lusaka in his study on career aspirations of grade 12 Technical Secondary School pupils at Hillcrest and David Kaunda. Findings showed that

parents drew a huge portion in influencing career choices of their children as they are believed to know their children first and better than any other person. As such, parents' advice was easily taken by the child due to that natural trust and attraction which existed between children and their parents.

The above revelations are in consistence with the views of the attachment theory of Bluestein (1995) which highlights the importance of parents' sensitive and response to their Children in order to promoting higher motivations in schools and better decisions . In this case, children develop better decisions in career choices before entering any tertiary institution.

The above findings are heavily contradicted by a recent survey by Muddy (2011) in France; where she found out that only 10 percent of high school students get any career guidance at school. More than half could think of no one at school who helped them with career exploration or their student career planning. Many adolescents' career decisions are influenced by the media or by their peers with little thought of what they might personally be interested in or motivated to do. If they are college bound, they may simply keep changing majors until they find something they like. Thus, the aspect of parents and their career choice influences among their children does not exist to some extent.

However, findings of Chilala (2002) are similar to those of the current study because the recent study too acknowledges the trust and attraction which exist between children and their parents and that through such trust, children have time to ask and take seriously the advice given by parents in career choices.

5.3. Career guidance parents offered to their children before admission at UNZA.

In establishing career guidance parents' offered to their children at the University of Zambia, the study through responses from children revealed that parents helped their children in identifying things they had interest in and advise them to focus on their own interest as they weigh all the available careers. The study found that parents offered career guidance to their children through encouragements where they told children to focus on those things they were good at doing. Parents also interacted and talked to their children about the world of work. This is where they

told children about what the industries have and the qualifications each industry requires for one to be considered for work.

These findings are in agreement with those of Fazarro (2006) in his study in Australia on how career information helped in career development and choices of children. Thus, findings showed that through career guidance, children have access to career explorations opportunities which make them gather necessary career information to make informed career decisions, set more realistic goals and experience better career outcomes. It has helped children identify curricular activities that enhanced their opportunities to achieve their career goals. Such guidance provides information that enlightens children on which subjects and skills are useful in future.

The current study however observed that parents enlightened their children as they told them about the careers which they knew were workable currently. This came about due to the natural attachment children have with their parents as shown in the attachment theory of Berk (2007). Thus, this study disagrees with those studies concluding that children followed the careers of their parents as it observed that children were positively guided and chose in accordance to their capabilities and interests.

Regarding to the importance of parental guidance on career choices, the study revealed that the role of parents in career guidance was very important though most parents were not aware of that fact. This was because in the time of schooling, children are normally less concerned about their future as it is the beginning of their teenage world. Thus, it is the responsibility of all parents that they would help children in identifying their goals and main aim in life.

The responses from parents concerning career guidance parents offered to children revealed almost similar ideas as children did but parents pointed out that they usually encouraged their children to focus on their interests and choose careers within their capabilities so that they can perform well when they get employed later in life. However, parents indicated that despite that children have own choices on which career to follow, them as people full of experiences in both bad and good time in various careers, they have of worries or barriers of which they perceive towards career choices made by their children. They worried about

the job workloads which the career had in it that if the job had to do with heavy equipment and one was to work for a longer period of time before knocking off. The nature of shifts involved in the job also worried parents. As such, they encourage children to go for careers of industries located in safer places. For instance, one parent pointed out that;

I would be worried if my children choose careers like that of being a track driver where they have to move in various places and even at night which is not safe. The same as working as cane cutters at Zambia Sugar Company, the whole process is risk. As parents, we consider all those aspects as we guide our children only that young people are sometimes full of experiments and as such, they worry less about these aspects as long as the career has good money in it.

It can be deduced that the findings above are in congruent with those of various scholars, For instance, Clutter and Macmillan (2008) in their unpublished paper on seeking a career guide in London outlined various ways in which parents can guide their children towards career selection. For instance, the parents' attitude matter most in such a way that each and every parent has to stay positive when advising children about which career to select. Always bring up positive gestures about your work place despite main changes which may seem scary to your children. It is important not to make the past seem perfect and the future terrifying. As such, parents should induce their children to developing a positive attitude and learn about varied set of industries. On the other hand, parents can provide career guidance to their children by avoiding shooting down ideas brought up by the children on their educational and career choices. Once blindly push aside their ideas, they are likely to react negatively and if they do, it may lead to shutting down of the whole communication process. Thus, it is advisable that parents give the young room their own views and opinions on such choices as they keep encouraging them to gather information on various available career choices and later make informed choices.

The theory to which this study was premised on shows its relation with the study in the sense that parents guided their children then these children out of what they were advised on, were able to make informed decisions.

Jocelyn (2000), in her study among students of various culture on career choices in relation to parental guidance, clearly her findings suggests that parents can also make it clear to their children that each industry has its own conditions . Thus, adhering to the stipulated conditions was another major decision to make before settling for any career.

To the contrary, the current study can suggest that parents as people who know their children better than anyone else may still guide their children with the help of counselors, career guidance teachers and motivational speakers. This is attributed from the fact that not all parents may have the skill to guide children in career choices. For instance, parents who never made it in life may have less or no examples to show to their children.

5.4. Factors influencing career choice of children at the University of Zambia

A number of factors influencing career choices of students at the University of Zambia were revealed by children and their parents who were from various walks of life. It was noted that children at the University of Zambia noticed several factors which influenced their career choices.

This was through responses such as; nature of results obtained at grade 12 final examinations determined which career one may suit in. Those with good results had a wide range of choices among the prestigious careers. Resources available to a family one was coming from also influenced children in settling for the current careers. To some extent, the educational levels of parents influenced the career choices children choose. Available jobs and the interest of each child further influenced the choices children made in careers Harwood (2008).

This was also cited by most children in the focus group discussions where they explained that several factors influenced the choices they made in settling for their careers. One child lamented that;

Results which I obtained in my grade twelve final examinations are what defined my future now. I can confess to you madam that I grew up wanting to study Medicine and other Science

related programmes, but it I performed poorly in all the Sciences and Mathematics. As a result, I could only be selected for admission in Adult Education programme. I regretted at first but now I understand that if I just work hard in the same career, I can be anything I want in this world.

Another child in a different group pointed out that;

Being born from a poor family and despite having obtained very good results in grade twelve, I could not do the career of my interest. I wanted to study Water Engineering at Natural Resource Development College (NRDC), but my worry was on where to source my tuition fees from. There can be bursaries offered to some students at the college but not every student has access to it like it is the case with the University Of Zambia where a good number of students benefits through bursaries. Thus, I opted to study Mathematics from the school of Natural Sciences and I like my career.

These findings are consistent with those of Mathatha (2013) who argued that grade 12 results are what guides one into any form of tertiary education in Zambian education regulations. Thus, grade 12 results determine the future of every person with regards to career choices.

To the contrary, Larson (2000) observed and supported that availability of resources and personality of the individual child are the only factors that influenced career choices of children.

A case study done by Karka (2000) further revealed that parents in the conducted interviews also reported that there are various factors which influence children's career choices. In their report, one parent emphasized in response to factors influencing career choices of children that;

There can be many factors influencing career choices of our children depending on their background and socio-economic status of each and every child's family. For instance; mainly, the nature of results the child obtains at grade twelve here in

Zambia places that individual in whatever career which may accommodate such results. For example; while in grade twelve, my daughter anticipated on being a medical doctor through the school of natural sciences there at the University. To our disappointment, the institution and the school respectively had higher requirements for admissions. As such, she had no choice but to go where her results would earn her a place at the highest learning institution which is school of education through the department of adult education. Thus, the nature of her results crushed with her personal interests later on. In the same view, we over looked the issues of whether the career pursued could provide her with a job just after completion because sometimes as parents, we believe that each and every career has a job awaits as long as someone work hard and have a positive attitude towards the career.

Another parent lamented that,

My dear daughter, I only heard from my son that his friend who was already at the University bought him an application form to enrol into the school of humanities and social sciences where he was to study demography which I had no idea of what job it may offer him afterwards. The only thing I knew about the University of Zambia is that they trained teachers, lawyers and doctors. Therefore, though I took time as I can remember talking about careers and how they are related to the world of work, my son finally got advice from his friends who were already training at the institution on which career to settle for. Thus, he defended his choices that if he does not find any job fast, he can still use his skill to do his own business after all. This was after he looked at the fact that as a family, we could not afford supporting him financially in the careers outside the University of Zambia, especially in Colleges without bursary schemes.

Thus, these findings are consistent with those of Bandura et al. (2001), who found that adolescent career choice is influenced by many factors, including life context, personal aptitudes, and educational attainments. He suggests that adolescents' own aspirations are influenced by their parent's aspirations or expectations. Parental support and encouragement are important factors that have been found to influence career choices and that most children in secondary schools do not have accurate information about occupational opportunities to help them make appropriate career choice. Thus, these multiple factors include; personality interest, social support and available resources such as information and finances.

Therefore, each individual undertaking the process is influenced by several factors including the context in which they live in, personal aptitudes, social contacts and educational attainment. However, in relation to the findings, Bandura further confirms that most people are influenced by careers which their parents favour depending on their levels of education in life. Others follow those which their educational choices have opened for them, some choose to follow their passion regardless of how much or little it will make, while others choose careers that give higher income.

The current study observed that personal interests matter in career choices in the sense that matching personal interests with career choice often leads to job satisfaction. Thus, interests of the children provided them with motives towards their career choices. For instance, in teaching or nursing career, children chose that which have availability of advancement opportunities. Employment and self-employment are outcome expectations which children considered as they chose careers. Additionally, anticipated earnings and prestigious positions as factors imply that children chose certain careers with the view to earn huge income as well as to acquire prestigious positions in life.

To the contrary Jocelyn (2009), disagrees with the available revelations above and argues that peer pressure influences career choices in children. This could be as a result of overloaded curriculum, overworked teachers who do not have time to advice students and parents spending less time with their children. This leaves children in the hands of their fellow peers to offer the necessary guidance. In her longitudinal study where the role of peer relationship in career choices was

examined in learners aged 18 and above, findings showed that the formation and maintenance of close relationships influenced career explorations and choices later in life as adolescents slowly detached themselves from the security given by their parents, thus, develop a sense of security in their peers needed to engage in career exploration and decision making. Additionally, close peers relationships allowed them to discuss and explore careers in the environment, and eventually, make career decisions.

Patton and McCrindle (2001) reported similar findings that as children interact with peers, their advice is less important as compared to family members, teachers and career counsellors though.

Findings from the current study however confirms that children relate with their parents and that it is at this time that they talk about careers and how to go about making a choice in a career. His kind of interaction made it easy for the children to ask several questions about careers.

The attachment theory proved that children interacted with their parents, they were able to get clear and concrete views and ideas on how various careers seemed like and would weigh their capabilities and personality in relation to the career.

5.4 Summary of the chapter

The foregoing chapter presented the discussion of the findings in the study which sought to investigate influence of parents on career choice of their children. Discussions are as per objective. Parents influenced their children through positive interactions which existed between parents and their children. Children were supported and encouraged to choose careers in which they hand interest and capable of handling. However, parents who were uneducated and lived in remote areas had limited choices of careers to guide their children into. On the other hand, parents guide their children in careers like Teaching, Nursing, Agriculture, Computer Science and Business studies, Policy Service, Zambia Army and Zambia Air Force respectively.

Concerning the factors influencing career choices of children at the institution, it was noted that grade 12 final examinations results which children obtained had influence on which career an individual child chose as they enter tertiary

education. The financial resources available to an individual child had great influence towards children's career choices in that those who were from financially stable families could choose even more expensive but of good paying job careers unlike those from poor families.

In the same view, some children chose careers in line with their personalities and those with higher chances of offering them employment after completion. Thus, a few children confirmed that all the above factors were of huge influence in career choices of children before admission at the University of Zambia.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Introduction

This chapter makes conclusion and recommendations of the study drawn from the findings. The study was conducted to investigate the influence of parents on career choice of their children at the University of Zambia.

6.2. Conclusion

Arising from the findings, it can be concluded that there are numerous factors which influence career choices of students at the University of Zambia.

Among the common factors influencing students' career choices were; nature of results obtained at grade twelve level of education. Those with good results had a wide range of choices among the prestigious career related programmes in the University. On the other hand, resources available to a family a student came from also influenced other students to settle for their careers.

To some extent, the educational levels of parents of students had influence onto the career which such students choose. In this view, those students whose parents attained higher education, their children were more likely to aim higher and even more than what their parents achieved. The children were advantaged and tended to have information about various careers and were likely to choose those careers which are prestigious unlike children whose parents did not go to school and it was mostly, those in rural areas. In the same way, job availability situations interest of each student respectively were influential factors to career choice.

Concerning the influence of parent on career choices of their children, The study revealed that all the two categories of respondents indicated that parents being the first and best people in knowing their children, they always want the best out of them especially after huge investments they make from childhood of the child up to the time they complete tertiary education and become independent. Children also accord their parents and know that they are the best people to trust as they offer them positive support, encouragements through the use of those positive experiences once passed through personally, by family member or various people in the society. Parents influence career choices of their children as they interact

positively with their children where they talk and discuss many issues to do with the world of work on what is workable and that which is still a nightmare in terms of employment acquisition in our country respectively.

From these findings, it can be concluded that positive support, interactions, encouragements and having talks on passed experiences of which are positive are the best ways in which parents influenced career choices of their children at the University of Zambia as confirmed by the findings of the study.

With regard to career guidance parents offer to their children, the study revealed that parents tend to offer guidance on issues of career choices unknowingly through encouraging their children to study hard and remind them that only when they obtain good results at the final examination is when they can have a wide range of choices on careers to go for. Failing would lead to limited choices; one student disclosed what the parents once said.

Parents try and help children to learn and identify their interests in things so that they can be able to choose those things which they like and enjoy doing in life. This was confirmed by all respondents that it is a huge basis of job satisfaction and good performances and later brings about development. Children are also guided by parents by positive encouragements in focusing on what they are capable of doing and know it can come out positive. All these are done through positive talks which occur during the interactions which parents have with their children as they grow up at each stages of life. Thus, parents emphasizes on children choosing things they have interest in and are able to handle positively as long as they are non-risk taking jobs in terms of shifts with normal workloads and safe locations when it comes to company locations.

Hence, it can be concluded that parents do offer career guidance to their children through various encouragements and open talks of which help children realise their interests and capabilities. They stress major points on safety involved in some of the careers and other issues which children may only realise after settling for the career and discover that they are not to their take. Parents also emphasizes on personal interests of which is the pillar of when it comes to employment later in life. Talking about the world of world with children help parents prepare children for the future with a positive mind and vision.

From the above, it can be said that unlike some countries and study site such as those in European countries, East African countries and one in Zambia where various studies conducted had revealed that most factors in influencing career choices of children are peers, role models religious beliefs, cultural aspects and sex stereotypes, findings from students of the three admitting schools of the University of Zambia and their parents show that the results which children obtain at grade twelve level, available resources, education level of the parent, availability of the job market and the personality of an individual child at large are more a factor in this case. Even the few factors like religious beliefs as mentioned by few parent respondents to be factors do not reflect in the views of students.

6.3. Recommendation

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations made:

1. The study revealed that in most of the secondary schools especially public ones, no trained career guidance teacher were found. This was echoed by parents and student in various focus group discussions. It is therefore, recommended that trained career guidance teachers should be deployed to provide career guidance services and other occupational related information. The programme should be time tabled with latest teaching and learning materials such as career guide manuals for learners and those of teachers.
2. The University of Zambia should collaborate with schools in giving teachers, parents and learner's information about what their institution offers and what is expected of the learners as they apply for admission in those institutions in order to avoid situations where applicants only come to know about the chosen programme after admissions are done already.
3. Parents should involve trained career guidance personnel instead of them coming out as guidance experts themselves.

4. There is need for parents to emphasize and involve children in career matters as early as in their early school grades in order to help them make good choices and obtain job satisfaction in life.

6.3. Recommendations for future research

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher suggests the following areas for further research:

1. Further studies should be done on career choices to cover Colleges and other Universities in order to have a comparative data in this area of study and hopefully generalise the findings.
2. A study to compare sources of career choices between girls and boys.
3. A comparative study on the perception of children towards career guidance offered by parents.

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APPENDICES

Appendix (i) Questionnaire for students

Dear Respondent,

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia, and you have been selected to participate in the study by providing the information that is necessary to the questions provided in this questionnaire. The questionnaire is intended to collect data on *influence of parents on career choice of their children at the University of Zambia*. This study is purely academic hence; confidentiality is highly assured to participants. Therefore, do not write your name on this questionnaire. Kindly answer the questions as honestly as possible and help the researcher to come up with a true reflection on the study.

Background Information

Q1. Age

- | | |
|--------------|-----|
| 1.18-24 | [] |
| 2.25-34 | [] |
| 3. 35-44 | [] |
| 45 and above | [] |

Q2. Gender

- | | |
|------------|-----|
| (a) Male | [] |
| (b) Female | [] |

Q3. Denomination

1. SDA []
2. Catholic []
3. Pentecost/Evangelical []
4. New Apostolic []
5. Jehovah's Witness []

Q4. Educational level

- (a) First year []
- (b) Second year []
- (c) Third year []
- 4. Fourth year []

Q5. Name of school

- 1. Education []
- 2. Natural Sciences []
- 3. Humanities and Social sciences []

A. Questions related to factors influencing career choices of children at the of Zambia.

Q6. Do you have knowledge about career choices?

- 1. YES []
- 2. NO []

Q7. If your answer to question 6 above is YES, where did you acquire the knowledge from?

- (a) Family []
- (b) Community []
- (c) Parent []
- (d) Guidance Teacher []
- (e) Peers []
- (f) Not Applicable []

Q8. How would you rate your level of knowledge on issues of career choices?

- 1. Excellent []
- 2. Very good []
- 3. Good []
- 4. Bad []

Q9. Who helped you choose the career you are pursuing now?

- (a) Parents []
- (b) Siblings []
- (c) Teacher []
- (d) My choice []

Q10. What factors influenced your choice of this programme?

	1	2
	[YES]	[NO]
1. Nature of acquired results	[]	[]
(c) Available resources	[]	[]
(d) Religious beliefs	[]	[]
(e) Parents' education level	[]	[]
(f) Job availability	[]	[]
(g) My personality	[]	[]

Q11. How many career choices did you had in mind before settling for your current one?

- 1. One []
- 2. Two []
- 3. Three []
- 4. Four []

Q12. How often do you and friends talk about career choices?

- 1. Often []
- 2. Very often []
- 3. Not often []
- 4. Never []

Q13. Generally, how can you rate the knowledge of teachers in issues of career choices?

- (a) Very Good []
- (b) Good []
- (c) Fairly good []
- (d) Poor []

Q14. Explain your response to question 13.

Q15. What would be the result of having wrong career choices?

1. Lack of interest in the job
2. Lack of cooperation
3. Poor work productivity
4. Job dissatisfaction

B. Questions related to how parents influence career choices of children

Q16. How do you rate the knowledge of parents in career choice?

1. Very Good []
2. Good []
3. Fairly good []
4. Poor []

Q17. Are views of parents on career choices of children helpful?

1. YES []
2. NO []

Q18. Give brief explanation on your response.

Q19. How do parents influence career choices of their children? Through.

1. Support []
2. Encouragements []
3. Positive interaction []
4. Positive passed experiences []
5. All the above []

C. Questions related to career guidance parents offer to their children

Q20. Do parents offer any guidance on career choices?

1. YES []
2. NO []

Q21. Do all parents have the skill in guiding children on career choices?

1. YES []
2. NO []

Q22. What career guidance do parents offer to their children?

1. Help children identify their interests
2. Encourage children focus on capabilities
3. Interact and talk to children about the world of work
4. All the above

Q23. What are the perceived parental encouragements towards self- direction in career choices of children?

1. Job of own interest
2. Choice within capabilities
3. Choice in relation to grades obtained
4. All the above

Q24. What are the perceived parental barriers to career choices of children?

1. Company location
2. Nature of job shifts
3. Job work loads
4. All the above

Q25. Do you value parents' contribution towards career guidance?

1. Yes []
2. NO []

Q26. Give a brief explanation to your response to question 25.

Q27. How effective is parental influence on career choices of their children at the University of Zambia?

1. Effective []
2. Very effective []
3. Ineffective []
4. Very ineffective []

Thank you for your participation in this study.

Appendix (ii) Interview Guide for parents

Dear respondent,

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia, and you have been selected to participate in the study by providing the information that is necessary to the questions provided in this interview guide which is intended to collect data on *parental influence on career choices of their children at the University of Zambia*. The study is purely academic hence, confidentiality is highly assured. Therefore, no names will be written on this interview guide. Kindly answer the questions as honestly as possible and help the researcher to come up with a true reflection on the study.

Background Information

- Q1. Age.....
- Q2. Gender.....
- Q3. Denomination.....
- Q4. Occupation.....
- Q5. Educational level.....

A. Questions related to factors influencing career choices of children

- Q6. What do you know about career choices?
- Q7. Should parents choose careers for their children?
- Q8. What factors influences career choices of children at the University of Zambia?
 - 1. Nature of results obtained
 - 2. Available resources
 - 3. Religious beliefs
 - 4. Educational levels of parents
 - 5. Job availability
 - 6. Personal interest
 - 7. Peers

8. All the above

Q9. What role do secondary schools play in career choices issues of children?

B. Questions related to how parents influence career choices of their children

Q10. What influence do you have as parents in career choices of children?

Q11. What makes parents worry about children and their own career choices?

A. Questions related to career guidance offered by parents to their children.

Q12. Do parents create time to guide children in career choices? Briefly explain.

Q13. How often are parents involved in issues of career talks or conferences in Schools of their children?

Q14. How important is parental guidance of children on career choices?

Q15. What are the best ways of helping children identify careers and later make recommendable choice?

Q16. Do you think that children value career choices made by parents later in life?

Q17. What measures could be taken in order to improve the issues of career choices of children at the University of Zambia?

Thank you for your participation in this study

Appendix (iii) Focus Group Discussions for Students

Dear Respondent,

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia, and you have been selected to participate in the study by providing the information that is necessary to the questions provided in this focus group discussion schedule. These questions are intended to collect data on *influence of parents on career choice of their children at the University of Zambia*. The study is purely academic hence, confidentiality is highly assured. Therefore, no names will be mentioned in this discussion. Kindly answer the questions and participate as openly and honestly as possible and help the researcher to come up with a true reflection on the study.

The discussion will be in three important areas which have to do with how parents influence University of Zambia, career guidance parents offer to their children before they are admitted at the University of Zambia and factors that influence career choice of children at the University of Zambia.

PART A. topic related to how parents influence career choice of their children at University of Zambia

1. Give an explanation on how you rate the knowledge of parents in career choice issues.
2. How are views of parents on career choice helpful to you?
3. How do parents influence career choice of their children?

PART B. topic related to career guidance parents offer to their children before they are admitted at the University of Zambia

1. Do parents offer any guidance on career choices? Please explain.
2. What career guidance do parents offer to their children?
3. What are the perceived barriers parents have towards career choice of their children?
4. Do you value the contribution which parents make towards career guidance?

PART C. topic related to factors that influence career choice of children at the University of Zambia.

1. Where did you acquire the knowledge of career choice from?
2. What factors influenced your career choice?
3. What would be the result of having wrong career choice?

END OF THE DISCUSSION, THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING