What is this research about?
Career decision-making may be more complex than previously assumed. It seems individuals do not adopt a rational, systematic and independent approach to career development (Whiston & Keller, 2004). Family processes, such as provision of a supportive environment and parental expectations, could have a great influence on young adults’ career interests. This study attempted to understand how parenting style can affect student’s motivations for choosing particular careers and what those motivations might mean long-term.

How might parenting style impact career aspirations?
"In order to understand the role of the occupation in the individual we must first have some understanding of their and his needs (Roe, 1956, p. 22). Two lines of research have proposed that the satisfaction or frustration of innate, psychological needs early in life have important implications for later life. Parenting style, and the resulting level of need fulfillment, plays a role what needs will be motivators later on, where interests will lie and overall well-being.

Research conducted in the 1950’s suggested that warm and attentive parents have children that grow up to be more “people-oriented” in their career interests (Roe, 1957). Recent research with self-determination theory (SDT) has shown that autonomy supportive parents have children with fulfilled needs and who, therefore, may choose careers that are intrinsically interesting to them (Rakies, Larson, Guay & Sencar, 2005).

What is Parental Autonomy Support?
Parents that acknowledge their children’s perspectives and encourage them to choose their own activities and how they go about doing them are autonomy supportive (Assor, Roth & Deci, 2004). Soenens et al., 2007), Controlling parents pressure their children to act in a certain way or to choose specified style can affect student’s motivations for choosing particular careers and what needs will be motivators later on, where interests will lie and overall well-being.

Parenting style is not directly related to Career Interests.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Interests</th>
<th>Mother Autonomy Supportive</th>
<th>Father Autonomy Supportive</th>
<th>Need for Autonomy Satisfied</th>
<th>Empathy, Concern for Others</th>
<th>Role to Take on Parental Others</th>
<th>Empathy, Family</th>
<th>Materialistic Values</th>
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Parental Autonomy Support is not directly related to Career Interests.

Variables related to career interests.

- Autonomy Supportive Parents => "People-oriented" or intrinsically motivated interests
- Controlling Parents => "Thing-oriented" or extrinsically motivated interests

Methods
Survey data were collected from 187 undergraduate psychology students at SUNY-Albany University. Students rated their mother and father’s autonomy supportive vs. controlling styles. The survey also assessed student’s general need satisfaction, materialistic values, empathy and well-being.

The Impacts of Parenting Style on Career Interests

Career interests were not directly related to parenting style in this study. That means parenting style may or may not directly affect what career a child pursues. However, parenting style may impact the motives with which children pursue the careers they do choose and those motives might lead to ill-being in the long run.

Parental style can affect child satisfaction, empathy and materialistic values. For example, business career interests were associated with materialism.

The implications of this study are important for parents, teachers and guidance counselors, who should seek to understand underlying motivations for career aspirations before providing young adults career development advice. Materialistic reasons for career pursuits, for example, have been linked to ill health. True interest and intrinsic motivation for a career is likely to mean better well-being, no matter what career is chosen.

Other studies have shown:
- Autonomy Supportive Parents have kids (and grown up kids) that are likely:
  - to be satisfied in their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Assor, Roth & Deci, 1991)
  - to be more motivated (Roe & Deci, 2008) and energized (Ryan & Deci, 2000)
  - to be healthier (both mentally and physically) (Ryan & Deci, 2000)
  - to be better performers (in school and at work) (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Gagne & Deci, 2005)
  - to internalize the values of their parents (Assor, Roth & Deci, 2004)
  - to persist in science curriculum (Rakies, Larson, Guay & Sencar, 2003)

- Controlling Parents have kids (and grown up kids) that are likely:
  - to seek approval through status, materialism or other symbols of worth (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Assor, Ryan & Sencar, 1996)
  - to have unstable self-esteem (Assor, Roth & Deci, 2006)
  - to perceive parents as disapproving and resent (Assor, Roth & Deci, 2004)
  - to have poor well-being (Assor, Roth & Deci, 2004)

References