

Family Background and Career Decision-Making

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and

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Overview

In our presentation we will discuss:

- the impact of family and the influence parents can have on career decision-making
- how guidance practitioners work with parents
- relevant career theory

We will be using references to our own research on parental interests and on the impact of gender of occupational choice

The family and career decision-making

- The labour market is constantly changing, so too are the individuals who inhabit it.
- There are subtle changes taking place relating to structures and attitudes within family units, which career theory and practice needs to show awareness of.
- One such example is that families, wherein the family unit is deemed to be parents and their children, are becoming smaller and more diverse.

How are families changing?

- Between 1996 and 2016, the number of UK families with three or more dependent children decreased while the number of families with one or two children increased.
- The proportion of two-sibling families remained stable (Office for National Statistics, 2016).
- Within these figures is a rise in only-children, fewer multi-sibling families and fewer mixed-gender sibling families.
- A greater number of children are becoming 'first' or only-born to a family (or remain an only child for a longer period).

Families in 2021

- Increasingly diverse shapes and sizes: lone-parents (a majority female), separately co-parenting families, same-sex parenting families, or families with adopted or foster children and corporate parenting, multiple generations, co-habiting non-dependent children or grandparents and extended family.
- In Scotland, the values of Corporate Parenting, as defined in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 are now prominent and refer to the organisation and services supporting looked after children, young people and care leavers.

Who in the family unit gives career guidance?

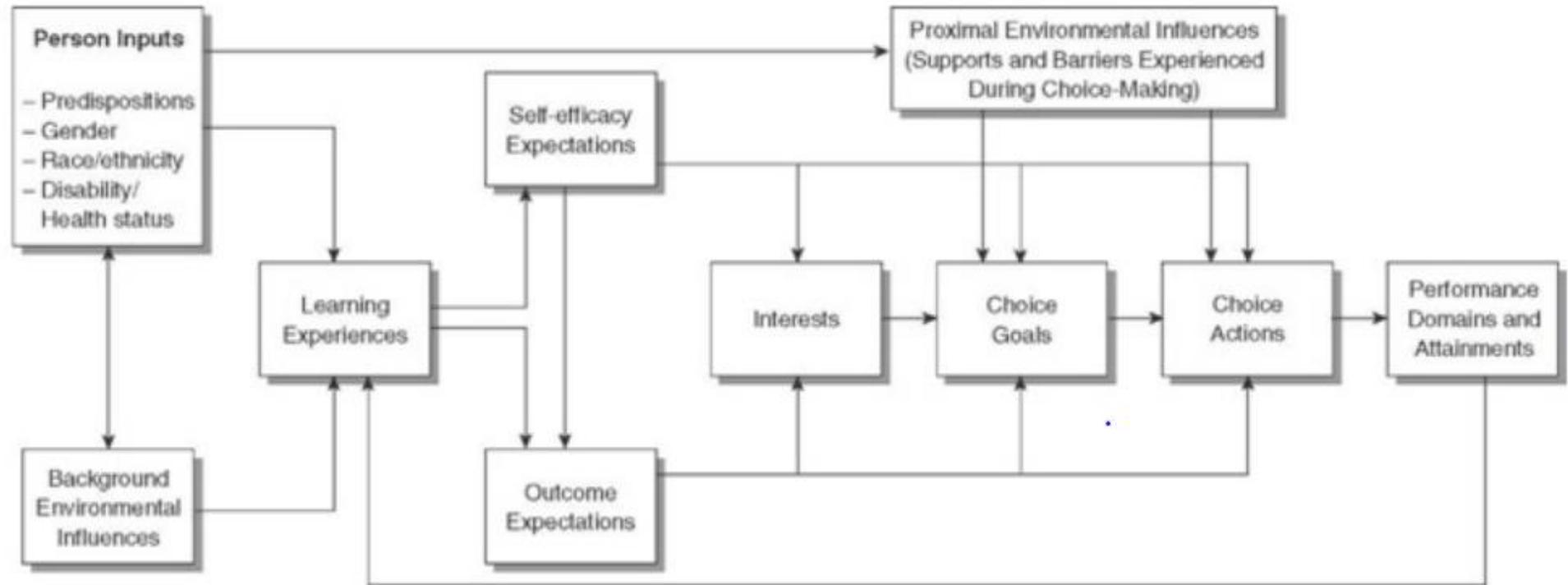
Recent Key Sources

- Barnes et al.'s comprehensive review of evidence on parental engagement in career support, *The role of parents and carers in providing careers guidance and how they can be better supported* (2020, p.13)
- The *Review of Career Guidance in the Republic of Ireland*, undertaken for the Irish government by Indecon (2019)

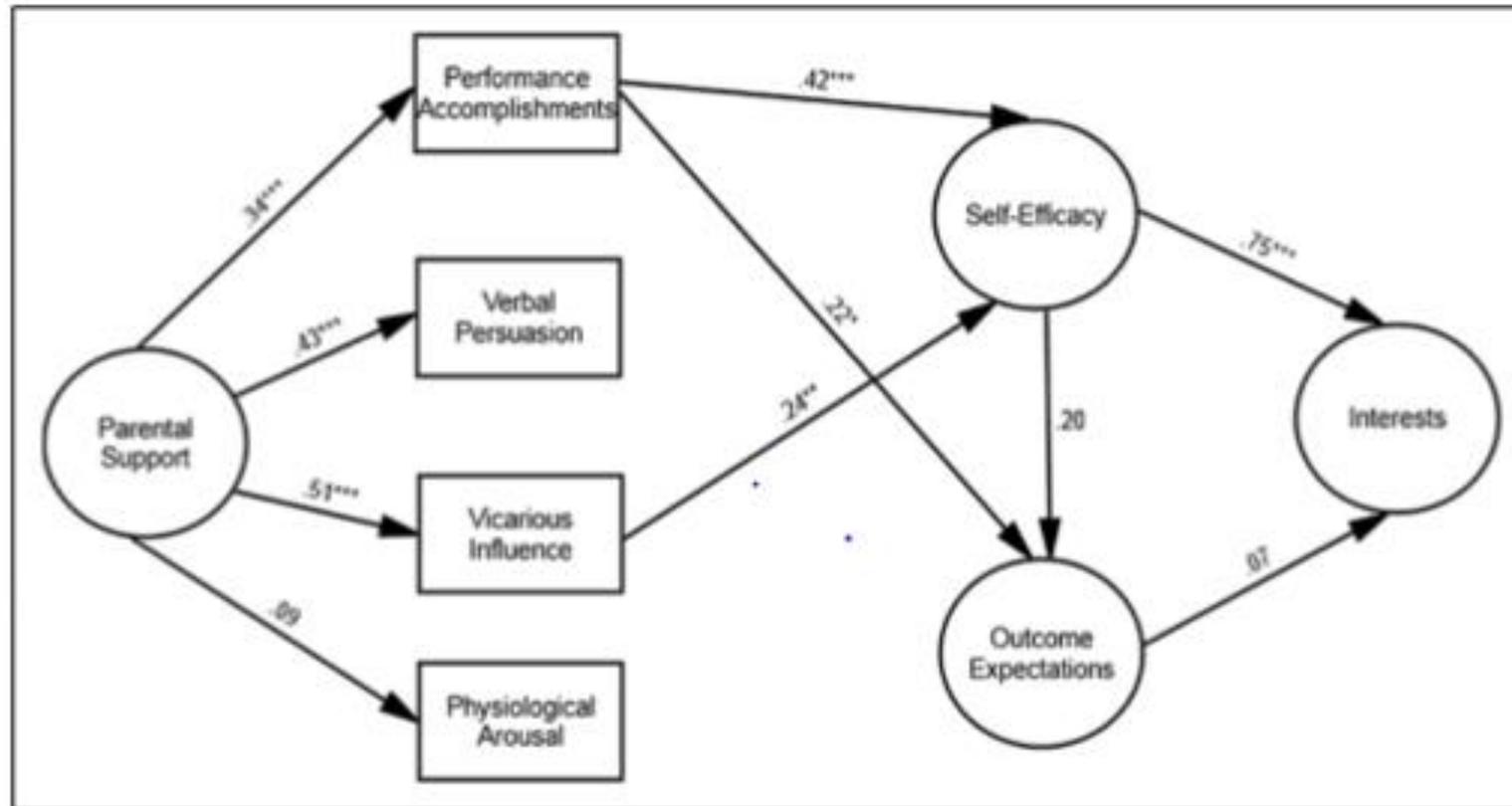
Parents and career support: a gendered role?

- There have been several attempts at general classification of parental engagement modes
 - Barnes et al. conceptualise parental career support in three domains: support, informational support and emotional support (2020, p.9)
- Role modelling: it is no longer about whether mothers working is 'good' or 'bad' or the impact on children of their exposure to working mothers
 - More complex gendered analysis
- Maternal employment appears to increase the employment rate of daughters and the willingness of sons to engage in caring responsibilities
 - social class implications
- “among the family group, mothers are more active influencers than fathers” (Phillips and Newton, 2014, p.3) but viewing mothers as a homogeneous influencing group would be erroneous and the gendering of parental involvement warrants consideration.
 - “compared with fathers, mothers have a greater perception of themselves as being supportive of their children’s career development” (Ginerva, Nota and Ferrari, 2015, p.12).
 - “Mothers—not fathers—seem to socialise their children into gender-specific fields of study” (van der Vleuten, Jaspers, Maas and van der Lippe, 2018, p.311).

Social Cognitive Career Theory

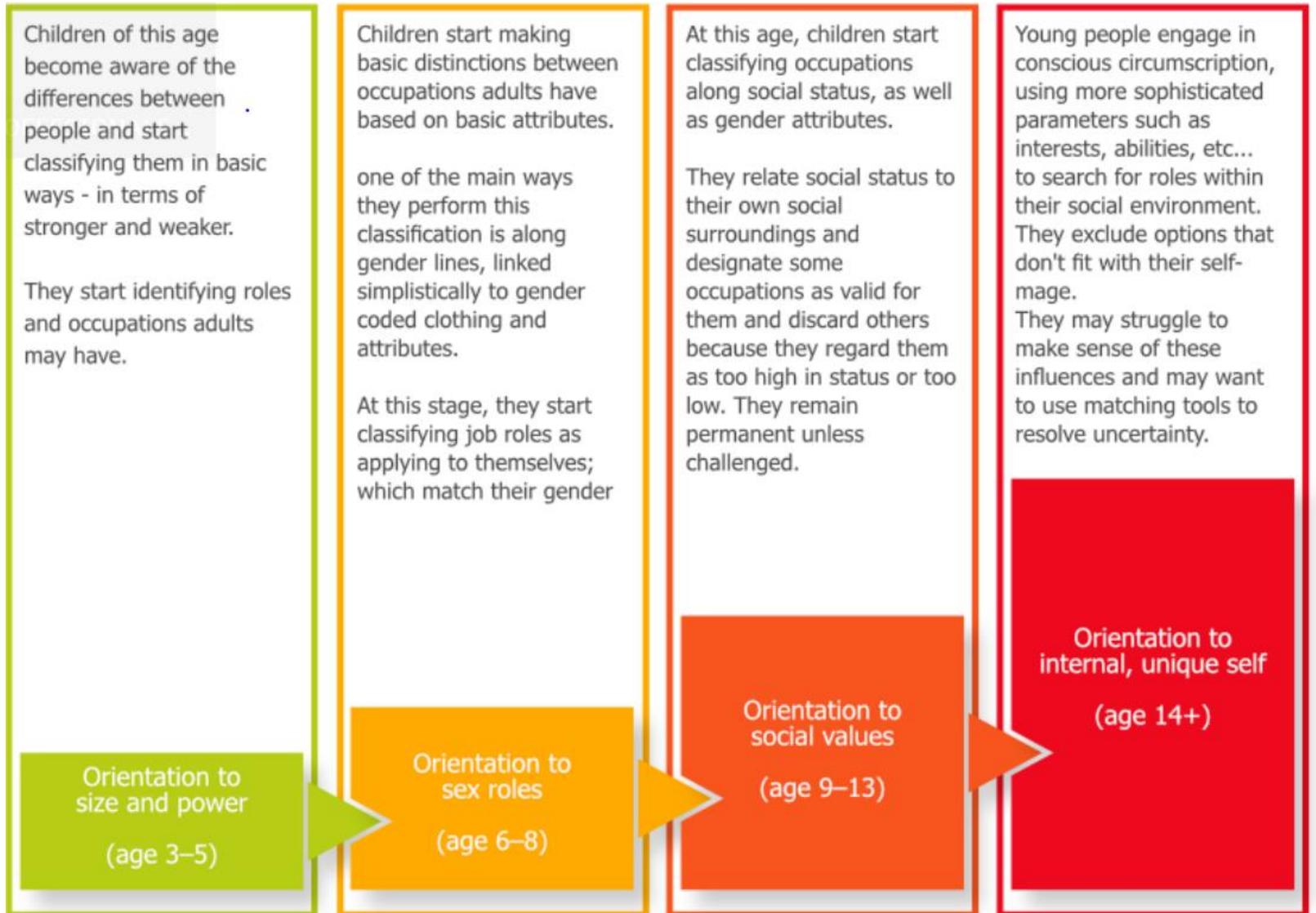


Social Cognitive Career Theory

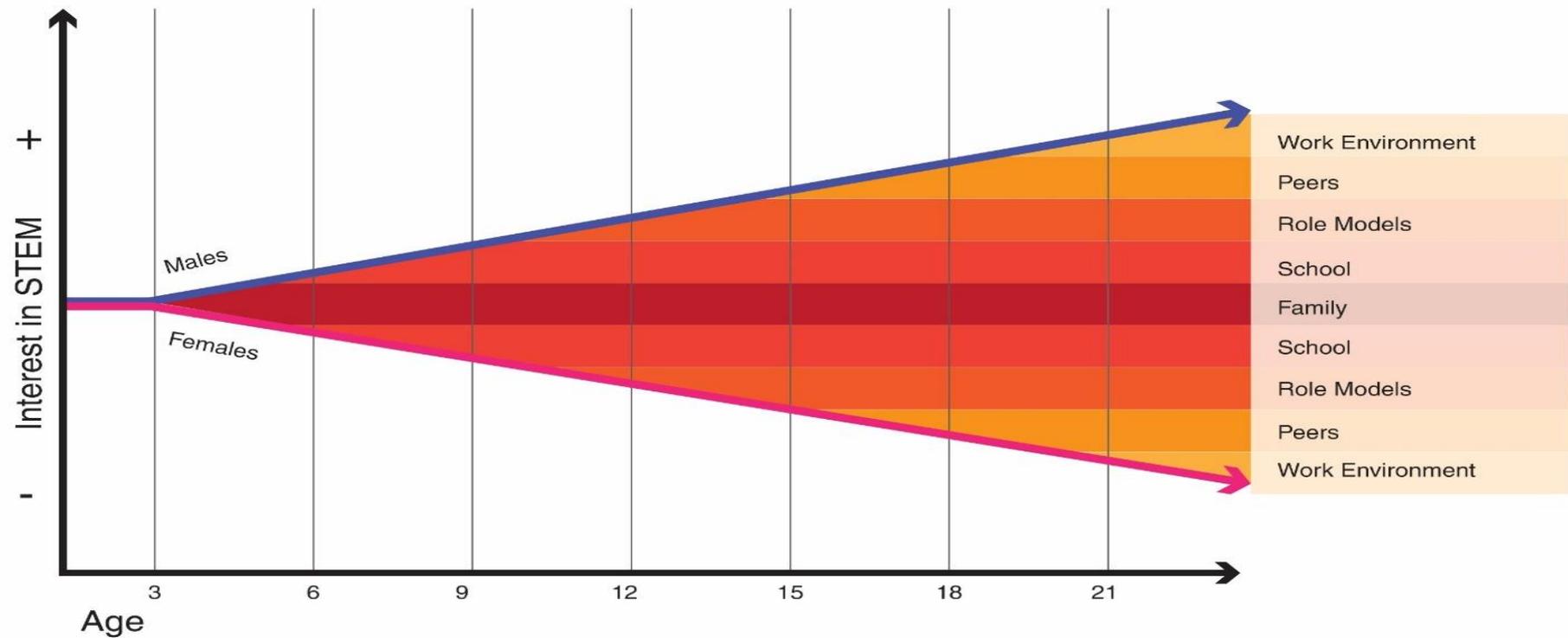


Final results of structural model. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$. (Garriott et al, 2013, p. 635).

Theory of Circumscription and compromise



The family and career decision-making



The development gender gap in STEM. Boernemeyer (2018).

Our PhD research

Emma: Occupational Segregation in Modern Apprenticeships: Gendered Career Decision Making

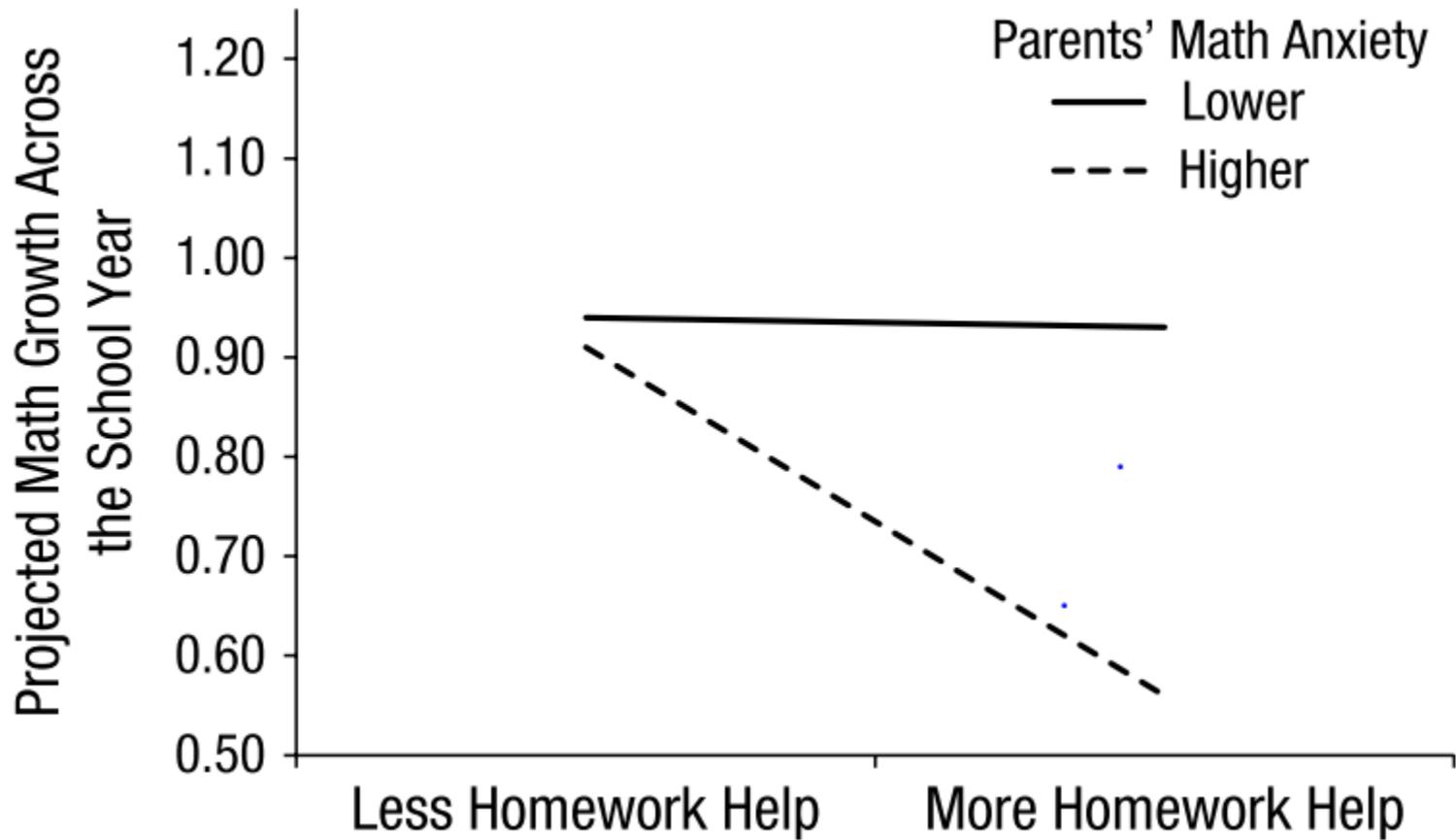
Jens: How do Parents Influence their Daughters? A Focus on Math-Anxiety.

Emma: findings from my PhD research relevant to this topic

The findings in my study confirm the dominance of parents in the giving of informal CIAG.

My PhD data collection showed that in the cohort who took part in the study:

- the majority of Modern Apprentices consult their parent/guardian/carer to obtain career guidance
- there is a gendered dimension to whom Modern Apprentices consult to obtain career guidance
- in every case the proportion of Modern Apprentices seeking advice from a person of the same gender was higher than the proportion seeking advice from a person of the opposite gender
- Modern Apprentices seeking advice from other males is higher than the proportion of male Modern Apprentices seeking advice from females in all three groupings (parent/guardian/carer, other relative and friend)
- the proportion of female Modern Apprentices seeking advice from female parents/guardians/carers is higher than the proportion seeking advice from male parents/guardians/carers
- in the qualitative interviews, both informal and formal sources cited by the interviewees indicated reliance on women as sources of CIAG, where CIAG had been memorably obtained.



The role of
parental
math
anxiety

What is needed?

- Ongoing continuous improvement of CIAG provision within education and training may benefit from the integration of wider family.
- While a focus of CIAG for the wider network is generally on young people's needs, it is also worth considering individuals who face longer career decision transitions or who wish to change direction later in life and whether they too have family members willing and able to provide informal support, given the high number of individuals changing direction later in life
- The gendering of advice is also of significance. Emma's research data obtained suggests that people go to individuals of the same gender to obtain career advice, and men and boys seek advice from other males in their lives, which has implications for the gender bias within careers professional roles
- Across the literature cited within the theoretical literature review, parents as a career influence are generally considered within heteronormative models, i.e. that children are born and raised within a nuclear family with one male and one female parent.
- To ensure consideration of and messaging on parental influence includes diverse parenting roles (such as: same-sex/same-gender parents, kinship care, corporate parenting), further research into the wide range of family backgrounds may offer more inclusive underpinning theory, which in turn informs service delivery models.

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