

The role of parents during adolescents' process of making a choice for tertiary education

Master Thesis

Utrecht University

2018 - 2019

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Wordcount: 8.087

Date: 08-12-2019

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Title and theme
Title: The role of parents during adolescents' process of making a choice for tertiary education Theme: Boundary Crossing
Name and student number
Name: Lotte Nieuwenhuis Student number: 6189717
Assessors
First assessor: Larike Bronkhorst Second assessor: Jonne Vulperhorst
Date
December 8th, 2019
Word count
8.087

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Abstract

At the end of secondary school, nearly every adolescent makes a choice for tertiary education that balances their sense of who they are and who they want to become. To validate this choice, they perform three decisional tasks: orientation, exploration and commitment. Experiences within these tasks are structured by discussions with people from the adolescents' social network, mainly their parents. Because previous research indicated a role for parents in an adolescent's choice process, but did not describe this role on a detailed level, this study aims to investigate that role in an in-depth way. Through qualitative analysis of 11 descriptive cases, this study found that three types of choice processes can be distinguished: the knowing type, the finding type and the searching type. These types differ from each other in decisional status at the beginning and end of the choice process, the performed activities, and the role parents take within the process. These valuable findings can be used to give parents, from adolescents that have to make their choice for tertiary education in the future, some extra information about the performance of activities within the choice process. Besides that, this study provides insights into meaningful questions that parents can ask to help adolescents in structuring their experiences in the previously mentioned activities.

Keywords: process of making a choice for tertiary education, adolescents, parents, decisional tasks, questions

Introduction

At the end of secondary school, nearly every adolescent makes a choice to study in tertiary education. The choice for a specific study program is more than just the question what to study (Illeris, Katznelson, Simonsen & Ulriksen, 2002). It is also about choosing who to become in future life (Schreiner, 2006). Adolescents have to balance this choice between reality and interests. For that reason, their choice has to fit within the present and future image they have of themselves within their living context (Hutter & O'Mahony, 2004; Gottfredson, 1981; Macrae & Maguire, 2002). This results in an uncertain and complex choice process that adolescents have to go through, before finding the best fitting study program in tertiary education (Holmegaard, 2015).

The fact that choosing a good fitting study program involves a lot of uncertainty is confirmed by the high drop-out rate - 40% on average - in the first year of several study programs, because the program of the adolescents' choice does not fit their interests (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2008; Tinto, 1993). Holmegaard, Ulriksen & Madsen (2014) state that, because of this uncertainty, adolescents validate their choice for tertiary education by information they receive from their social network (e.g. family, teachers, peers and community members). There is little known about the mechanism of validating choices, although several studies show that parents seem to be central in making a substantiated choice for tertiary education (Pimlott-Wilson, 2011; Holmegaard et al., 2014; Reay, 1998; Jackson, 1982). This study aims to gain insight into the role of parents within the process of making a choice for tertiary education. Results can be used to formulate an advice for parents who have to guide their children, in similar choice processes, in the future.

Choice for Tertiary Education

Holmegaard (2015) distinguishes between three theoretical perspectives to approach adolescents' choice for tertiary education: rational choice, social inclusion and choosing as an

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expression of interests. The following part of the framework will build upon the approach that adolescents' choice for tertiary education is an expression of their interests. There are studies that state that the origin of someone's interests can be found in identity (Holmegaard, 2015; Rowley & Moldoveanu, 2003). Identity can be defined as the way information about one's self is organized (Clayton, 2003). It is an unfixed concept since identity is contextually produced, i.e. produced in interaction with a particular context that a person is part of. A way to form an identity is by performing a conversation with members of the context. These conversations serve a contextual production of new knowledge and new experiences, so adolescents constantly reconsider and redevelop themselves in order to form an identity (Giddens, 1991; Archer et al., 2010; Akkerman & Niessen, 2011). Since the choice for tertiary education is an expression of an adolescent's interests, this choice might be influenced by conversations with people from their social network. Besides that, these conversations can help in selecting a proper set of choice alternatives. This results in a reduction of complexity of the choice process (Akkerman, Overdijk, Admiraal, & Simons, 2008; Akkerman & Niessen, 2011; Holmegaard et al., 2014).

That is to say, that people from the adolescent's social network can play an important role to reduce the complexity of the choice for tertiary education, for example by performing conversations (Akkerman et al., 2008; Akkerman & Niessen, 2011; Holmegaard et al., 2014). Most adolescents classify their parents as the most important group within their social network, to have conversations with, in order to verify their choice for tertiary education (Dietrich & Kracke, 2009; Evers, 2006; Lacante & Schodts, 1996). In line with the aim of this study, it may offer added value to elaborate insights in the conversations whereby adolescents involve their parents in making their choice for tertiary education.

The Choice Process

Germeyes and Verscheuren (2006) describe that there are several activities that might evoke conversations between adolescents and people from their social network, in order to make a choice for tertiary education. These activities are captured in the *Study Choice Task Inventory* (SCTI), see figure 1. The SCTI is a process-oriented instrument that makes it possible to assess the performance on tasks that serve an, as optimal as possible, choice for tertiary education (Brisbin & Savickas, 1994; Jepsen & Grove, 1981). An advantage of the SCTI is that it controls gender. This is important because girls do score significantly higher on the performance of the decisional tasks (Germeyes & Verscheuren, 2006). Within the SCTI three important decisional tasks, that can be performed in a zig-zag sequence, are distinguished: orientation, exploration and commitment (Germeyes & Verschuren, 2006; Gati & Asher, 2001; Van Merriënboer & Kirschner, 2018). The first subscale measures, *orientation* to a career choice. Orientation stands for creating awareness of the need for making a decision and motivation to engage in the choice process (Super, 1955). The second subscale measures, career *exploration*. It focusses on self-appraisal and external search activities that provide information to foster selection of possible study directions (Bartley & Robitschek, 2000). The third subscale measures *commitment*, whereby the final choice is made out of a reduced set of choice alternatives (Germeyes & Verscheuren, 2006). The next paragraph will define the three decisional tasks and the role parents could take in these.

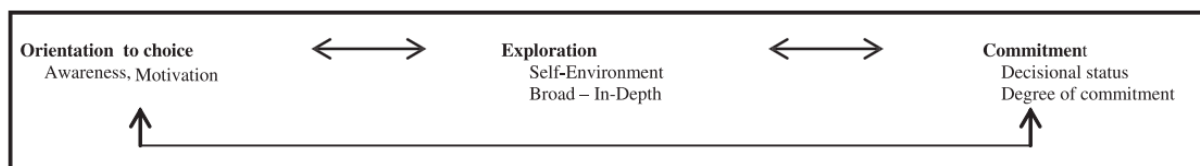


Figure 1. The SCTI's Decisional Tasks

Parents Within the Choice Process

Most parents take a non-directive role within the performance of the decisional tasks (Berings & D’Haeseleer, 1997). The degree of non-directivity depends on the image they have

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about their children's capability to make their own substantiated, choice for tertiary education. This image lays on a continuum between complete dependence in making a choice on the one hand and complete independence in making a choice on the other hand (Taylor, Harris, & Taylor, 2004). Parents who have a more independent image of their children will be more directive and therefore more supportive and guiding in individual parent activities, like structuring the experiences as a result of performance in the exploration task (Taylor et al., 2004; Young, Friesen, & Pearson, 1988).

Within the exploration task, a distinction can be made between self-exploration and exploration of the environment. *Self-exploration* is a task performed by the adolescents themselves, for example in the form of performing an internship (Jepsen & Grove, 1981; Kunnen, 2013). For adolescents, it is hard to process the experiences from self-exploratory tasks all alone, since their ideas have to fit their sense of social relations as well (Yorke & Longden, 2008). For this reason, adolescents often ask their parents for help (Luken, 2008; Kunnen, 2013). An outcome of self-exploration, is often that young people prefer meaningful work. Something can be labelled as meaningful for the individual when it is perceived as important by society as well (Schreiner & Sjøberg, 2007).

Besides the task of self-exploration, the SCTI describes a task that explores the environment in a *broad* and *in-depth* way. A broad exploration takes all alternatives for possible study directions into account, while during the in-depth exploration only a reduced set of alternatives is taken into account (Harren, 1979). To compile the optimal reduced set of alternatives, adolescents recognize, reject and adjust received information. To do this, they use cognitive abilities like planning and considering future consequences (Holmegaard et al., 2014; Kunnen, Holwerda, & Bosma, 2008). Parents can be involved in this process by performing joint parent activities like suggesting a set of alternative study directions (Holmegaard et al., 2014). Other joint parent activities are (a) being responsive and encouraging by showing their

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own interests (b) providing information and (c) giving advice, suggestions and feedback (Taylor, Harris, & Taylor, 2004; Young, Friesen, & Pearson, 1988). These activities do not only occur during the performance of the exploratory tasks but also during the task to create commitment to the final choice. The term *degree of commitment* refers to the strength of confidence in a made choice (Blustein, Ellis & Devenis, 1989). *Decisional status* is a term that refers to an indication of one's progress in choosing (Harren, 1979). The degree of commitment generally increases when the choice is definitely made, so when there is a full decisional status achieved (Blustein et al., 1989).

A second factor that might positively influence an adolescent's degree of commitment is the alignment with their parents' expectations and aspirations (Mickelson & Velasco, 1998; McFarland & Pals, 2005; Yorke & Longden, 2008). An adolescent's choice is often compatible with his or her parents' expectations and aspirations when the future study direction aligns with the adolescents' interests (Roest, 2009). When there is a contradiction between the parents' and the adolescent's expectations and aspirations, conflicts might occur (Pless & Katznelson, 2007). For instance, at first a parent may say that it is acceptable to work as a civil servant, but then counters such statements with comments about low payment (Taylor et al., 2004). When this contradiction stays unspoken, it may result in a conflict. Conflicts might cause an aversion to involving parents in the choice process at all (Bregman & Killen, 1999).

Present Study

Adolescents make a validated choice for tertiary education by trying to make sense of who they are, who they want to become, and their social relations (Illeris et al., 2002; Yorke & Longden, 2008). Expected is that they do this by performing several decisional tasks, mainly in consultation with their parents as central group within their social network (Germeyes & Verscheuren, 2006; Holmegaard et al., 2014). Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate the perceived role of parents in the uncertain and complex process of making a choice for

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tertiary education, that adolescents go through in their final years of secondary school. Against this background, the following research question will be answered in this study: *What role do parents have in their children's process of making a choice for tertiary education, described from the adolescents' and the parents' perspective?*

Method

Context of The Study

The present study took place in The Netherlands, where 70% of the student population continues in tertiary education (CBS, 2017). Access to tertiary study programs is fixed. The chosen set of courses in upper secondary school and the level at which a student follows these courses determines if a student is admissible in further study programs. The price of a study program, for students with Dutch nationality, is nationally regulated by the government. Students are able to apply for an interest-free loan to finance their study. Because of this, economic background is not expected to form a limitation in making a choice for tertiary education.

Research Design

The aim of this study was to investigate the perceived role of parents in the uncertain and complex process of making a choice for tertiary education, that adolescents go through in their final years of secondary school. In line with this descriptive study aim, qualitative data was collected by conducting semi-structured, narrative interviews to answer the research question. By using interviews, in-depth information about the way adolescents and their parents perceived the choice process could be collected. Because both adolescents and parents got the chance to describe their experiences in the choice process, during an interview (Neuman, 2012). That is why a holistic image of the process in making the choice for tertiary education could be created (Field, 2018).

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Participants

In total 11 pairs of adolescents and parents were interviewed in 22 separate interviews. Participants were purposely selected in order to form an image of the process of making a choice for tertiary education, from different perspectives. The participating adolescents share the characteristic that they will graduate from secondary school in the year they were interviewed. The participating parents do not share a predetermined characteristic. Nevertheless, it is chosen to interview parents from both sexes. It was not considered necessary to interview both parents, since in most situations an agreement in parenting between both parents is made (Starnes, 2012; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2004). Besides that, interviewing one parent - that represents the shared vision of both parents - was considered sufficient since it serves the aim of the study to gain insight into parents' vision on guiding their children's choice process, instead of comparing the way both parents guide this process. The selection of participants aimed for a representation of a variety in participating pairs different in age, gender, level of education and final choice in what to study. A varied sample made generalizability to the population more reliable (Bitsch, 2005). An overview of the characteristics per participant can be found in table 1.

Three participant pairs were direct contacts from the researcher's network. On the one hand, this connection could lead to an increase in honesty. On the other hand, the urge to be seen as a socially accepted member of the network, that the researcher is part of, could count as a limitation. To avoid further bias, for instance in gender or level of education, other participant pairs were selected through snowballing in the participants' networks (Byrne, 2001). In this selection, the characteristic of graduation in the year of the interview was still taken into account. Adding the snowballing method, resulted in eight participant pairs that were unfamiliar for the researcher on beforehand.

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Table 1

Overview of Participants

Case	Name		Age		Gender		Educational level		Final choice adolescent
	Adolecent	Parent	Adolecent	Parent	Adolecent	Parent	Adolecent	Parent	
<u>Knowing</u>									
4	Bibi	Esther	16	44	F	F	Vmbo-tl	Mbo	Nursery
8	Wouter	Tom	17	51	M	M	Vmbo-kb	Hbo	Bakery
11	Amber	Francis	16	42	F	F	Vmbo tl	Hbo	Hotelmanagement
<u>Finding</u>									
1	Niek	Moniek	17	47	M	F	(t)vwo	Wo	International Business
2	Felien	Mariëlle	17	49	F	F	Havo	Mbo	Creative Business
6	Julia	Herman	18	52	F	M	Gymnasium	Wo	University College
7	Iris	Sandra	17	49	F	F	Havo	Hbo	Social Work
9	Stijn	Linda	16	44	M	F	Vmbo-tl	Hbo	Army (afther havo)
10	Esmee	Huub/Mariska	18	MV	F	M/F	Havo	Hbo/Hbo	Applied psychology
<u>Searching</u>									
5	Daan	Johan/Miranda	17	49/44	F	F/M	Havo	LTS/Mbo	Gap year
3	Eva	Marjolein	18	50	F	F	Vwo	Hbo	Gap year

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Instrument

To conduct the semi-structured, narrative interviews a topic list (appendix A) was used and carried out from a narrative interview approach. The main goal of using the topic list was to let the adolescents and their parents describe the way they perceived the adolescents' choice process, while focusing on the involvement of parents (Andrews, Squire, & Tamboukou, 2008). That is why the three main topics: context, choice process and the role of parents were addressed. Under each of these main-topics, sub-questions were included. The questions were in Dutch, since that is the spoken language of the participants. The questions were validated based on the concept of content validity, because the questions have their origin in the SCTI as described in the theoretical framework (Field, 2018). Besides that, the questions were validated based on the concept of face validity, because they were labelled as valid by the supervisor who is an expert in the field of this research (Field, 2018). Before the instrument was used, one pilot interview with a secondary school student and one pilot interview with his mother, within the researcher's network, was conducted to refine the questions in the way they were formulated. Also, the order in which questions were asked changed as a result of the pilot interviews.

Procedure

After recruiting the heterogeneous group of participants, an information letter was sent to make sure that the participants were fully informed before signing the consent (Field, 2018). The consent was split up into a part for the adolescents and a part for the parents (appendix B and C). When signed, the participants were contacted to participate in the interview. All interviews were performed by the same researcher. First, the adolescents were interviewed for 15 to 30 minutes. Afterwards the parents were interviewed for an additional 20 to 30 minutes. The adolescents and parents were not interviewed at the same time, to make sure that they did not influence each other. The interviews with both adolescents and their parent(s) took place at the participant's home. With the permission of the participants, a recording tool was used to

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record each interview. Afterwards, the interviews were transcribed. A transcript was sent to the participants in the form of a member check to validate the transcripts and giving participants the opportunity to adjust their answers. All participants agreed with the transcriptions without any addition. After this approval, transcripts were stored on the server of Utrecht University to make sure that only the researcher, and when necessary, the supervisor had access.

Analysis

The study design, with separate interviews with adolescents and their parents about the process of making a choice for tertiary education, afforded the possibility to describe both the adolescent's perspective and the parents' perspective. The combination of data from these interviews functioned as descriptive cases in order to form an understanding of the context and complexity on within-case level (Yin, 2003). On cross-case level, the cases were used to find commonalities in all cases, beyond the unique character of the separate cases (Stake, 1994). Because of interpretative choices that were made based on research purposes, a combination of within-case and cross-case analyses could help the reader to recognize a researcher's individual experiences in a generalizable way (Ayres, Kavanaugh & Knafl, 2003).

Within-case analysis. First, transcripts were read carefully while phrases that seemed relevant to capture activities, considerations and conversations that occurred during an adolescent's choice process for tertiary education were highlighted. Second, these highlighted phrases were labelled with codes from a code scheme (appendix D) in order to map the role of parents in the choice process. The code scheme consisted of both inductive and deductive codes (Boyatzis, 1998; Crabtree & Miller, 1999). The inductive codes were based on Germeyes and Verscheuren's (2006) SCTI. In order to find patterns within the data the coded quotes were placed in an overview that provided insight in the sequence of tasks, adolescents carried out to make a choice for tertiary education and the way in which they involved their

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parents in this. To end the within-case analysis, the overview was used to create representative summaries of all cases.

Cross-case analysis. For the cross-case analysis, the summaries were used as comparable descriptions in order to find commonalities between the cases on a more abstract level. That is why the summaries have made it possible to find a pattern that made a clear distinction between types of choice processes, based on their decisional status. These types were compared with each other, on two variables. Namely, the performed activities and the way in which adolescents involved their parents in this, for example by entering into a conversation with them. An example of this cross-case analysis can be found in table 2, in the form of a cross-case analysis matrix (Cresswell, & Miller, 2000). During the performed steps in the cross-examination, transcripts were approached again, at the point where the summaries did not provide sufficient information. Lines from the transcripts that led to decisions were added to the summaries. Throughout data analysis, the cases were described with the numbers 1 to 11, each number represented a pair consisting of an adolescent and his or her parent(s), in sequence of the interviews. When citations out of cases were described more elaborately in the results section, the numbers were changed into pseudonyms.

Dependability. De Kleijn and van Leeuwen (2018) state that conducting an audit trail, is a way to ensure reliability within the process and results of a qualitative study. In this, a process document is used by an external auditor, to trace back decisions made by the researcher. The process document included a comprehensive description of data collection and all documentation used for data analysis. Suggestions made by the external auditor clarified steps in data analysis and verified the results and conclusions. This way of working contributed to a more dependable study (Akkerman, Admiraal, Berkelmans, & Oost, 2008; De Kleijn & Van Leeuwen, 2018).

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Table 2

Example of a Cross-case Analysis Matrix

Case	Type of choice process	Activity	Parents' role	Conversation
10	Finding	<i>Broad-exploration:</i> Reducing the set of possible options for studies to choose.	<i>Directive role:</i> The parents performed conversations in order to help the adolescent to discover her interests.	Parents asked their child questions like: What evokes your enthusiasm? What are your qualities?
3	Knowing	<i>Broad-exploration:</i> proposing alternative study directions.	<i>Non-directive role:</i> The parents did not pay too much attention to alternative study directions.	The daughter did know what she wanted that well, that there was no conversation needed about an option B.

Results

In order to find an interesting study program at a suitable location, all 11 adolescents performed the three decisional tasks. Most of them did this in collaboration with their parents. Commonalities were found in the way adolescents approached the decisional tasks, based on their decisional status at the beginning of the choice process. That is why a clear distinction between two types of choices processes could be made. These two types were described as follows:

1. A process in which adolescents had a study program to enroll in, in mind, prior to the performance of the decisional tasks. Adolescents with this type of choice process were still looking for the most suitable location. This type could be shortened to *the knowing type*.
2. A process in which adolescents did not have a study program to enroll in, in mind, prior to the performance of the decisional tasks. Adolescents with this type of choice process were looking for the most interesting program and the most suitable location.

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Within the second type of choice processes, two subtypes (2A and 2B) could be identified, based on a difference in the fulfilment of the decisional status, the adolescents reached at the end of their choice process. These two subtypes were described as follows:

- A. A process in which adolescents had no idea of what to study at the beginning of their choice process. As the process progressed it did become clear which study program and location best suited to the adolescent's preferences. This type could be shortened to *the finding type*.
- B. A process in which adolescents had no idea of what to study at the beginning of their choice process. As the process progressed it still did not become clear which study program and location best suited to the adolescent's preferences. Adolescents with this type of choice process did not reach a full decisional status at all. This type could be shortened to *the searching type*.

Remarkable in this is that the participating adolescents in this study did not show any differences in feeling the need for making a choice for tertiary education in the near future and were therefore motivated to get engaged in the choice process. Also, the issues that they consider as important for making a choice in study program or location were equal over the groups. Most of the adolescents and parents labelled a suitable balance between practice and theory, labour market perspective and a broad scope within the study program as conditions that a study program has to satisfy. A drivable distance, offering the right support to the students and the image within the region are frequently mentioned conditions a location has to satisfy.

In the next section, the adolescents' contexts, performed activities and role of the parents within the different types of choice processes is explained and illustrated with citations of participants. Although a clear pattern has been found in three different types of choice processes, it is very plausible that choice processes assigned to these types differ from each other on a detailed level.

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The Knowing Type of Choice Process

The first type of choice process is *the knowing type*. Three choice processes of participating adolescents were ascribed to this type. The adolescents with this type of choice process had a clear study program in mind and were only looking for the most suitable location to follow this. There was no doubt about the content that the program must meet. One adolescent indicated this very clearly:

“Well, I knew what I wanted to study for a long time, so I just went to see institutes that offered that particular program. And then, I just went to see if I liked it there.”

(Bibi, adolescent).

In order to find out whether the profession she had in mind really suited her, she performed an internship. Her mother said about this:

“It is important to let young people participate in practice. Certainly, when it comes to hand-work, that should actually be possible much more.” (Esther, mother of Bibi).

Adolescents with a knowing type of choice process, indicate that the internship confirmed their feeling about the profession they had in mind for themselves in the future.

The next step was to find institutions that offer particular programs that train to become the profession they had in mind. Several activities were performed to find these institutions. Another adolescent described this as follows:

“I collected information by going to an information market. I have been there with my schoolmates and with my parents. I also collected information from flyers.” (Amber, adolescent).

The schools that have drawn her attention within this broad exploration, were subsequently visited on open-door days. Her mother said about this:

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“For our daughter, visiting an open-door day is an obligation. You can get a taste of the atmosphere, that is something you can't get from a website.” (Francis, mother of Amber).

All adolescents with a knowing type of choice process have chosen to take at least one of their parents with them to an open-door day, because:

“When I would have gone by myself, I would have stayed much shorter and I would have thought: I don't care. I am happy that my father went with me. I think he paid attention to other things than I did.” (Amber, adolescent).

To reach a final decision, adolescents with a knowing type of choice process have used conversations with their parents in order to organize their experiences during the choice process. A conversation after an internship is described by a father as follows:

“We did not directly speak about the content, but we discussed whether he enjoyed it. Afterwards I received a video from the baker with a subscription that he enjoyed the collaboration as well, so that is a good sign.” (Tom, father of Wouter).

A way adolescents structured these experiences and experiences from the open-door days is by making lists that describe pros and cons of a location. One adolescent said about this:

“After visiting a second open door day, I discussed with my father what we had seen on both open-door days. Based on that I made a choice. I still asked my parents for confirmation.” (Bibi, adolescent).

In all the three cases of students with a knowing type of choice process parents were satisfied with their children's choice. That means that there was no contradiction between the parents' and adolescents' expectations and aspirations, so conflicts did not occur:

“We had no conflicts during the choice process. As parents, we think that our daughter has to do something that makes her happy. So, we support her choice. We do think that this is a good profession for her.” (Francis, mother of Amber).

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The Finding- and The Searching Type of Choice Processes

Eight adolescents were ascribed to the finding- and searching type of choice processes. Adolescents with these types of choice processes did not have a specific study program in mind before they entered their choice process. Therefore, there was a need for finding an interesting program and (afterwards) a suitable location to enroll in such a program. From the eight adolescents with these types of choice processes, six adolescents had a finding type of choice process. These adolescents reached a full decisional status at the end of their process and found a suitable study program and location. The other two adolescents had a searching type of choice process. They did not reach a full decisional status and were therefore still doubting about the best suitable study program and location. Both adolescents with this type of choice process did choose for a gap year after their graduation.

The Finding Type of Choice Process. One adolescent with a finding type of choice process described her decisional status as follows:

“In the beginning, I didn't really want to invest time and energy in making a choice. I considered many different studies and finally opted for applied psychology. Getting a bachelor degree in law also draws my intention. I'd rather do both, but that's just not possible.” (Esmee, adolescent).

Were adolescents with a knowing type of choice process, already had an idea of which studies they would further investigate during an open-door day, that picture was not entirely clear to the adolescents with a finding type of choice process at the beginning of their choice process. So, adolescents with this type of choice process had to undertake various activities to get well informed in order to make a choice in which open-door days to visit. One adolescent said about this:

“The first thing that I have done, is just asking the dean of my school for an information package. Together with my mother, we had a look at which courses I

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needed to enroll in study programs that I thought were interesting.” (Niek, adolescent).

Another adolescent described an activity with a similar purpose as follows:

“At school, we had a program called Qompas, it is a tool that guides you in making a choice. I discussed the assignments from Qompas with my school counselor, parents and friends.” (Felien, adolescent).

These two examples clearly showed that parents played a role in the performance of these activities. But adolescents also used their parents as a sounding board in order to evaluate these activities. About this is said:

“My parents have been able to help me well in choosing a number of studies to investigate further, by talking. Yes, because your parents know you pretty well. So, if they think that a study is not suitable for you, it might be that they are right.” (Esmee, adolescent).

Her father formulated his role in this, with the following words:

“What I liked about our daughter’s search in what to study is that we had a look at many different studies, with genuine interest. We asked her a lot of questions to clarify what she actually liked. Any examples: What would you like to become in future life? What suites you?” (Huub, father of Esmee).

Such as adolescents with a knowing type of choice process, all adolescents with a finding type of choice process have visited open-door days. Most of them preferred to take their parents along. Specific for adolescents with this type of choice process is that they often attended a ‘student for one day’ program, in addition to visiting an open-door day. A ‘student for one day’ program is a special program for students who are seriously interested in enrolling in a specific study program. The program offers the opportunity to go along with a student to his or her lectures and/or working groups for one day (Studiekeuze123, 2019). A

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number of parents have actively encouraged participation in such a day. One parent said about this:

“Such a day ensures that you can taste what it is to study.” (Moniek, mother of Niek).

That participation in a ‘student for one day’ program may lead to a motivated choice, is apparent from the following quote:

“After participating in a ‘student for one day’ program, I knew that this was the study program I wanted to enroll in.” (Feliën, adolescent; Iris, adolescent; Julia, adolescent).

One parent confirmed this with the following words:

“After a first ‘student for one day’ program, my daughter came home very enthusiastic. This was supposed to be it. I told her that she also had to see the other university of applied sciences as well. Because I do think that the wider you are oriented, the more you will be committed to your final choice.” (Sandra, mother of Iris).

Another parent added to this:

“The ‘student for one day’ program only confirmed to him what he wanted the most. So, you know, it’s fine as long as you have understood and weighted all the interesting options.” (Moniek, mother of Niek).

In the examples, that illustrate the finding type of choice process, parents played a role in particular by asking questions in order to arrive at the most suitable study program. Among the adolescents with this type of choice process, there were also two adolescents for which their parents played a slightly different role. One of the adolescents indicated the following about the role of his mother:

“My mother insisted that I had to start investigating what study program I wanted to enroll in. She thought it was important that I was working on this.” (Stijn, adolescent).

His mother added to this:

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“He indicated by himself which direction drew his attention. Then, I also went looking for information. He was a bit easy-going in this. I think, that is not strange for a 15 years-old boy. If I would have been less on top of this, he might have done this by himself, but he didn't get the chance. Because I already figured some things out.”
(Linda, mother of Stijn).

The parent of another adolescent described an opposite role that he had during the choice process of his daughter:

“Our daughter has always been fairly independent in her studies and in making a choice for tertiary education. She is also quite reserved. She said: dad, mom, don't get involved. I will figure it out. Sometimes she said: I don't want to talk about it, I have everything under control. She did not asked us a lot of questions. However, me and her mother did offer her some advice.” (Herman, father of Julia).

The Searching Type of Choice Process. The last type of choice process, *the searching type*, can be illustrated with the following quote:

“Next year, I will first take a gap year. Then, I can still think about which study I prefer.” (Eva, adolescent).

Another adolescent with a choice process, ascribed to this type, gave this reason for making the choice for a gap year:

“I have already looked at a few studies, but I did not have something that I really liked. I did have a profession that I really liked, but the study program that trains toward that profession did not sound interesting at all.” (Daan, adolescent).

His mother said about this:

“At first, we did not like the idea of taking a gap year. I would have liked it if he just went to a university of applied sciences.” (Miranda, mother of Daan).

His father added to this:

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"But you can't force him." (Johan, father of Daan).

In contrast to adolescents with a finding type of choice process, the adolescents with a searching type of choice process are still in the middle of the process to find out in which profession they see themselves in, in future life. Just like the adolescents with the other two types of choice processes, the adolescents with a searching type of choice process have carried out various assignments. In most cases their deans and/or school counselors commissioned them to perform these activities in order to steer them in their search. Typically, both adolescents with a searching type of choice process indicated that they have experienced the performance of these assignments as annoying. That is reflected in the following quote:

"At school, we had to do some assignments in 'Quompas', but I thought that was really terrible, really very bad." (Eva, adolescent).

Nevertheless, adolescents with a searching type of choice process have already performed orienting activities. For example, one adolescent has performed several internships in order to find out which profession draws his attention:

"I have been with people from different professions for a few days. I spent a day with an accountant, a sports teacher and a police officer." (Daan, adolescent).

The other adolescent with a searching type of choice process focused more on stories from others who studied before:

"I mainly talked to people who have already studied. I talked with an old classmate about the academic teacher training program, with my mother about the profession of being a teacher itself and with someone else about the study pedagogical sciences." (Eva, adolescent).

The role parents take in this type of choice process is not significantly different from the role parents take in the other two types. In all types, parents acted as a sounding board to discuss

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experiences in performed activities. A parent from an adolescent with a searching type of choice process described her role with the following words:

“I think our son does consult us a lot, he gives a lot of feedback about his choice process.” (Marjolein, mother of Daan).

Although the orienting activities have not yet led to a specific choice, both adolescents do tend to have a clear direction in which they want to follow a study. Remarkable in this, is that parents in both cases are critical towards this direction. One parent says about this:

“I am critical about her choice to go to the teacher training college. On the one hand, I like her idea very much. But on the other hand, I know what she will find there. And in the future, it only gets harder to be a teacher. The workload is very high.”

(Marjolein, mother of Eva).

Despite their critical attitude towards the preference of their children, parents of adolescents with a searching type of choice process indicated that adolescents must make a choice that they like. One parents said about this:

“His future job needs to be nice. That is really important, because he needs to do that for a very long time. So, he has to make a choice that really fits him.” (Miranda, mother of Daan).

The mother of the other adolescent with a searching type of choice process added to this:

“It's her choice. Yes, she doesn't just make a choice and then it's okay”. (Marjolein, mother of Eva).

In summary, the 11 unique choice processes of participating adolescents could be ascribed to three types of choice processes, based on their decisional status at the beginning and the 'end' of their choice processes. Table 3 gives an overview of characteristics per type of choice process.

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Table 3

Overview of Characteristics Per Type of Process.

Type of choice process	Knowing	Finding	Searching
Decisional status at the beginning	Know which study program to enroll in, but not at which location.	Do not know which study program to enroll in at which location.	Do not know which study program to enroll in at which location.
Decisional status at the end	Know which study program to enroll in, at which location.	Know which study program to enroll in, at which location.	Do not know which study to enroll in, at which location.
Mostly performed activities	Visiting open-door days, performing internships.	Self-exploration, visiting open-door days, performing 'student for one day programs.	Self-exploration, visiting open-door days, performing internships and talk to students.
General role of parents	Being an extra pair of eyes during open-door days and structuring experiences in performed activities.	Asking questions to steer the self-exploration, being an extra pair of eyes during open-door days and structuring experiences in performed activities.	Asking questions to steer the self-exploration, being an extra pair of eyes during open-door days and structuring experiences in performed activities.

Discussion

This study aimed for a deeper understanding of the role that parents play in adolescents' process of making a choice for tertiary education. Because of 22 interviews, that resulted in 11 varied cases, this study provided an in-depth insight in the unique context of adolescents' choice processes. These processes could be described from the adolescent's and parents' perspectives. Despite the fact that Germeyes and Verscheuren's (2006) study provided clear decisional tasks in the process of making a choice for tertiary education, there is not one universal way to make this choice. That does not take away, that all adolescents who start the process have the same goal to make a well-founded choice for tertiary education. Therefore, several decisional tasks are performed inconsecutively and iterative. Based on the decisional status, as a result of the commitment task, three clear types of choice process could be distinguished: (1) the knowing type, (2) the finding type and (3) the searching type.

No differences were found between the types in the performance of the orientation task. That is to say, that all adolescents in this study did feel the need for making a choice for tertiary

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education in the near future and were therefore motivated to get engaged in the choice process. Besides that, no differences were found in the criteria that a study and the location of a study must meet. Differences between the types of choice processes were found in the performance of subtasks within the main task of exploration, and the way in which adolescents with a particular type of choice process involved their parents in that performance.

It turned out that adolescents with a knowing type of choice process often use internships to validate the ideas they have about their ideal study direction. Based on that experience, they visit an open-door day of an institution that offers study programs within that direction, mainly together with their parents. It appears that parents play an important role in the period after this visit. In line with the studies of Taylor and colleagues (2004) and Young and colleagues (1988) it seems that parents offer support in mapping the pros and cons of visited locations by asking in-depth questions about the adolescent's experiences during the open-door day.

Where adolescents with a knowing type of choice process clearly know which open-door days (of specific studies) they want to visit, this is not yet established for adolescents with a finding type of choice process. For them, performing the self-exploration task is therefore extremely important to gain insight into which studies fit within their sense of who they want to become in future life. In alignment with the findings of Luken (2008) and Kunnen (2013) this study shows that questions from parents may evoke discussions. Adolescents gain insights in their interests from these discussions. Most of the adolescents with a knowing type of choice process test the ideas - they have about the most suitable study direction - by following a 'student for one day' program instead of doing an internship. Nevertheless, parents offer support in mapping the pros and cons of in-depth explored studies by asking questions about the adolescent's experiences in the 'student for one day' program.

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Typical for adolescents with a searching type of choice process, is that they have experienced little help with the supervision they received from their school counselor and/or dean. The help they received was experienced as annoying. The adolescents often found information by asking other students or doing an internship. As with the other two types of choice processes, the adolescents share and structure experiences of these activities by discussing them with their parents. Remarkable in this study, is that both adolescents with a searching type of choice process, had parents that were critical towards the preferred direction their children currently take. This finding can be explained in multiple ways. On the one hand, it is possible that adolescents still doubt because their parents are critical towards the study direction of their interest. On the other hand, it is possible parents are critical because of the adolescents' doubt. Both explanations could indicate a contradiction between the parents' and the adolescent's expectations and aspirations (Pless & Katznelson, 2007). However, in line with the findings of Roest (2009) parents in this study state that adolescents should choose what makes them feel happy.

Comparison of the findings in this study, with those of other studies that state that parents are central in making a choice for tertiary education (i.g. Pimlott-Wilson, 2011; Holmegaard et al., 2014; Reay, 1998; Jackson, 1982), confirms that parents do play a role in all three types of choice process. Parents are important for adolescents in asking the right questions to understand who they are, what they like and who they want to become. Thereafter, adolescents use this knowledge to perform various activities to explore choice options. The experiences from these activities are often discussed with parents again, so pros and cons of all the choice options can be structured in order to formulate a final choice in what and where to study.

Limitations and Future Research

While providing valuable insights, this study has some limitations. To start with, the time the interviews took place. Except for the two cases with a searching type of choice process, the interviews in this study took place in the final phase of the process of making a choice for tertiary education. Adolescents and parents have been asked to recall specific actions that were taken during the choice process they described. Despite the fact that adolescents and parents referred to authentic experiences, it depended on their current considerations which experiences they remembered and how they interpreted them (Bruner, 2004; Holmegaard, Ulriksen & Madsen, 2015). Therefore, it is possible that participants in this study omitted significant information (i.g. about conversations), in order to create an as coherent as possible story. To overcome this issue, future research could study the undertaken activities in a choice process longitudinally, with a focus on processing conversations to validate and add to the results of this study.

Another issue that has to do with the moment the interview was conducted, is that adolescents' and parents' narratives can alter during the process of making a choice for tertiary education and are therefore time-variant (Holmegaard et al., 2014). The reason for this lays in the inconsecutive and iterative character of a process of making a choice for tertiary education. This may imply that the results found in this study, would have been different when the interviews were conducted six months earlier or later. In order to get a more reliable image of the whole choice process, a longitudinal approach within the study can be a solution for this issue too.

Finally, the number of interviewed parents might count as a limitation in this study. Although, in most cases one of the parents is perfectly capable of expressing a shared vision on guiding the choice process (Starnes, 2012) it may be better to interview both parents in future

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research. This idea stems from the finding, that some adolescents and parents do perceive the father and mother as to separate factors that influenced their choice process.

Practical and Theoretical Implications

Prior to this study, a number of researches had focused on adolescents' process of making a choice for tertiary education (i.g. Pimlott-Wilson, 2011; Holmegaard et al., 2014; Reay, 1998; Jackson, 1982). These studies indicated that parents play an important role in this choice process, without describing this role on a detailed level. The present study addressed this knowledge gap and contributed to existing literature on the role of parents in different types of choice processes with a more detailed framework of the fulfillment of this specific role. Therefore, parents' role can be understood on a deeper level. This role is often taken by parents, but can also be taken by others from adolescents' social network. Therefore, insights from this study may also hold meaning for other people in social networks from adolescents who have to make a choice for tertiary education, or at least provide meaningful input for research along these lines.

The present study confirms in different ways that parents are an important group out of adolescents' social network to verify their decisions during the process of making a choice for tertiary education (Pimlott-Wilson, 2011; Holmegaard et al., 2014; Reay, 1998). On a practical level, a next step is to identify which questions parents can ask to fulfill a value-adding role in structuring experiences in the three decisional tasks as described in the SCTI. Secondary schools can contribute to this, by addressing this topic in the information that most schools provide to parents, in preparation for guidance in the choice process. An example that makes this possible, is the creation of a flow chart. It can show the steps that an adolescent goes through during his or her choice process, highlighting possible questions to ask. Therefore, with the help of a flow chart, parents can make a meaningful contribution to adolescents' process of making a choice for tertiary education.

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Appendices

Appendix A Topic list

Appendix B Informed consent adolescents

Appendix C Informed consent parents

Appendix D Code scheme

Appendix E FECT-form

Appendix A. Topic list

Interviewee	Hoofdonderwerp	Topic	Sub-topic	Vraag	Doorvraag
Studenten	Achtergrondgegevens	Persoonlijk	Naam	Wat is je naam?	
			Leeftijd	Hoe oud ben je?	
	Context	Thuis context	Thuisituatie	Uit wie bestaat je gezin?	Hoe oud zijn deze mensen? Wie van deze mensen wonen er bij jullie thuis?
		Opleiding ouders	Opleiding vader	Wat voor een opleiding heeft je vader afgerond?	Was dit een MBO, HBO of Universiteire studie?
			Opleiding moeder	Wat voor een opleiding heeft je moeder afgerond?	Was dit een MBO, HBO of Universiteire studie?
		Baan ouders	Baan vader	Wat voor werk doet je vader?	Welke werkzaamheden heeft hij? Welk werk heeft hij hiervoor gedaan?
			Baan moeder	Wat voor werk doet je moeder?	Welke werkzaamheden heeft zij? Welk werk heeft zij hiervoor gedaan?
		Broers en zussen	Werk/studie	Heb je broers of zussen die studeren?	Welke studie doen zij? Is dit een MBO, HBO of Universiteire studie?
				Heb je broers of zussen die al werken?	Wat voor werk doen zij?
	Small-talk	Examenjaar	School	Kun je iets meer vertellen over je school?	
			Vakken	Welk vakkenpakket heb je gekozen?	
			Cijfers	Vind je, dat je goede cijfers haalt?	
	Studiekeuze proces	Algemeen	Voorwaarden	Wat vind jij belangrijk in een studie? Weet je al welke studie je volgend schooljaar wilt gaan volgen?	Welke studie heb je gekozen?
			Studie	Twijfel je nog tussen verschillende studies?	Tussen welke studies twijfel je?
			Twijfel	Neig je meer naar 1 optie?	Waarom juist deze?

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

	Zekerheid	Hoe zeker ben je over de keuze die je tot nu toe hebt gemaakt?	
Motivatie	Informatie inzamelen	Via welke wegen heb je informatie gekregen over mogelijke studies? Welke mensen heb je ingezet om informatie te krijgen over mogelijke studies? Heb je al eens een dagje meegelopen met iemand die het werk doet dat hoort bij de studie van jouw keuze?	Waarom heb je dit gedaan? Heb je dit uit jezelf gedaan? Of moest dit van iemand anders? Van wie moest dit?
	Werkveld (stage)	Heb je open dagen bezocht?	Zo ja, van welke opleiding(en)? Waarom heb je dit gedaan? Heb je dit uit jezelf gedaan? Of moest dit van iemand anders? Van wie moest dit?
	Open dagen	Heb je een meeloopdag bij een studie gedaan?	Zo ja, van welke opleiding(en)? Waarom heb je dit gedaan? Heb je dit uit jezelf gedaan? Of moest dit van iemand anders? Van wie moest dit?
Exploratie	Open dagen	Waarom heb je ervoor gekozen naar deze specifieke open dagen te gaan? Welke open dagen spraken jouw het meeste aan? Ben je alleen naar de open dag geweest? Of ging er iemand met je mee?	Waarom? Wie ging er met je mee? Waarom deze persoon?
	Meeloopdagen	Waarom heb je ervoor gekozen om naar deze meeloopdagen te gaan?	

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

		Welke meeloopdagen spraken jou het meeste aan?	Waarom?
		Ben je alleen naar de meeloopdag geweest? Of ging er iemand met je mee?	Wie ging er met je mee? Waarom deze persoon?
		Heb je voorafgaand aan de meeloop-/open dag met iemand hierover gesproken?	Zo ja, met wie? Vond je het belangrijk wat deze mensen zeiden over jouw plannen? Aan wiens mening hechtte je de meeste waarde? Waarom aan de mening van deze persoon?
	Gesprekspartners	Heb je na het bezoeken van een meeloop-/open dag met iemand hierover gesproken?	Zo ja, met wie? Vond je het belangrijk wat deze mensen zeiden over jouw ervaringen? Aan wiens mening hechtte je de meeste waarde? Waarom aan de mening van deze persoon?
	Beslissing	Stappen	Heb je voor het nemen van je beslissing nog stappen ondernomen die we nog niet hebben besproken?
		Beslissing	Wanneer wist je zeker welke keuze je zou gaan maken? Heb je na het maken van je beslissing hier met anderen over gesproken?
		Suggesties	Zo ja, welke? Wat heeft hier het meeste aan bijgedragen? Zo ja, met wie? Aan wiens mening hechtte je de meeste waarde? Hebben de mensen met wie je hebt

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

				gesproken nog andere studie opties aangedragen? Heb je daar vervolgens nog wat mee gedaan?
Ouders	Invloed	Algemeen	Heb je het gevoel dat je ouders zich veel hebben bemoeid met je studiekeuze?	Waarom wel of waarom niet?
		Activiteiten	Hebben je ouders geholpen om de voor en nadelen van een bepaalde studie duidelijk te krijgen? Hebben je ouders je altijd het gevoel gegeven dat je de juiste studiekeuze maakt/hebt gemaakt?	Hoe hebben ze dit gedaan? Waarom merk je dat?
	Beeld	Beeld	Had je het gevoel dat je ouders je in een bepaalde studierichting hebben willen sturen? Zo ja -->	Hebben je ouders dit beeld duidelijk naar je gecommuniceerd? Komt dit beeld overeen met de keuze die je hebt gemaakt? Voelt het alsof je ouders je in dit bepaalde beeld hebben geduwd? Zou je een andere keuze hebben gemaakt als je wist dat je keuze niet aan het beeld van je ouders voldoet?
	Conflict	Conflicten	Hebben er tijdens het keuze proces meningsverschillen tussen jou en je ouders plaats gevonden?	Zo ja, waar gingen deze over? Hoe zijn deze conflicten weer opgelost? Is je keuze verandert als gevolg van deze conflicten?
Ouders	Achtergrondgegevens	Persoonlijk	Naam Leeftijd	Wat is u naam? Hoe oud bent u?

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

Contexten	Gezinssituatie	Ouders Werk	Bent u opgegroeid met beide ouders? Wat voor werk deed/doet uw vader? Wat voor werk deed/doet uw moeder?	Woonden zij bij elkaar?
	Schooltijd	Vakken	In welke vakken heeft u ooit examen gedaan? (vind u het belangrijk dat uw kind dezelfde vakken volgt?)	Welk van deze vakken vond u het leukste? Welk van deze vakken vond u het minst leuk? Waarom wel of waarom niet?
	Eigen studiekeuze	Plezier Cijfers Invloed ouders	Ging u altijd met plezier naar school? Vind u dat u goede cijfers haalde op de middelbare school? In hoeverre hebben uw ouders invloed gehad op uw studiekeuze?	Hoe doet u dit nu bij uw eigen kind?
Studiekeuze proces	Algemeen	Activiteiten Beeld Voorwaarden Conflicten	In hoeverre bent u betrokken geweest bij de studiekeuze van uw kind? Had u voorafgaand aan de keuze die u kind gemaakt heeft een beeld van waar u uw kind het liefste zou willen zien? Wat vind u belangrijk aan een studie? Hebben er tijdens het keuzeproses van uw kind conflicten plaats gevonden?	Zo ja, waar? Voldoet de keuze die uw kind heeft gemaakt aan dit beeld? Wat zou u doen op het moment dat de keuze van uw kind niet aan dit beeld voldoet? Zo ja, waarover? Hoe zijn deze conflicten weer opgelost? Is er iets veranderd in de keuze van uw kind naar aanleiding van deze conflicten?
	Moivatie	Informatie	In hoeverre heeft u het gevoel dat u, uw kind, heeft	Zo ja, op welke manier?

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

	inzamelen	kunnen voorzien van informatie over mogelijke studierichtingen?	Waar blijkt dit uit? Is hier thuis veel over gesproken?
		Heeft u zelf nog alternatieve studierichtingen aangedragen?	Is hier iets mee gedaan?
	Welkveld	Heeft u, uw kind gestimuleerd om eens een dagje met iemand mee te lopen die het werk doet dat bij een bepaalde studie hoort?	Zo ja, welk beroep voerde deze persoon uit?
	Meeloopdagen	Heeft u, uw kind gestimuleerd om eens een dagje met iemand mee te lopen die al een bepaalde studievolt? (Meeloopdag)	Zo ja, van welke opleiding(en)?
	Open dagen	Bent u met uw kind mee geweest naar open dagen van instituten?	Zo ja, van welke opleiding(en)?
Exploratie	Gevoel	Heeft u het gevoel dat u veel invloed heeft gehad op de studiekeuze van uw kind?	Waarom wel of waarom niet?
		Heeft u het gevoel dat u, uw kind, heeft geholpen bij het in kaart brengen van de voors en tegens van een studie?	Op welke manier?
	Gesprekken	Heeft u het gevoel dat u gedurende het hele keuze proces altijd achter de keuze van uw kind heeft gestaan?	Waar blijkt dit uit?
		Heeft u, met uw kind veel gesprekken gevoerd over snuffelstages, open dagen en mee loop dagen? (weg halen) Heeft u het idee, dat u kind, naast u, ook met anderen heeft gesproken over deze snuffelstages, open dagen en mee loop dagen?	Zo ja, wat vindt u belangrijk in deze gesprekken? Zo ja, met wie?
Beslissing	Stappen	Heeft u kind verder nog stappen ondernomen alvorens hij of zij een studiekeuze heeft gemaakt?	Zo ja, welke?
	Overeenstemming	Bent u het eens met de studiekeuze van uw kind?	Zo niet, waarom niet?

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

(Wat vind u van de uiteindelijke studiekeuze van uw kind?)

Appendix B. Informed consent adolescents

Beste eindexamenleerling,

Voor mijn onderzoek ben ik opzoek naar eindexamenleerlingen die het leuk vinden om samen met (een van) hun ouders deel te nemen aan een onderzoek over hun studiekeuzep proces. Lijkt dit jou, en (een van) jouw ouders, leuk? Lees dan snel verder!

Wie ben ik?

Ik ben Lotte Nieuwenhuis, een masterstudente onderwijswetenschappen aan de Universiteit Utrecht. In het kader van mijn masterthesis doe ik onderzoek naar de invloed van ouders, als gesprekspartners, op de studiekeuze van eindexamenleerlingen. Hierin word ik begeleid door Jonne Vulperhorst (PHD Candidate).

Wat is het doel van het onderzoek?

Het doel van het onderzoek is door middel van semi-gestructureerde interviews te achterhalen hoe examenleerlingen de invloed van hun ouders, op hun studiekeuze, ervaren.

Wat houdt het onderzoek in?

Het onderzoek bestaat uit twee interviews. Eerst zal er een interview plaats vinden met jou (max. 45 min), en daarna zal er een interview plaats vinden met (een van) jouw ouders (max. 30 min). De interviews vinden bij voorkeur plaats op een nader te bepalen locatie, bijvoorbeeld bij jullie thuis. Mocht dit niet mogelijk zijn, dan kunnen de interviews ook plaats vinden via Skype of de telefoon. Alle interviews worden opgenomen met een voice-recorder, zodat deze later door mij, als onderzoeker, kunnen worden uitgewerkt. Deze uitwerking zal voor gebruik aan je worden voorgelegd om deze mogelijk bij te stellen. Het is mogelijk dat ook de begeleider luistert naar deze opnamen wanneer dit noodzakelijk blijkt te zijn.

Privacy en vertrouwelijkheid

Alle gegevens worden vertrouwelijk behandeld en anoniem verwerkt. Dat wil zeggen dat straks in de uitkomsten van het onderzoek niet te zien is welke antwoorden jij gegeven hebt. De gegevens worden alleen voor onderzoeks- en opleidingsdoeleinden gebruikt. Jouw ouders krijgen de antwoorden die je hebt gegeven in principe niet te zien of te horen.

Mogelijkheid tot vragen, informatie en toestemming

Als je nog vragen hebt over het onderzoek, stel die dan nu aan één van de onderzoekers of stuur een mail aan: Lotte Nieuwenhuis (l.nieuwenhuis@students.uu.nl). Voor verdere vragen over het onderzoek kun je contact opnemen met: Jonne Vulperhorst (j.p.vulperhorst@uu.nl).

Wanneer je akkoord gaat met de bovenstaande informatie wil ik je vragen **het formulier op de volgende pagina in te vullen** en terug te sturen of aan mij te overhandigen voorafgaand aan het interview.

Met vriendelijke groet,

Lotte Nieuwenhuis (student), Jonne Vulperhorst (PHD Candidate)

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

TOESTEMMINGSVERKLARING voor deelname aan wetenschappelijk onderzoek

Ik heb uitleg gekregen over het onderzoek. De informatie over het onderzoek heb ik goed gelezen. Ik heb mijn eventuele vragen over het onderzoek gesteld. Ik heb goed nagedacht over of ik aan het onderzoek wil deelnemen. Ik mag op ieder moment stoppen met het onderzoek als ik dat wil. Ik hoef niet uit te leggen waarom ik wil stoppen.

Ik doe wel mee aan het onderzoek

Ik doe niet mee aan het onderzoek

Zet hiernaast een kruisje in het vakje dat voor jou van toepassing is

Naam :

Naam van mijn ouder (s) :

Geboortedatum :

Datum :

Handtekening :

Als je informatie wilt ontvangen over de uitkomsten van het onderzoek, vul dan hier je e-mail adres in:

Appendix C. Informed consent parents

Beste ouder(s),

Voor mijn onderzoek ben ik opzoek naar ouders van eindexamenleerlingen die het leuk vinden om samen met hun zoon of dochter deel te nemen aan een onderzoek over het studiekeuzeproces van hun kind. Lijkt u, en uw zoon of dochter, leuk? Lees dan snel verder!

Wie ben ik?

Ik ben Lotte Nieuwenhuis, een masterstudente onderwijswetenschappen aan de Universiteit Utrecht. In het kader van mijn masterthesis doe ik onderzoek naar de invloed van ouders, als gesprekspartners, op de studiekeuze van eindexamenleerlingen. Hierin word ik begeleid door Jonne Vulperhorst (PHD Candidate).

Wat is het doel van het onderzoek?

Het doel van het onderzoek is door middel van semi-gestructureerde interviews te achterhalen hoe examenleerlingen de invloed van hun ouders, op hun studiekeuze, ervaren.

Wat houdt het onderzoek in?

Het onderzoek bestaat uit twee interviews. Eerst zal er een interview plaats vinden met de eindexamenleerling (max. 45 min), en daarna zal er een interview plaats vinden met (een van) zijn of haar ouders (max. 30 min). De interviews vinden bij voorkeur plaats op een nader te bepalen locatie, bijvoorbeeld bij jullie thuis. Mocht dit niet mogelijk zijn, dan kunnen de interviews ook plaats vinden via Skype of de telefoon. Alle interviews worden opgenomen met een voice-recorder, zodat deze later door mij, als onderzoeker, kunnen worden uitgewerkt. Deze uitwerking zal voor gebruik aan u worden voorgelegd om deze mogelijk bij te stellen. Het is mogelijk dat ook de begeleider luistert naar deze opnamen wanneer dit noodzakelijk blijkt te zijn.

Privacy en vertrouwelijkheid

Alle gegevens worden vertrouwelijk behandeld en anoniem verwerkt. Dat wil zeggen dat straks in de uitkomsten van het onderzoek niet te zien is welke antwoorden u gegeven heeft. De gegevens worden alleen voor onderzoeks- en opleidingsdoeleinden gebruikt. Uw zoon of dochter krijgt de antwoorden die u gegeven heeft in principe niet te zien of te horen.

Mogelijkheid tot vragen, informatie en toestemming

Als u nog vragen heeft over het onderzoek kunt u deze stellen door een mail te sturen aan: Lotte Nieuwenhuis (l.nieuwenhuis@students.uu.nl). Voor verdere vragen over het onderzoek kun je contact opnemen met: Jonne Vulperhorst (j.p.vulperhorst@uu.nl).

Wanneer je akkoord gaat met de bovenstaande informatie wil ik u vragen **het formulier op de volgende pagina in te vullen** en terug te sturen of aan mij te overhandigen voorafgaand aan het interview.

Met vriendelijke groet,

Lotte Nieuwenhuis (student), Jonne Vulperhorst (PHD Candidate)

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

TOESTEMMINGSVERKLARING voor deelname aan wetenschappelijk onderzoek

Ik heb uitleg gekregen over het onderzoek. De informatie over het onderzoek heb ik goed gelezen. Ik heb mijn eventuele vragen over het onderzoek gesteld. Ik heb goed nagedacht over of ik aan het onderzoek wil deelnemen. Ik mag op ieder moment stoppen met het onderzoek als ik dat wil. Ik hoef niet uit te leggen waarom ik wil stoppen.

Ik doe wel mee aan het onderzoek

Ik doe niet mee aan het onderzoek

Zet hiernaast een kruisje in het vakje dat voor u van toepassing is

Naam :

Naam van mijn zoon of dochter :

Geboortedatum :

Datum :

Handtekening :

Als u informatie wilt ontvangen over de uitkomsten van het onderzoek, vul dan hier u e-mail adres in:

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

Appendix D. Code scheme

Adolescents

Code	Explanation
S Orientation	The adolescent talks about activities he/she performed during the orientation task.
S Motivation	The adolescent talks about motivation he/she had to make a choice.
S Awareness	The adolescent describes that making a choice is important.
S Exploration	The adolescent talks about activities he/she performed during the exploring task.
S Self-exploration	The adolescent describes an activity that contributes to self-exploration.
S Broad exploration	The adolescent describes an activity that contributes to a broad exploration of possible study directions.
S In-depth exploration	The adolescent describes an activity that contributes to an in-depth exploration of possible study directions.
S In-depth exploration internship	The adolescent describes an internship that contributed to an in-depth exploration of possible study directions.
S Decisional status	The adolescent describes to what extent he/she has made a choice.
S Degree of commitment	The adolescent describes to what extent he/she is committed to the choice he/she had made.
S Orientation parents	The adolescent talks about how he/she involved his/her parents in activities he/she performed during the orientation task.
S Motivation parents	The adolescent talks about how he/she involved his/her parents in gaining motivation to make a choice.
S Awareness parents	The adolescent describes how his/her parents made them aware of the importance of making a choice.
S Exploration parents	The adolescent talks about how he/she involved his/her parents in activities he/she performed during the exploring task.
S Self-exploration parents	The adolescent talks about how he/she involved his/her parents in activities that contribute to self-exploration.
S Broad exploration parents	The adolescent talks about how he/she involved his/her parents in activities that contribute to a broad exploration of possible study directions.
S In-depth exploration parents	The adolescent talks about how he/she involved his/her parents in activities that contribute to an in-depth exploration of possible study directions.
S Decisional status parents	The adolescent describes what he/she discussed with their parents about the final decision.
S Education family low	The adolescent speaks about the low level of education of their parents/brothers or sisters.
S Education family medium	The adolescent speaks about the medium level of education of their parents/brothers or sisters.

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

S Education family high	The adolescent speaks about the high level of education of their parents/brothers or sisters.
S conflicts	The adolescent speaks about a conflict, between him/her and his/her parents, that occurred during the choice process.

Parents

Code	Explanation
P Orientation	The parent talks about activities the adolescent performed during the orientation task.
P Motivation	The parent talks about motivation the adolescent had to make a choice.
P Awareness	The parent describes that making a choice is important.
P Exploration	The parent talks about activities the adolescent performed during the exploring task.
P Self-exploration	The parent describes an activity that contributes to the adolescent self-exploration.
P Broad exploration	The parent describes an activity that contributes to a broad exploration of possible study directions.
P In-depth exploration	The parent describes an activity that contributes to an in-depth exploration of possible study directions.
P In-depth exploration open day	The parent speaks about guidance before or during an open day that the adolescent has visited.
P In-depth exploration internship	The parent speaks about guidance before or during an internship that the adolescent performed.
P Decisional status	The parent describes to what extent the adolescent has made a choice.
P Degree of commitment	The parent describes to what extent he/she is committed to the choice the adolescent had made.
P Expectations	The parent gives an expectation he/she has of his/her child.
P conflict	The parent speaks about a conflict, between him/her and his/her child, that occurred during the choice process.

Appendix E. FECT-form



APPLICATION FORM FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF A RESEARCH PROTOCOL BY THE FACULTY ETHICS REVIEW BOARD (FERB) OF THE FACULTY OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCES

General guidelines for the use of this form

1. This form can be used for a single research project or a series of related studies (hereinafter referred to as: "research programme"). Researchers are encouraged to apply for the assessment of a research programme if their proposal covers multiple studies with related content, identical procedures (methods and instruments) and contains informed consent forms and participant information, with a similar population. For studies by students, the FERB recommends submitting, in advance, a research programme under which protocol multiple student projects can be conducted so that their execution will not be delayed by the review procedure. The application of such a research programme must include a proper description by the researcher(s) of the programme as a whole in terms of the maximum burden on the participants (e.g. maximum duration, strain/efforts, types of stimuli, strength and frequency, etc.). If it is impossible to describe all the studies within the research programme, it should, in any case, include a description of the most invasive study known so far.
2. Solely the first responsible senior researcher(s) (from post-doctoral level onwards) may submit a protocol.
3. Any approval by the FERB is valid for 5 years or until the information to be provided in the application form below is modified to such an extent that the study becomes more invasive. For a research programme, the term of validity is 2 years and any extension is subject to approval. The researcher(s) and staff below commit themselves to treating the participants in accordance with the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki and the Dutch Code of Conduct for Scientific Practices as determined by the VSNU Association of Universities in the Netherlands (which can both be downloaded from the FERB site on the Intranet¹) and guarantee that the participants (whether decisionally competent or incompetent and/or in a dependent relationship vis-a-vis the researcher or not) may at all times terminate their participation without any further consequences.
4. The researcher(s) commit themselves to maximising the quality of the study, the statistical analysis and the reports, and to respect the specific regulations and legislation pertaining to the specific methods.
5. The procedure will run more smoothly if the FERB receives all the relevant documents, such as questionnaires and other measurement instruments as well as literature and other sources on studies using similar methods which were found to be ethically acceptable and that testify to the fact that this procedure has no harmful consequences. Examples of studies where the latter will always be an issue are studies into bullying behaviour, sexuality, and parent-child relationships. The FERB

¹ See: <https://intranet.uu.nl/facultaire-ethische-toetsingscommissie-fetc>

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

asks the researcher(s) to be as specific as possible when they answer the relevant questions while limiting their answers to 500 words maximum per question. It is helpful to the FERB if the answers are brief and to the point.

6. **Our FAQ document that can be accessed through the Intranet provides background information with regards to any questions.**
7. The researcher(s) declare to have described the study truthfully and with a particular focus on its ethical aspects.

Signed for approval²:

Date:

² The senior researcher (holding at least a doctoral degree) should sign here.

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

A. GENERAL INFORMATION/PERSONAL DETAILS

1.

a. a. Name(s), position(s) and department(s) of the responsible researcher(s):

Jonne Vulperhorst
PHD Candidate
Department of Education
Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences

b. Name(s), position(s) and department(s) of the executive researcher(s):

Lotte Nieuwenhuis
Masterstudent Educational Sciences
6189717

2. Title of the study or research programme - Does it concern a single study or a research programme? Does it concern a study for the final thesis in a bachelor's or master's degree course?:

Master thesis: The influence of parents, as interlocutor, on students' choice for higher education.

3. Type of study (with a brief rationale):

~~-experimental~~

~~-observational~~

- otherwise: Descriptive research. The goal of the research is to investigate the influence of parents, as an interlocutor, on students choice for higher education. This will be done by conducting semi-structured interviews.

4. Grant provider: not applicable.

5. Intended start and end date for the study: October 2018 – June 2019.

6. Research area/discipline: Social sciences (boundary crossing)

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

7. For some (larger) projects it is advisable to appoint an independent contact or expert whom participants can contact in case of questions and/or complaints. Has an independent expert been appointed for this study?³not applicable.

8. Does the study concern a multi-centre project, e.g. in collaboration with other universities, a GGZ mental health care institution, a university medical centre? Where exactly will the study be conducted? By which institute(s) are the executive researcher(s) employed?: no.

9. Is the study related to a prior research project that has been assessed by a recognised Medical Ethics Review Board (MERB) or FERB?

If so, which? Please state the file number: no.

B. SUMMARY OF THE BACKGROUND AND METHODS

Background

1. What is the study's theoretical and practical relevance? (500 words max.):

Every student has to make a choice for higher education at the end of secondary school. This choice is more than just the question what to study, as it is also about choosing who to become in future life. Students have to balance their choice between reality and interest, so that it fits within the student's image that he has of himself within his living context in the present and the future. This results in an uncertain and complex choice process that students have to go through, before finding the best fitting study programme in higher education.

Students validate their choice for higher education because of uncertainty, by information they receive from their social network (especially their parents). There is little

³ This contact may, in principle, also be a researcher (within the same department, or not) who is able to respond to the question or complaint in detail. Independent is to say: not involved in the study themselves. The FERB upholds that an independent contact is not obligatory, but will be necessary when the study is more invasive.

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

known about the mechanism of validating choices, but several studies the parents seem to be central in making a substantiated choice. That is why students who have to make a choice for higher education in the future, can benefit from a research that investigates the role their parents have as an interlocutor in the uncertain and complex process of making a choice for higher education. Having said this, the aim of this study is to investigate the influence that parents have, as interlocutor, on the choice for higher education of their children.

2. What is the study's objective/central question?:

How do parents', as interlocutor, influence upper-secondary higher education students', study choice?

3. What are the hypothesis/hypotheses and expectation(s)?:

It is expected that parents influence the choice for higher education of their children.

Design/procedure/invasiveness

4. What is the study's design and procedure? (500 words max.):

5.

a. Which measurement instruments, stimuli and/or manipulations will be used?⁴

A self-created topic list will be used. Main topics that will be questioned are: Background information, small talk, choice process and parents.

b. What does the study's burden on the participants comprise in terms of time, frequency and strain/efforts?:

⁴ Examples: invasive questionnaires; interviews; physical/psychological examination, inducing stress, pressure to overstep important standards and values; inducing false memories; exposure to aversive materials like a unpleasant film, video clip, photos or electrical stimulus; long-term of very frequent questioning; ambulatory measurements, participation in an intervention, evoking unpleasant psychological or physical symptoms in an experiment, denial, diet, blood sampling, fMRI, TMS, ECG, administering stimuli, showing pictures, etc. In case of the use of a device (apparatus) or administration of a substance, please enclose the CE marking brochure for the relevant apparatus or substance, if possible.

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

The participants are asked to participate in a semi-structured (or narrative) interview that will take max 30 minutes for the children and max 30 minutes for the parents.

- c. Will the participants be subjected to interventions or a certain manner of conduct that cannot be considered as part of a normal lifestyle?:

No.

- d. Will unobtrusive methods be used (e.g. data collection of uninformed subjects by means of observations or video recordings)?:

Yes, all interviews will be recorded so they can be transcribed.

- e. Will the study involve any deception? If so, will there be an adequate debriefing and will the deception hold any potential risks?:

No.

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

6. Will the participants be tested beforehand as to their health condition or according to certain disorders? Are there any inclusion and/or exclusion criteria or specific conditions to be met in order for a participant to take part in this study?:

No.

7. Risks for the participants -

- a. Which risks does the study hold for its participants?
- b. To what extent are the risks and objections limited? Are the risks run by the participants similar to those in daily life?

There are no risks for the participants.

8. How does the burden on the participants compare to the study's potential scientific contribution (theory formation, practical usability)?:

Since participation will take only 30 minutes of time, this might be not an issue. But participation can give some useful information for students that have to make a choice in higher education in the future.

9. Will a method be used that may, by coincidence, lead to a finding of which the participant should be informed?⁵ If so, what actions will be taken in the case of a coincidental finding?:

Not applicable.

Analysis/power

10. How will the researchers analyse the data? Which statistical analyses will be used?:

11. What is the number of participants? Provide a power analysis and/or motivation for the number of participants. The current convention is a power of 0.80. If the study deviates from this power, the FERB would like you to justify why this is necessary:

⁵ For instance: dementia, dyslexia, giftedness, depression, extremely low heartbeat in an ECG, etc. If coincidental findings may be found, this should be included in the informed consent, including a description of the actions that will be taken in such an event.

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

C. PARTICIPANTS, RECRUITMENT AND INFORMED CONSENT PROCEDURE

1. The nature of the research population (please tick):

1. General population without complaints/symptoms
- ~~2. General population with complaints/symptoms~~
- ~~3. Patients or population with a diagnosis (please state the diagnosis)~~

2. Age category of the participants (please tick):

- 18 years or older
- 16-17 years
- ~~• 13-15 years~~
- ~~• 12 years or younger~~

3. Does the study require a specific target group? If so, justify why the study cannot be conducted without the participation of this group (e.g. minors):

Yes, the study cannot be conducted without the participation of students in their graduation year. And the study cannot be conducted without (at least one of) their parents.

4. Recruitment of participants -

- a. How will the participants be recruited?
- b. How much time will the prospective participants have to decide as to whether they will indeed participate in the study? : max 1 week.

5. Does the study involve informed consent or mutual consent? Clarify the design of the consent procedure (who gives permission, when and how). Does the study involve active consent or passive consent? If no informed consent will be sought, please clarify the reason:

The study involves active informed consent. Students and parents will sign this before conducting the interview.

6. Are the participants fully free to participate and terminate their participation whenever they want and without stating their grounds for doing so?: Yes.

7. Will the participants be in a dependent relationship with the researcher?: No.

8. Compensation

- a. Will the participants be compensated for their efforts? If so, what is included in this recompense (financial reimbursement, travelling expenses, otherwise). What is the amount?:

No.

- b. Will this compensation depend on certain conditions, such as the completion of the study?

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

No.

D. PRIVACY AND INFORMATION

1.

- a. Will the study adhere to the requirements for anonymity and privacy, as referred to in the Faculty Protocol for Data Storage⁶?:
- anonymous processing and confidential storage of data (i.e. storage of raw data separate from identifiable data): yes/~~no~~
 - the participants' rights to inspect their own data: yes/~~no~~
 - access to the data for all the researchers involved in the project: yes/~~no~~

If not, please clarify. Not applicable.

- b. Has a Data Management Plan been designed?

2.

- a. Will the participant be offered the opportunity to receive the results (whether or not at the group level)?:

Yes.

- b. Will the results of the study be fed back to persons other than the participants (e.g. teachers, parents)?:

If so, will this feedback be provided at the group or at the individual level?

If both parents and students decide that they want to receive the results, it might be possible that they both see the results.

3.

- a. Will the data be stored on the faculty's data server?yes/~~no~~
- b. Will the data that can be traced back to the individual be stored separately on the other faculty server available for this specific purpose?: Yes.

If not, please clarify where will the data be stored instead?:

⁶ This can be found on the Intranet: <https://intranet.uu.nl/wetenschappelijke-integriteit-facultair-protocol-dataopslag>

PARENTS ROLE IN ADOLESCENTS' STUDY CHOICE PROCESS

E. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Optional.

F. FORMS TO BE ENCLOSED (CHECKLIST)

- Text (advert) for the recruitment of participants
- Information letter for participant
- Informed consent form for participants
- (Descriptions of) questionnaires

Signature(s):⁷

Date and place:

Name, position:

⁷ The senior researcher (holding at least a doctoral degree) should sign here.