

Primary School Children's Interest in Further Education and Career Choices

– Summary in English –

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The study examined pre-career, seventh-grade primary school children's interest in further education and career choices. The results are based on the results of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (HCCI) national career guidance study.

Two major groups stood out among seventh grade students: white-collar and blue-collar. The former are more independent, more diligent in learning, and more skilled at intellectual tasks and solving puzzles, but are less talented of practical tasks. This group tends to strive for attainment of higher education, even to obtain a degree and a white-collar profession. Children from the other group are interested in home improvement, repair, and the world of machines, and are less receptive to learning, are more inclined to solve school tasks in groups, and are regarded as less independent. The latter group of young people takes on vocational careers.

The data show that the majority of seventh grade students surveyed requests career selection information from the Internet: 84% acquired information in this way. Almost all students have already dealt with the issues of further education. Most (85%) were informed after consulting with their parents, 67% during class, and 21% at a school career event. Only 5% have not yet discussed their choice of career.

In terms of further education plans, a majority of students wish to obtain a college or university degree (32%), followed by those who want a vocational school degree (19%), another 18% would like to be certified for a trade, 15% would like to become a skilled worker, 11 % of them want to obtain a high school diploma, and 5% a technical qualification. Only 1% of students indicated that they do not want to continue their education after primary school.

By far what is of interest to students is listening to music and watching movies. Most students feel they have talent in the use of information and communication technologies (ICT), sport, and drawing.

There are significant gender differences in terms of work and profession related plans; other important influential factors include a father's educational level as well. The attractiveness of white-collar professions is generally higher among children of parents with a higher level of education. Students usually want an occupation that requires the same level of education that their father has.

A higher proportion of children planning for white-collar professions can be found in economically favored regions. In Central Hungary and the Trans-Danube region

students prefer white-collar professions as opposed to eastern Hungary (especially the Great Plains region) where blue-collar occupations are more popular.

Students have an open vision of their future, and as a result specializing in 2-4 areas is considered attractive. Parental advice tends to have a significant impact on the further education and career choices of students.

In the second part of the analysis we established the following composite indicators: Dependency index, Leisure index, Engineering/metalworking index, Creativity index, and Diploma index. With the help of these we can examine in more depth to what extent do various psychological, characteristic, and family background factors influence the way in which seventh grade students make their career decisions.

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