

The Conditions for Educational Achievement of Lower Secondary School Graduates

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NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The report looks at a variety of conditions for educational achievement in an attempt to determine which of these are the most significant.

The research was undertaken owing to the possibility to use the database of results of lower secondary school leaving exam, which is still under construction. Starting from 2002, the students leaving the lower secondary school are required to sit the exam, which is conducted using a standard set of questions [the exam is held as a written test]. The researchers were, therefore, able to use comparable and reliable data.

The main research method was based on the use of questionnaires for 1,100 students and 300 teachers from forty-six schools [in rural areas and in small and big cities]. Research information comes from the following sources:

- students [home, family, educational plans]
- tutors [education and occupation of parents, pathologies, exam results]
- headmasters [teachers].

In the report, the results of lower secondary school leaving exam are presented as school achievements.

The report contains the following:

- information about the exam,
- characteristics of the research sample [students, parents, teachers],
- statistical analysis of the results,
- register of major conditions.

The results analysis has demonstrated that the home-family factor continues to have the greatest impact on student achievements, not only in terms of parental education and occupation but also with regard to family pathologies.

The impact of conditions is most visible if the following divisions are taken into account:

- rural areas versus big cities,
- humanities versus sciences sections of the exam,
- divisions among schools [rather than among individual students].

This should be understood to mean that the same conditions are not equally significant in big cities and in rural areas or with regard to achievements in the humanities and in the sciences. It is also interesting to note that the better-performing students tended to adopt a decision to continue education in a “better” school at an earlier stage. The teacher-related factors were demonstrated to have limited impact.

The report gives rise to the following conclusions:

- the number of conditions should be reduced [under further research],
- reference should be made to schools [rather than to students] in the statistical analysis,
- students’ biopsychological characteristics should be included in the research,
- insufficient school achievements should be compensated for at an earlier stage,
- impact should be exerted on parents from culturally deprived and impoverished backgrounds [parents play an essential role].

Keywords: lower secondary school leaving exam, school achievements, student’s family, school location, family pathologies, family-home conditions, trip to school, teachers.