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EDUCATION AND WORKING LIFE IN HUNGARY

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Abstract: *In our study we intend to discuss the role of education in economy and the relationship between education and the current state of Hungarian labour market. The aim of our thesis is the comprehensive examination of the phenomenon why employees leave their work. In order to fulfill this investigation we have mainly focused on the data of different studies and statistics. Beyond this we have relied on our own inquiry: assumptions, consequences and suggestions have been composed based on the questionnaire filled in by a group of 128 employees. The result from the viewpoint of assumptions, suggesting that the main reason for leaving work is the question of financial matters, is not correct nowadays. The reason why employees leave work today is the modification of their interests or some other motifs. Natural curiosity plays a significant role and ultimately the problems of cost of living and the devaluation of the jobs' prestige (in the major case of qualified workers, but similarly in the case of medical employees or engineers). Decision-makers of Hungary would be suggested that circumstances should be established urging employees to stay in the country. The practice of life guidance, temporary agency, personnel placement and supply services as well as mobility should be proposed to and accepted by a wider range of society. During my work I also call the employers' attention to the extension of part-time employment since the results of my thesis confirm this need especially in the case of some groups of women.*

Keywords: *education, working life*

INTRODUCTION

Education became one of the largest sub-system of modern societies in the past century. The role of education is no longer interpreted only as the conveyor of culture, knowledge and values, but it is also attributed a significant role in its contribution to economic development and the promotion of social integration.

Nowadays investments in human capital development are seen as the most important part of economical and social status development of both the individual and the society, too. The level of the reached education and required abilities and the position on the labour market reflect on the height of earnings and the quality of the life pro rate (Bitterova – Hajós, 2009).

The correlation between vocational education and the labour market was given priority as early as the time of the system change.

Unemployment turned up in Hungary in the nineties and it exceeds 8% at present. It affects the

younger generations and those starting their career more than the totality of the population able to work. This tendency is general in developed countries globally. According to Kutas (1996), the reason of the high proportion of young unemployed people lies in our education system. Therefore, one of the most important goals of employment politics in the opinion of Pulay (1996) is to create a closer relationship between education and employment. The key of reducing unemployment among the youth is to make education serve demands of the labour market better.

The establishment of market economy is a challenge for education. Education of the youth is not a short-term investment. The professional yield of this investment may not be evaluated exclusively from the point of view of cost yield. The optimal situation is when a school knows up-to-date what are current requirements of the labour market and what professionals to train (Cseh Papp, 2010). Numberless researches were carried out in this

area, from the work Vincze, 2009; Veroszta, 2010; Varga, 2010; Polónyi, 2010, 2011, 2012; Mocanu -Zamfir -Lungu -Militaru, 2012; Csernovitz - Szegedi, 2012.

Changes in the horizontal structure of the public educational system was primarily compelled by the expansion of secondary school education. Rapid increase of the number of students attending secondary schools in full-time began in the second half of the eighties. The number of those receiving further education in secondary schools increased from 60000 to 80000 between 1985 and 1990. By the end of the nineties, 70% of applicants within each generation chose secondary schools. As a whole, the offer of educational programmes in secondary vocational schools is in accordance with labour market demand but its professional composition does not follow labour market requirements dynamically enough, rather it reproduces the existing - and often obsolete - profession structure.

Numberless researches were carried out in this area. The experiences of these degrees are:

- Students prefer professions considered popular by society to traditional professions. They had little knowledge concerning what time arrangement, working conditions, work environment and compensations to expect for various jobs.
- Investigation of the interest of young persons demonstrated that the directing-innovating and innovating-social interest pairs were the most frequent. The social-methodical and subjective-methodical interest pairs were insignificant. This justifies the fact that the youth dislike professions where they work with tools and machines. Rather, they want professions - and later jobs - where they can make decisions and they are independent during their job.
- One third of the students of vocational schools were not trained in the profession for which they first applied.
- These days, the quality and contents of education has also become important.
- Today, the demand is highest for well trained workers with real professional skills.

- The majority of youngsters with a profession looks for a job in accordance with their professional training.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

□ Research results

The examination described in the paper is only one component of a comprehensive research.

Based on a survey made with questionnaires, the research outlines the circumstances under which those with secondary-school qualifications leave their trade or career. The paper also drafts the factors affecting the decision starting from the way of choosing school, through the successes (or failures) in studies to the trial/admission phase at the workplace. The paper lists those pressing conditions which lead to the decision of career modification and those aspects and features on the basis of which new career or craft is chosen by the individual. The survey sample consists of 128 persons from Gödöllő region, all of them with trade school qualifications, who changed their careers.

The social-economic changes in Hungary from the middle of the 1990s have required a new approach from employees. One of the priorities is the quick adaptation to the changes of the labour market, considering also the requirements and needs of the person. Career modification is one of the ways of adaptation.

According to the hypothesis of the research, those who choose career and also those employees who change their career do not possess all the necessary information for making good decision and do not know the whole range of possibilities.

Many of them are not aware of their own qualities, interests, others have difficulties to see through the labour market, jobs, trades and retraining courses. Good decision can be made only on the basis of adequate information and often external support and assistance is needed.

This hypothesis was confirmed by the result of the examination. The result from the viewpoint of assumptions, suggesting that the main reason for leaving work is the question of financial matters, is not correct nowadays.

□ Research sample

59 women and 69 men completed the questionnaire in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to genders (head, %)

Gender	head	ratio %
Man	69	54
Woman	59	46
Total:	128	100

It can be seen from the composition of respondents according to age that the different generations are represented equally, there is a small peak only in case of age group of 30-39 years (Table 2)

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to age groups (head, %)

Age group	head	ratio %
between 20-29 years	31	24
between 30-39 years	37	29
between 40-49 years	31	24
above 50 years	29	23
Total:	128	100

Defining the composition of respondents according to this aspect is important because, in my opinion, the age differences affect the factors influencing the employees and their preferred values.

Hereinafter I list the most interesting conclusions that can be cautiously drawn from the examination:

The table demonstrates that more than 60% of respondents choose their first craft (school) on the basis of own decision, 20% of the sample listened to the parents. The others made decisions either on the basis of their study achievement or on advice from friends. It can be presumed that some of those people who defined the career selection as their own decision, were also influenced by their parents, but later identified with the idea – if it was not too far from them – and accepted the decision as their own (Table 3).

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to the way of first career selection (%)

I chose	61
My parents suggested	20
Friends suggested	7
I was admitted there	10
Other	2
Total	100

As regards the quality of the knowledge obtained in the school, the interviewees judged themselves rather negatively. Less than half of the respondents felt that he/she adequately acquired the skills of the given trade. The tendency of undervaluation,

mentioned often in the literature, can have a part in it, as well as the school experiences, when one evaluates himself or herself on the basis of the marks received in school. The ratio of replies given to the question explains why the respondents modified their career path (Table 4)

Table 4: Distribution of respondents according to their presumed level of knowledge of their own trade (%)

Very good	47
Average	48
Not at all	5
reason: too much theory	4
was not interested	1
Total	100

Following the vocational training at the trade schools, only about two-third of the respondents found jobs in the acquired profession. The ratio of those who continued studies, was relatively high due perhaps to family expectations, but sometimes they wanted to delay the beginning of employment. It is interesting, that there were some people who started retraining right after finishing the school (Table 5).

Table 5: Distribution of respondents according to the way of original trade selection (%)

I found job in the trade	60
Continued my studies	15
Started retraining	6
Started an enterprise	1
Joined the family enterprise	1
Became jobless	12
Other (I found job in another trade)	5
Total	100

Less than half of the total respondents did not work even a year in the original trade, including those who continued studies or found job in another trade. One-fifth of respondents worked for more than 10 years in their first job (Table 6).

Table 6: Distribution of respondents according to the time spent in the original trade (%)

Less than 1 year	40
1-2 years	14
2-5 years	18
5-10 years	9
more than 1 years	19
Total	100

It is easy to understand that the results correlate with the time of leaving the career and the esteem of the given trade, as well as the time of leaving the

career and the satisfaction with the income from the career.

Those who were satisfied with their salary spent more time in the trade before they changed career. It was typical for the young and the older people. Except for the generation above 50, where 50% of the respondents claimed good salaries, the number of those who were not satisfied with their income was higher in all age groups (Table 7).

Table 7: Distribution of respondents according to their satisfaction with the salary, divided by age groups (%)

	Between 20-29 (%)	Between 30-39 (%)	Between 40-49 (%)	Above 50 (%)
Yes	36	23	20	50
No	64	77	80	50
Total:	100	100	100	100

Those employees who felt esteemed connected with their professional activities, remained within the given career at significantly higher proportion. At this question, only the age group of those older than 50 indicated satisfaction in their reply (Table 8).

Table 8: Distribution of respondents according to the professional esteem, divided by age groups (%)

	Between 20-29	Between 30-39	Between 40-49	Above 50
Yes	45	40	50	80
No	55	60	50	20
Total:	100	100	100	100

In contrary to the above, only a few people indicated the dissatisfaction felt the lack of financial and professional appreciation as a primary reason for leaving the career. Examining the factors which led to leaving the original trade it has become clear that the internal factors were more important in making the decision. Those responses belong to the inner reasons which are related to one of the qualities of the personality (money, negative or positive feelings towards the profession, intent to continue studies, interest in other profession, total lack of interest in the given profession). The external factors included the economic, regional and social conditions (health reasons, winding up of workplace, regular military service, firing after maternity leave, etc.)

According to the results, continuing of studies or learning another profession, or the salary conditions are very important factors in leaving

the trade. Less important whether one is employed in black labour or needs to be more mobile owing to the work (Table 9).

Table 9: Distribution of respondents according to the reasons of leaving the original trade (%)

Due to health reasons	9
I could not find job	10
I could find only black job	5
I would earn less with much work	20
I did not like my occupation	8
There is no adequate job around my home, I do not want to commute	7
I wanted to continue studying (high school certificate, college, etc.)	15
I wanted to learn other profession in order to stand on more legs	22
Other	4
Total	100

Aspects of choosing the new profession further enforced the influence of internal factors on modifying the career. Those respondents were in the greatest majority who changed profession because their interests changed. It is very positive, because interest – as one of the most important characteristics in choosing profession and finding job – can change year by year. If the personality cannot follow this change in the career, it can lead to professional dissatisfaction and the deterioration of work performance. Those, who chose the second job close to their original qualifications, aimed to reach a certain level of safety, because they did not have to meet the requirements of a completely new career, the professional experience collected and the acquired skills supported their adaptation to the career. On the other hand, in this case they are not forced to modify their career by the interest change or other factor connected with some personal feature, they have to adapt „only” to the changing labour market.

Only a few people chose a new occupation by considering the professions demanded on the labour market and ensuring the best employment possibilities and salaries. While the reason connected with commuting and mobility was less important regarding the career leaving decision, it was more important feature in choosing new profession that the workplace is closer to the home (Table 10).

Table 10: Distribution of respondents according to the aspects of choosing new occupation (%)

I heard that it is in demand, easy to find job	4
The employment agency offered a course in this line	11
One can earn a lot with it	9
I am more interested in that line of work	33
I did not have any sense of achievement in my original craft	6
It is close to my original craft	13
There were open jobs in that line within my home area	13
There are job opportunities abroad	3
Due to my illness I was fit for this	2
Other	6
Total	100

By reviewing the chosen crafts according to the sectors of the national economy, it is obvious that the employees are increasingly oriented towards the service sector regarding their original occupation and after the career modification, too. The greater proportion in service sector is due mainly to the foreign capital flowing in the country after the social-economic transition and the improvement of transportation-communication network. As regards the second chosen profession, the popularity of industrial trades is decreasing. It can be explained with the considerable reduction of Hungarian industrial production and the globalization impact that is the force to adapt to international economic impacts. There have already been very few people in the primary sector but the selection value of the new occupation well demonstrates the considerable reduction of agricultural employment (Table 11).

Table 11: Distribution of respondents according to the national economy sector of their profession (%)

	Agriculture (%)	Industry (%)	Services (%)	Total
Original profession	3	33	64	100
New profession	0	23	77	100
If one could choose again	1	11	88	100

As regards the second choice of profession, the diminishing interest in agricultural crafts is very obvious. At the same time, the popularity of industrial trades is also increasing because many people were forced to leave their original career after the employing companies went bankrupt or closed down. It is especially true for the processing industry. It is interesting, that the engineering

industry has kept its rank, but it should be noted that 9 out of the 16 persons who pursue the second career here work as semi-skilled workers. The construction industry is still very popular, and many people would choose jobs in construction industry if it was possible. It is very interesting if we consider that the economic crisis of 2008 affected primarily the Hungarian construction industry. It also refers to the fact that the labour market position of the given area is less important in career selection. As regards the service sector, the economic services, repairing are the most popular, because more and more people work or would work there. Transportation and warehousing are also highly ranked within the new occupations. The demand for trading and catering jobs is slightly decreasing (Table 12).

Table 12: Distribution of respondents according to the sector branch of their profession (%)

	Original occupation	New occupation	If you could choose again
Agriculture	2	0	1
Forestry	1	0	0
Processing industry	14	5	0
Construction industry	2	2	7
Machine industry	16	16	4
Chemical industry	1	0	0
Trading	21	20	19
Catering	15	11	13
Transportation, warehousing	6	18	6
Business services (repairing)	18	25	46
Health, social services	4	3	4
Total	64	77	88

Table 13: Distribution of respondents according to their current dreams about a new occupation (%)

Would choose the original occupation or something close to it	5
Would choose again the second occupation or something close to it	23
Would choose something completely different	72
Total	100

It is an outstanding value that 72% of the respondents would choose a profession which is completely different from their original choice. Thought provoking that 23% of career-leaving skilled workers are not satisfied with their second occupation either, so changing professions cannot

be regarded successful in their case. 5% of respondents would choose again their original trade or something very similar to it (Table 13).

CONCLUSION

One of the outputs of the research is the statement that the career-related decision made at the end of the primary school is not necessarily a final decision, even if it is affected by the parents or friends of the same age group. The main reason for choosing a new profession was the interest-based career correction process. The labour market possibilities, however, were only slightly considered by those leaving their occupation.

The society should give high priority to the organizational development and operation of human resources and infrastructure of training places based on changing market needs. Everybody should have access to them and to the adequate information sources. The special assistance of career or labour market advisors can have a key role in ensuring access to the training courses, orientation among crafts, professions and jobs, proper knowledge of the labour market and ourselves.

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