The decision to pursue the next level of education has an importance comparable to choosing a career or getting married (Lannert 2004: 21). The importance of choosing a school is best illustrated by the fact that it is the first decision that has a direct effect on the academic and professional career path of the student. “It is an empirical fact that, in a modern information society, knowledge-based goods play the most important role in determining young people's chances and social spheres of mobility” (Gazsó–Laki 2004: 123).

The topic of the present paper is the school choice of students in Miercurea Ciuc, and the factors that directly or indirectly influence this decision.

Every year, another generation has to face the fact of having to choose a school, and hundreds of students are forced to make a decision that will influence all of their lives, by filling out a simple application form. Are these students aware of the gravity of this decision? Is it lengthy contemplation and careful planning, or a sudden idea and the mood of the moment that influence the chosen school or specialization? Do parents have a say in their children's choice, or are the kids left alone in their decision making? Do the parents' economic status, level of education, occupation, or social connections influence the child's decision when it comes to choosing a school or a trade? These and similar questions arise when we deal with the issue of school choice.

I tried finding answers to the above questions through my questionnaire-based study. The subjects of my study were those Hungarian high school freshmen in Miercurea Ciuc who had already been through the process of having chosen a school. In all, 312 students were successfully interviewed, of whom 186 students attended college preparatory high schools, and 126 were enrolled in trade and technical schools.

In developing the questionnaire, the main goal, besides the methodological requirements, was to have the responses yield as much information as possible to the questions mentioned above. The main questions related to the student's current status, school and family environment, and the process of choosing the school.

1. School Choice

In the subchapter below, I will describe how the high school freshmen evaluate school choice as a decision making process, and what they think of their choice so far, given that they have partial knowledge of its consequences.

Maturity in school choice is a developmental stage in the student's personality, which enables choosing an academic and professional career that is in line with future prospects and the student's personality. It also ensures at least a minimal level of success for professional training,
and sparks the desire in the student to integrate into his or her trade (Rókusfalvi 1969, quoted in Danes 1989: 19).

According to the students questioned, 36.54% of parents intervened in their children's choice of a school or a trade. In the question that followed, however, I asked to what degree was it the student's own decision, versus their parents'. Comparing the responses to these two questions, we find that the difference is significant. Thus, in contrast with the admitted 36.54%, based on the second question it can be determined that 67.46% of parents—specifically 64.42% of fathers and 70.51% of mothers—intervened in their child's educational choice. It can further be noted that mothers tend to have a greater degree of influence, in both absolute and relative terms, than fathers. While 64.42% of fathers contributed to the decision making process by an average of 11.10%, 70.51% of mothers influenced their child's decision at an average rate of 14.13%.

**Figure 1.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decisionmaking about school choice among family members (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Own decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother's decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father's decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the responses given by the students, the most important factors in the decision making process were those related to the field or profession. More than half of the respondents chose a particular class because they were interested in that specific area of training or education (58.6%), or because they wanted to start a career in the field (53.8%). Furthermore, attending a school with a strong tradition and good reputation was also very important (48.7%), as was the fact that the student's prospects for higher education were guaranteed after getting a degree in a particular field (43.5%). For 42.9% of the respondents, it was their parents who recommended their chosen schools and fields of study, and almost one quarter of them (22.4%) chose a specific class or school because their siblings or friends attended as well, or because it was close to their place of residence (23.7%). 16.3% of the respondents admitted that their current school or class was not their first choice, but rather their only option to which they were admitted.
Table 1. *The factors that influence school choice*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>No. of cases</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>It is close to my home</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>23.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I've heard about it on TV/radio/in a newspaper ad</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>My siblings and/or friends attended as well</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>22.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>This is a reputable school</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>48.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>My higher education is guaranteed through this school</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>43.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>My parents recommended it</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>42.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>My middle school teachers recommended it</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>16.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>This is the only similar school in the area</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>This was the only school with my field of interest</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>58.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I had no other choice–I was only admitted here</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>16.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I want to start a career in this field</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>53.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Mihály Andor, the types of information that the families use to decide what school the child will attend depends on the socioeconomic status of the family. According to the results of the research, the higher the father's level of education, the more the family will rely on informal sources of information, such as friends, acquaintances, and relatives, neglecting formal sources of information. Andor explains this through the fact that better educated families tend to have a social network among people who know about the schools, and are thus less forced to use official sources of information (Andor 2005: 19–28).

Based on data available to me, I verified whether there was any significant difference with regard to the types of information sources used among the students in Miercurea Ciuc, relative to the level of the parents' education. The second and seventh, as well as the third and sixth subpoints of Question 17 of the questionnaire yield us data about the types of information used by the families in the decision making process. I created the indicators of formal and informal sources of information. In the case of the formal sources indicator, the respondent's mentioning that they had heard of the respective school on TV, the radio, or in a newspaper ad, as well as recommendations by their middle school teachers, represented two points each. For the informal source indicator, parental recommendation and the fact that parents, siblings, or friends already attended the school represented two points each as well.
Based on the results of the correlation between the parents' level of education\(^1\) and the indicators of the two types of information, it can be established that there is no statistically significant difference in the use of formal sources of information relative to either parent's level of education. Informal sources of information, however, are influenced by the father's level of education. The more educated the father, the more he uses his connections to gather information about the prospective school (\(r=0.141, p=0.05\)).

The opinion of teachers with regard to the decision making process is divided. High school teachers tend to think that it is parents who are primary decision makers: “It is primarily the parent who guides the child toward our school, or else the student had already heard a lot from older kids about the superior training and education that he will get here” (teacher of foreign languages, Kájoni János Commercial-Technical High School, interview excerpt). There are also cases in which the child has little to no influence in deciding where he or she will be attending school: “it is partially the child's decision, but I believe that parents intervene in the decision making process in forceful ways. Unfortunately, there are perfectionist parents who try to realize their own failed dreams through their children” (Hungarian language and literature teacher, Márton Áron College Preparatory High School, interview excerpt).

The above opinion is reinforced by the results of an empirical study\(^2\) conducted by Ferenc Gebauer among students and their parents before having chosen their schools, namely, that it is primarily the mothers who want to see their own failed goals in life come to fruition through the efforts of their children (Gebauer 1998: 487–500).

In contrast to the above findings, in trade and technical schools a parental indifference and disinterest can be experienced in the decision making process, which itself is often left to the children alone. “The way I see it, parents do not care too much for their children at home, that is, the children who attend this school. They are generally left in the dark about what their options are in terms of professional training, or future career prospects after getting trained in a particular field. I see the entire process as quite incidental” (technical teacher, Venczel József Technical High School, interview excerpt).

Traces of the “interventionist” attitude can be found in two entirely different paradigms. The first is typical of families of a low socio-economic status, characteristics of which include a sense of perplexity, a lack of goals or a comprehensive life strategy, and an avoidance of responsibility. The parents are indifferent; they do not make decisions with regard to school choice. The second type of families rely on longer-term reflections; this category includes the majority of families that are oriented toward technical-professional training. The parents recognize that their child is not mature enough to make autonomous decisions, and needs their help in choosing a school in accordance with his or her capabilities and academic performance. The distance of the chosen school from home, the costs of attendance, as well as future career prospects and earning potential are also important factors in the decision making process (Csákó 1998: 478–481).

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1. I substituted the approximate number of years required to achieve a particular level of education for the nominal categories of degrees conferred, similar to the conversion used by Judit Lannert (Lannert 1998: 436–446).
2. A research study conducted on a nationwide sample in the late 1990s, which involved the questionnaire-based inquiry of 2,123 persons (of whom 1,076 were middle school students in the 7th grade, 695 were parents, and 352 were educators).
2. Endowment with Different Types of Capital

a) Economic Capital

Based on the available data, I created the economic capital indicator, which is to represent the volume of economic capital owned by the student's family. In crafting this indicator, I used all those variables that related to the family's material status (gross income, home amenities, consumer goods, real estate, automobile). One point was awarded within this indicator to families with a gross income of less than 3 million lei, running water, modern toilets, hot water, gas and electricity, bathroom, color TV, freezer, refrigerator, automatic washing machine, personal computer, cable TV, satellite, VHS, landline phone, sound system, microwave. Two points each were given families with: a gross domestic income between 3-9 million lei, personal or central HVAC, Internet connection, car. Three points each were given for a gross domestic income of over 9 million lei, other real estate owned (land, garage, weekend- and other residence). As illustrated in Figure 2, I divided the sums total of these points into three categories: those between 1-12 points constitute the group of families with low economic capital; between 13-24 points, medium economic capital; and those families who reached between 25-36 points, were categorized as having high economic capital. The maximum number of points was 36.

Based on the above data, it can be said that more than half (54%) of the respondents' families were in possession of a medium volume of economic capital, while 22% possessed high levels of economic capital, the remaining 24% having a low volume of economic capital.

Figure 2.

Distribution of students' families according to economic capital

- High economic capital 22%
- Medium economic capital 54%
- Low economic capital 24%
b) Cultural Capital

“Cultural capital can exist under three forms: 1) in an internalized, incorporated state, as a durable characteristic of the organization, 2) in an objectified state, in the form of cultural goods, pictures, books, lexicons, tools or machines, and, lastly, 3) in an institutionalized form . . .” (Bourdieu 1998: 158).

In the present case, I measured the amount of cultural capital a family possesses in its objectified form, by the number of books the family possessed: the higher the number of books owned by the family, the more cultural capital the family has. Based on the responses received, it can be observed that more than half of the respondents (58%) had 100 or less books in their possession. Six percent of the children's families had no books at all, and only 11% owns more than 500 books.

**Figure 3.**

![Number of books owned by the family chart]

I then proceeded to examine whether there is a correlation between the father's level of education and the number of books owned by the family. It can be determined that there is a statistically significant correlation between the father's education and the number of books owned by the family (level of significance 0.000, X² value 55.050). The number of books owned by the family grows parallel to growth in the father's level of education; fathers who finished middle school, trade or technical schools, or high school, for instance, tended to have 100 or less books.

**Consumption of Print Media**

I found the analysis of the consumption of print media important because, on the one hand, it provides information about the volume of cultural capital with which the family is endowed, and on the other hand, conclusions may be drawn about the types of information sources used to choose a school based on the types of newspaper subscriptions.
According to the results, 41.6% of the respondents have a subscription to some kind of a daily, whereas 13.4% have weekly paper subscriptions, and 11.2% were subscribed to magazines. Of the families with daily subscriptions, 89% subscribed to *Hargita Népe* (“The People of Harghita”), while 9% subscribed to *Krónika*. The remaining 2% subscribed to *Háromszék* and *Gyergyói Kisújság*.

The most well-known weekly paper among the respondents is *Heti Hirdető* (“Weekly Bulletin”), which is purchased by 54.5% of weekly subscribers, followed by *Vasárnap* (“Sunday,” 15.9%) and *Európai Idő* (“European Time,” 6.8%). Among magazines, the most purchased are women's (*Nők Lapja, Tina*) and youth magazines (*Popcorn, Bravo, IM*).

In the case of daily, as well as weekly newspapers, it can be observed that parents tend to buy local and regional media products (*Ciuc – Hargita Népe, Gheorghieni – Gyergyói Kisújság, Covasna County – Háromszék*). National dailies and weeklies do not appear in any significant quantity among the paper subscriptions and purchases. One of the important factors that contributes to this choice of local and regional media is that these are the news sources that primarily touch on events relevant to their respective region. Among the weekly subscriptions, most prominent are advertisers and bulletins, as well as entertainment magazines.

Similar to economic capital, I also developed an indicator for cultural capital, in which I tried incorporating all the variables that carry information about the family's level of cultural capital: the education of the parents, the number of books owned by the family, the consumption of media products, and culturally related leisure activities. In incorporating leisure activities of a cultural nature, I was influenced by the theory of Crook and N. D. DeGraaf, who divided cultural capital into two main constituent parts: reading, and participation in fine arts (Crook 1997 and N. D. DeGraaf 2000, quoted in Sullivan 2001: 896).
Among the variables incorporated into the indicator of cultural capital, to whose attributes I assigned various numerical values. In the case of the parents' education, middle school and below was worth 1 point; a trade or technical school degree, 2 points; a high school diploma, 3 points; post-high school training, 4 points; and lastly, a college degree and above, 5 points. In the case of print media consumption, subscriptions to daily and weekly papers and magazines were worth 2 points each, whereas occasional purchases of such products amounted to 1 point. Among leisure activities, reading was worth 1 point, while 2 points were awarded for going to the theater and museums. The maximum number of points awarded for ownership of books was 3, in the case of 500 or more books; those who had between 101-500 books were awarded 2 points; while those who had less than 100 points got one point. Besides the above factors, the type of residence was also counted among the variables, considering that rural and urban areas differ in terms of the cultural environment that they represent, and they offer different venues and opportunities for cultural activities. Thus, rural areas were given 1 point, while urban residences got 2 points in the formation of this variable.

The highest number of points possible was 32. It can be noted that in the case of cultural capital, there are a lot fewer families who have a high volume of cultural capital (4%) than in the case of economic capital; more than 90% of the respondents belonged to families with medium- or low cultural capital.

**Figure 5.**

**Distribution of families according to cultural capital**

If we look at the differences between the two types of capital relative to the type of training in which students are enrolled, it can be noted that there is a strong correlation between the type of education and the volume of capital—both economic and cultural—owned by the family ($\chi^2$ value 39.177, $p=0.000$; as well as $\chi^2$ value 38.269, $p=0.000$). Among those who were enrolled in a technical education, more than a third of the families (37.3%) had a low volume of economic capital, while in the case of those attending high schools and college preparatory schools, only a little more than one-tenth (14.1%) was in this category. Thirty percent of those attending high
schools, and ten percent of those enrolled in trade and technical schools, belonged in the category of families with a high volume of economic capital. The distribution of cultural capital relative to the type of school attended is similar. Those receiving a technical education were overrepresented in the category of low cultural capital, while high schoolers were overrepresented in the high-volume cultural capital category.

There is a difference between the amount of capital owned relative to the type of residence as well; whereas almost one third (28.8%) of rural families had a low volume of economic capital, only 14% of urban families were in this category. Conversely, 31.1% of the urban respondents versus only 16.7% of the rural ones possessed a high volume of economic capital ($\chi^2$ value 13.325, $p=0.001$).

**Figure 6.**

The distribution of cultural capital according to the type of education and residence

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c) Social Capital

“Social capital is an accumulation of those actual and potential resources that are related to the more or less institutionalized network of social relationships and recognition; in other words, those resources based on belonging to a group.” The foundation of social capital is constituted by material and symbolic factors that are intermixed through relationships based on voluntary exchange. The volume of social capital is dependent on the extent of the social network that can be mobilized, as well as the volume of economic, cultural, or symbolic capital possessed by the people involved in the network (Bourdieu 1997:165-167).

According to Coleman, social capital—contrary to other forms of capital—is materialized in the structure of relationships between the actors. It is generated whenever relationships between...
people are changed in a way that promotes activity. Coleman distinguishes between two types of social capital: within families, as well as outside of them. Social capital within families is constituted by the relationship between parents and children, as well as relations toward other relatives, if the family keeps in touch with them. This is the type of capital that enables children to access the human capital of adults—parents and relatives—relative to how much time and attention the adults give to the children. Extra-familial social capital can be found in the social relations (and in the degree to which these relations are closed to outsiders) between communities outside of the family, as well as between communal institutions (Coleman 1988: 11–43).

Thus, in Coleman's sense, social capital is that system of relationships that makes it possible for children to access the human capital of the adults around them. In the following, I measured the concept of social capital mainly through the extrafamilial component, because I mapped the relationship between parents and their environment, rather than that between parents and children.

According to Mark Granovetter's hypothesis, so-called “weak bonds” have the most important role from the perspective of the individual's opportunities for social mobility. Relationships that are weak bonds are more advantageous for gathering information. Granovetter explains this through the fact that tight circles of friends have a reduced access to information due to the closed nature of their relationships. In contrast, weak bonds can act as veritable channels of information (Granovetter 1991, quoted in Pusztai–Vedres 2002: 90–106). Therefore, when it comes to gathering information for choosing a school, an analysis of the family's more distant “weak-bond” types of relationships are not negligible.

I considered three variables when creating the indicator of social capital: the family's number of connections, the heterogeneity of these connections, and the frequency of visits. In the case of the first variable, I measured the number of social connections based on the number of individuals that the family of the respondent visits, or is visited by, on a regular basis. The diversification of the relationships in effect means the relations between the family of the respondents and the people who participate in their social network. The types of relations could be selected by the respondent based on multiple-choice questions. Thus, the individual in question could be a relative, friend, neighbor, or acquaintance of the respondent's family. The more types of relationships the respondent had, the more points he or she received on the social capital scale. The frequency of visits can represent the strength of the relationships: the more frequent, the stronger the relationship. The frequency of visits received the following variable values when creating the indicator: daily visits received 4 points, multiple times a week, 3 points; weekly visits, 2 points; and monthly visits, 1 point.

Two-thirds of the respondents' families possess a medium volume of social capital, 15% have high social capital, and finally, 18% of the families have low levels of social capital.
A fundamental common characteristic of the three types of capital presented above is that they are convertible. Cultural and social capital can be converted into economic capital, while economic capital can be converted into cultural capital; however, this necessitates a costly process of conversion (Bourdieu 1997: 155–176).

An accumulation of cultural capital is optimal in those families that have a high volume of cultural capital. In this case, the period of socialization is also a period of accumulation (Bourdieu 1998, quoted in Lannert 2004: 6). In the opinion of Lannert, however, the accumulation of capital takes time. It is only those who possess sufficient economic capital to have periods free of economic necessity that are able to invest enough time in this accumulation process. The regeneration of social capital also requires time and money, since these are the basic conditions for maintaining relationships between the members of these groups that are based on mutual voluntary exchange (Lannert 2004: 6–7).

In the following, I analyzed the correlations that can be observed between the three types of capital described above. As the figure below illustrates, there is a significant correlation between the three types of capital. Based on the correlation coefficients calculated from the values of the three indicators, the strongest correlation is between cultural and economic capital \((r=0.588, p=0.01)\): the higher the family's volume of cultural capital, the higher their economic capital. There is a similar relationship between social and economic, and social and cultural capital. The results of the correlation in fact prove the accumulation of the different types of capital: if a family possesses a high volume of one type of capital, then chances are that the other two types of capital are also of a higher volume. Endre Borsos and István Győrgy note, in the course of their analysis of dominant family strategies in a locality, that the different types of capital are concentrated with precisely those people who are able to generate large amounts of individual capital types (Borsos–Győrgy 1999: 163).
I drew the following conclusions from my analysis of the school choice among high school students in Miercurea Ciuc:

According to my first and most important hypothesis, the student's micro-environment determines his or her school of choice. According to the results of the study, there are notable differences among students regarding their opinions of school choice, and their relationships with their school, relative to their family environment. The composition of the family has an influence on the type of school chosen as well, in the sense that the number of siblings is inversely correlated with the student's chances of being admitted into high school. Thus, among those attending high schools and college preparatory schools, families with more (three, four, or five) children are underrepresented.

The academic performance of students is influenced by their parents' level of education and occupation. This is further proven by the fact that the parents of high school students tend to have higher degrees than the parents of kids attending trade and technical schools. The middle school performance of the child is instrumental in determining his or her future academic career. The father's level of education is an indirect factor of influence on the child's general education performance as well.

The father's education is important not only in determining his child's academic performance in middle school and the type of high school to be chosen, but it also influences the types of information sources used in the decision making process. The families of fathers with both
advanced and lower degrees use formal sources of information (ads, teachers' recommendations), but those who have advanced degrees also use more informal sources (the recommendations of friends and acquaintances). Thus, they use more of their social relations (i.e., their social capital) to gather data about the school to be chosen for their child.

There is also a correlation between the father's level of education and whether the child had private tutoring. Children of fathers with advanced degrees were more likely to use private tutoring before their high school entrance examinations than children whose fathers did not have a higher education. It is a general trend, however, that children only use tutoring for classes that are necessary for passing entrance exams. Thus, tutoring is used as a tool to facilitate the student's academic career; tutoring in foreign languages, general education, musical education and other extracurricular activities designed to foster talent are not characteristic of students.

It is evident, based on the research results, that there is a relationship between the volume of different types of capital possessed by the family and the type of school chosen. It can be observed in the case of both economic and cultural capital that their volume tends to be higher among those who choose to attend college preparatory and technical high schools. The differences are not as apparent in the case of social capital.

Parents who are endowed with higher levels of economic capital have at their disposal the tools with which to create a more favorable educational environment for their children. They greatly increase their child's chances by making available the tools necessary for modern mobility and communication (Örkény–Szabó 2001: 473–479). Thus, the presence of durable consumer goods is more characteristic of families endowed with higher levels of economic capital. These families are more likely to own personal computers, CD players, newer and/or Western types of automobiles. While in the case of families with a low volume of economic capital the students usually live in the same room with their parents, better-endowed parents can afford to provide their children with their own rooms.

According to Bourdieu's theory of cultural reproduction, the school values those language and cultural skills and capabilities that are gained through the process of family socialization. In this regard, students who come from families with higher levels of cultural capital tend to be in a more advantageous position (Bourdieu 1978: 58–83). Therefore, students who come from families with high levels of cultural capital tend to conform better to academic requirements and perform better in school.

The parents' level of education also tends to be higher in families with high cultural capital, and they generally own more books on average than families with low levels of cultural capital. Families with high cultural capital also subscribe to, or regularly purchase print media products, and cultural programs are prominent among their leisure activities.

Social capital itself does not directly influence the type of education of the student, but it does have an effect on the acquisition of information, and on the ways of spending leisure time. I believe that a lack of a significant correlation between the type of training and the level of social capital can also be reduced to the fact that, as a characteristic of a traditional rural society, familial and neighborly relationships are important for every social class, and therefore the volume of social capital does not differ so much relative to the family's socioeconomic status.
It can be said based on the questionnaire responses that parents tend to intervene in the process of choosing a school—even though a significant majority of the respondents had trouble admitting this fact. The degree of parental involvement, however, differs greatly based on the child's academic performance and autonomy, as well as the parents' level of education, occupation, and socioeconomic status. Although at the beginning of the present paper, I posed the question as whether parents have a say in their child's school choice, I would now rephrase that question and ask, rather, to what degree do parents involve their children in the process of choosing a school. It can be observed that parents who possess a higher volume of economic, cultural, and social capital also tend to be more consciously aware of the formation of their children's future.

With regard to the decision making mechanism, the families of the respondents show a traditional picture, in the sense that about half of the more important decisions are made by the parents without consulting their children.

Children attending trade and technical schools tend to be more content with their choice than high school students. They do not have such a clear set of expectations as those who attend college preparatory and technical high schools. Their case tends to lack long-term planning, and many of them see school as a necessary evil in their lives. In this sense, the short period of schooling is a tool directed toward obtaining a degree, followed by an immediate entry into the job market after finishing secondary education.

This attitude can also be explained by the fact that high school students tend to be more autonomous and capable of forming independent opinions, which they are also more willing to express. The choice of those attending college preparatory high schools can be interpreted as a first step of a long-term plan. They tend to choose their particular educational profile based on guaranteed higher education, or because they want a career placement in that field.

In reality, there are two different types of strategies for the future that can be discovered among students that come into play before their choice of secondary education. The first is oriented toward continuing education, in which they think in the long run, and see secondary school as merely a step. This way of thinking is characteristic of college preparatory and technical high school students, and their families. The second type of mentality can be observed among those who attend trade schools, and is oriented toward job placement. They see secondary education as a tool by which they can step out into the job market. For them, in fact, choosing a school means choosing a trade or occupation at the same time.

The students' level of satisfaction with their school choice differs, on the one hand, based on the type of school; and, on the other hand, the degree to which they see the choice as their own. Those students who made their own choice tend to be more satisfied than those whose parents intervened in the decision making process.

Analyzing the mechanisms of decision making within families, I came to the conclusion that the decision making process tends to be more democratic within the families of those who choose high schools, as opposed to trade school students. It is presumably the parents' cultural capital, as well as their level of education, that determines whether they involve the child in making decisions. We found that the most important factor for parents of trade school students is for

3. I determined this based on two separate questions.
their child to acquire marketable skills and training after having finished their primary education. They are less motivated to acquire advanced degrees.

The time management of students is determined by the type of school they attend. Students in college preparatory schools have less free time, because they tend to devote more time to studying and participating in school activities. The types of leisure activities pursued also depends on what school the child attends, similar to the case of the parents. Students who are enrolled in college preparatory and technical high schools tend to devote more time to cultural activities (reading, theater, concerts, extracurricular activities) than those who go to trade schools. The latter tend to spend their leisure time among their family and friends. Thus, when it comes to the way they spend their leisure time, students in trade schools are generally characterized by introverted leisure that is tied to their place of residence, while high school students tend to have extroverted and culturally related leisure activities outside of the home.
References


