

Self-assessment and educational transitions – an analysis on Hungarian educational panel data*

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Abstract

Why are talented pupils coming from low low-status families reluctant to choose knowledge intensive educational routes? Throughout my paper I try to answer this question, employing the framework of sociological rational choice theory. My argumentation is that (1) the perception of one's own ability (self-assessment) is not similar by pupils having different parental background. Furthermore (2) educational choices are not exclusively influenced by abilities but also by subjective beliefs about own talent. Finally (3) educational choices are not identical across social classes because pupils with different parental background estimate their own abilities differently. Data are derived from Hungarian Life Course Survey (HLCS). The sample contains 9,050 pupils (aged 14-15) who finished primary education in the academic year 2005/2006, begin secondary education in autumn 2006, and tertiary education in 2010 or 2011.

Key words: self-assessment; self-confidence; transition to upper-secondary and tertiary education; school tracks; inequality in educational opportunities; tracking in education; educational panel data; Hungarian Life Course Survey (HLCS);

JEL-codes: D83, J24, I24, J62

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