

SUMMARY

SCHOOL SUBJECTS AND SOCIETY

School subjects and society by Peter Tibor Nagy. In this study the volume's editor outlines the alternatives regarding how the social sciences and humanities can describe the universes of different school subjects within a social context. Cultural studies examine different concepts of public culture in relation to the different proportions of subjects in a curricula. Policy analysts see school subjects as being connection points between educational policy and academic circles (pressure groups). For the science of science, school subjects mirror the competition taking place between different sciences and the paradigms existing within one science. For the sociologist looking at social inequalities, subject-specific school achievements are elements within a description of social group-specific school activity.

Subject-specific sub-cultural performance differentials among students of graduating classes in Hungarian secondary schools of the Dual Monarchy by Victor Karady. This is an empirical study of performance differentials had by graduating students in five major secondary education subjects: Hungarian language and literature, German, Latin, Maths and Physical Education. Performance is measured by average marks (on a 4-grade scale, when 1 = best and 4 = failure). The study is based on a unique overall survey of secondary school students in the time period 1850-1950. Only global results from the survey are analyzed here, in line with a combination of two variables: religion and ethnic background (indicated by the surnames of pupils involved). The main results of the study can be seen and summarized in a clear hierarchy of academic achievement in intellectual subjects – with Jews at the top, being closely followed by Lutherans as well as (at a distance) Roman Catholics and Calvinists; while members of the Greek Orthodox and Uniate (Greco-Catholic) faith came last. In every subject, pupils with a German background tended to perform better than others (except for Jews, where the best achievers were the most assimilated, i.e. those with Magyar-ized names). Explanations for these rather marked differences come via ethnic minorities having a need to compensate for social handicaps, their value systems and inherited 'cultural capital' - especially their sub-culturally and in-bred relationship to schooling (learning habits); also,

their respective strategies of educational mobility as well as the internal selection process they have gone through during their educational trajectory.

Subjects, marks and family background by Mihály Csákó. Analysing differences between students' achievements by subject, this article seeks to answer the question of whether particular groups of students can be characterised in relation to their adhering to special sets of school subjects. In a search to identify such groups' characteristics, the type and orientation of the school, and students' family backgrounds are examined. Former experiences are here consolidated – and the importance of meanings attributed to school subjects by students are underlined.

Schools' effectiveness in subject competitions by Anikó Fehérvári & Gábor Neuwirth. It is well known that, in any international comparison, the Hungarian education system is highly selective; and this is made manifest in the performances of students, which show many more significant differences between schools than within schools. Such differences between students' performances have a substantial impact on results gained in the context of various curricular-based competitions. This paper shows which schools characteristically performed with more success in different national and international, curricular-based competitions and in the Student Olympics; it also indicates how the 'grouping' of these schools has changed.

Which factors served to determine the marks given by mathematics teachers in 2011 by Geza Saska. In mathematics marks, three distinct but interconnected elements have been identified at grade 6 in primary schools. One is a student's competency/knowledge based on government assessment; the second is the degree to which students adopt a school's values, in other words, their attitude, diligence and general educational advancement levels; and, thirdly, there is the student's social status, namely family circumstances, and gender. The model here reveals that mathematics marks are influenced by two different factors: firstly, there is the student's overall level of academic advancement, which includes diligence - with this being the dominant factor, and which essentially favours girl students; secondly, the other way to understand maths marks is to depart from the social status of a student and take into account reading comprehension and knowledge of mathematics. The author demonstrates that among students performing at the same level, teachers tend to give better marks to girl students and to students who have a more favourable social status.

The social nature of the choice of German at the Faculty of Arts by Zsuzsanna Hanna Biró. The goal of the paper is to explore the social history of the teaching of German language and literature in secondary schools in a period in which the German language was necessary for intellect-based careers and in elite education (1895–1945). The researcher's interest is in comprehending what was specific to humanities education and to the profession of teaching in a secondary school. The

most relevant social factor motivating someone in a choice of German studies was ethnic provenience. The marker of being “German” identified in one’s personal name was less decisive in this respect than the ethnic character of the socializing environment of graduates of humanities. A further factor refers to the religious denomination of graduates – Jews, Lutherans and Unitarians can be said to have had more of an affinity for German studies; while the attitudes of Calvinists to German studies were negative. With an obvious over-representation of women, German studies graduates had usually descended from affluent families – and this was also reflected in study results. The most typical occupational areas where the parents of students pursuing German studies usually occur are those of the armed forces (soldiers, security and police), and professions associated with the intelligentsia where the German and Jewish middle-class were over-represented (doctors, physicians, lawyers, bankers, businessmen etc.). Surveys taking on board regions show that the most important environmental factor here was everyday utilization of the German language; thus, members of the German-speaking minority, Hungarians living in German-speaking areas of the Dualist Monarchy and also foreigners who utilised the German language in Hungarian-speaking areas as a “lingua franca” were all keen to choose German studies.

Subject-based similarities and differences between characteristics of teachers, in a cross-national perspective by Matild Sági. The paper focuses on subject-based characteristics of teachers’ in relation to their demographics, their contractual status, and also similarities and differences among teachers’ beliefs, attitudes and classroom practices; and there is a comparative perspective in that use is made of 23 countries. The analysis is based on data from the OECD’s first Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), which was done in 2008 among lower-secondary education teachers and principals.

Our main finding is that subject-based differences in teachers’ demographic features strongly connect with the issue of whether there is a (relative) lack of teachers in a place or not. Major contractual differences that were found to exist between countries – and within countries – could mainly be explained not by the subject taught but by a teacher’s age; and while data does reveal some country-specific characteristics relating to teachers’ attitudes and practices, no focal domain specificity can be seen in any one country.

Patterns involved in young teachers’ leaving the profession by Zsuzsanna Veroszta. The aim of this study is to redefine the concept of the “quitting decision” among young graduates. Here, the terms “quitting” or “leaving the profession” offers an approach that can be taken up by scientific research as regards interpretation; and there are no preliminary evaluation factors. The study is based on a career-tracking dataset for young teachers who graduated in 2008 or 2010. According to the study

hypothesis, the employability of young, profession-leaving teachers is partially to be determined by their former subject; and differences may be identified – simultaneously – in connection with the employment sector involved, a job’s content, and the level of income and satisfaction. An analysis of these factors shows us several patterns, ones demonstrating that a person’s “quitting/leaving the profession” should be interpreted without prior value judgments being made.

