The specific features of professional aspirations of pupils with special educational needs in Czech basic schools

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Introduction

• In CR, a relatively high *unemployment* rate (around 9%), which has a different structure in individual fields

• *minimal impact* on systemic changes in the educational sphere and do not strongly influence pupils' or their parents' choices of education and career (they choose often generally oriented upper secondary schools)

• considerable attention has therefore been paid to issues relating to *choice of occupational/educational path* and to career counselling in schools
Our research

• In this paper: an extensive (7 years) research project, *Special Needs of Pupils in the Context of the Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education* carried out at the Faculty of Education of Masaryk University in Brno

• Our research efforts on the field of profession choice and carrier guidance for pupils with SEN, the aim: recognize the choice specifics, describe them, suggest and initiate the measures

• Combined methodology – case studies, questionnaires – individually applied
Quantitative research (2011)

Main questions:

• The interests differences (subjects preferences) in school...?

• The differences between the choice - occupational orientation of pupils with a disability and without a disability ...?

• The differences between factors influencing the choice

(Differences in school results, in values, how (if) the pupils project their feelings (choice) through colours etc.)
Methodology

- Student assistants (52), cooperation of teachers in selected schools (The student assistant contacted the class teacher, asked for the cooperation all pupils with special educational needs, and drew at random from the class list other students without disabilities). They worked with pupils individually (interviews)

- **261 pupils**, aged 14 to 15 years, 116 girls and 145 boys

- 125 pupils had a disability, 136 did not

- **learning disorders - dyslexia (71), social disabilities (42), behavioural disorders (12)**

- slightly higher proportion of the boys had a disability
Selected research results

School success and school interests

• The school success is noticeably lower in pupils with disabilities (not only in mathematics and Czech, but across all subjects)

• The most popular subjects – no significant differences (ambivalently perceived math)

• The tendency: More pupils without disabilities refuse physical education, while students with specific learning and behavioral disorders more often refuse Czech language
## Subjects preferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Popular subjects (ordered)</th>
<th>Unpopular subjects (ordered)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupils without disability</td>
<td>physical education, maths, foreign language, history</td>
<td>maths, physics, foreign language, Czech, but also physical education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils with learning disorders</td>
<td>physical education history, maths, natural history</td>
<td>maths, Czech, foreign languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils with behavioural disorders</td>
<td>physical education, maths, Czech, foreign language and technical education</td>
<td>Czech, maths, foreign language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils with social disability</td>
<td>physical education, maths, foreign language, technical education</td>
<td>maths, physics, chemistry, Czech</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selected research results

*Occupational preference and the influence of a disability*

**Occupational areas (inspired by Holland)**

- Artistic professions
- Social professions
- Realistic – working environment (lower education)
- Realistic – higher education
- Intellectual – science, technology
- Intellectual - humanistic, social, philosophy...
- Conventional
Selected research results

*Occupational preference and the influence of a disability*

- Pupils with learning difficulties are most inclined to realistic occupations which do not require higher education (R-worker) and they are also more likely to choose artistic professions (Art).

- Pupils without a disability and pupils with social disability tend to choose social occupations.

- Pupils without disabilities tend naturally to the more intellectual professions (mainly I-sci, tech).

- This difference proved (Chi square) to be significant at $p=0.05$, however, the strength of association is rather low (Cramér’s $V = 0.245$).
Handicap vs. Choice

learning disorders
behavioral disorders
social disorders
without disability

R - worker
R - educ
I - sci, tech
I - hum
Art
Social
Enterpr
Conven

Četnosti
## Influences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>without disability</th>
<th>with disability</th>
<th>social disability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mother</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>4.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>2.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>friends</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>siblings</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professionals</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teachers</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>1.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relatives</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Choice influences

• We didn´t prove significant differences, but some tendencies

• Low professional counsellors and teachers influence (higher in pupils with handicaps)

• Great influence of mother, parents like advisors (not models ?) (Kniveton, 2004)
Role models: the influence of parents' occupations

• The occupational choice correlated with the area of occupation of the mother in 19% of pupils and with the occupation area of the father in 22% of pupils.

• Boys are more likely to be influenced by the occupation of the father, than girls by the occupation of the mother.

• Pupils with behavioural disorders have the lowest congruence with the father's occupation (10%). In these families, the fathers live outside the family more often (about half the time).
Relation between congruence with father’s occupation and disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father’s occupation – congruence with the choice x Disability</th>
<th>Chi-square</th>
<th>sv</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson’s chi-square</td>
<td>38.93110</td>
<td>df=6</td>
<td>p=.00000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MV chi-square</td>
<td>27.66941</td>
<td>df=6</td>
<td>p=.00011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cramér’s V</td>
<td>.2773786</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Colour test

1. Pleasant
2. Nice
3. Friendly....
4. Ugly
5. Sad
6. Endangering...
Colour test

• We did not find any difference in the projected meaning of colours between the disabled and non-disabled groups. Pupils typically associated pleasant emotions with pastel colours (yellow...)

• In 80% of cases, the pupils marked positive options (subjects and occupations that they liked) with colours that induced pleasant feelings for them

• Pupils associated positive colours to subjects in which they do not achieve good results, so it seems like the student's feelings toward the subject are not solely determined by achievement
Conclusion

- Low influence of school counsellors, high influence of parents (mother) opinion (pupils are often identified with it)

- Parents with higher education are more active in choosing upper secondary school for children — (David, West, Ribbens, 1994)

- Qualitative research: to understand parents’ expectations to schools, real ways of school counsellors support, parents and pupils’ emotions (fears etc.)

- Parent education (we are starting with the programmes in schools, action research), to motivate parents with basic education to attend the educational activities
Thank you