A sociological approach to the school career of Day High School students in Greece

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to investigate and highlight the factors that contribute to the formation of the school career of Day High School students in Greece. Moreover, the outline of the school career of students according to the type of High School (General/Vocational) they attend is attempted. The research sample consists of 1430 Day High School students, who attended the 2nd grade of High School during the school year 2017-2018, and the research data were collected with the use of the questionnaire. The results of this study showed that the school career of the students attending the two types of High School (General/Vocational) tends to be influenced by the particular social characteristics that make up their family profile and which are determined by their class habitus. The national origin of the students' families and the differentiated educational level of their parents tend to contribute significantly to shaping their school career.

KEYWORDS

School career, students, General High School, Vocational High School

RÉSUMÉ

Le but de cet article est d'enquêter et de mettre en évidence les facteurs qui contribuent à la formation de la carrière scolaire des élèves des Lycées Générales en Grèce. En outre, le plan de la carrière scolaire des élèves en fonction du type de Lycée (Général/Professionnel) qu'ils fréquentent est tenté. L'échantillon de recherche comprend 1430 élèves des Lycées Générales, qui ont fréquenté la 2ème année du Lycée au cours de l'année scolaire 2017-2018, et les données de recherche ont été recueillies à l'aide du questionnaire. Les résultats de cette étude ont montré que la carrière scolaire des élèves des deux types de Lycée (Général/Professionnel) tend à être

influencée par les caractéristiques sociales particulières de leur profil familial déterminées par leur habitus de classe. L'origine nationale des familles des élèves et le niveau d'éducation différencié de leurs parents tendent à contribuer de manière significative à l'orientation de leur carrière scolaire.

MOTS-CLÉS
Carrière scolaire, des élèves, Lycée Général, Lycée Professionnel

INTRODUCTION

Family, the first socialization group (Giddens, 2002), in which the young person accumulates primary schemes of thought and perception (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1996), as well as the secondary socializing group, school, through the culture and the habitus that it gradually engraves on the young person, tend to (co)influence the formation of his/her system of choices in a decisive way. Indeed, these choices define his/her educational path and the shaping of his/her professional career in the future (Oliver & Kettley, 2010; Reay, 1998).

In the context of a review of scientific literature, it is noted that the issue of students' educational and occupational choices, which are influenced by the socio-economic and demographic factors that define their educational career, has garnered interest in a large number of scientific papers (Chileshe & Haupt, 2010; Edwards & Quinter, 2011; Støren & Arnesen, 2007; Thomas & Webber, 2009). Furthermore, the investigation of the factors that contribute to changing the educational and occupational aspirations and preferences of young people during the transition from adolescence to adulthood, thus redefining their educational path also attracts researchers' attention (Alm, 2015; Croll, 2008; Hegna, 2014; Pinxten, De Fraine, Van Den Noortgate, Van Damme & Anumendem, 2012).

This study attempts to fill the research gap found in scientific literature focusing on the school career of High School students, as this issue is approached mainly on the basis of the students' educational success, which is expressed, in particular, through their performance grades, under the influence of socio-economic and demographic factors (see: Fuligni, 1997; Kao & Tienda, 1995; Long, Conger & Iatarola, 2012). The purpose of this paper is to explore and highlight the factors that contribute to the formation of the school career of Day High School students in Greece. Moreover, an outline of the students' school career according to the type of High School (General/Vocational) they attend is attempted.

THEORETICAL NOTES

In this paper we will use the concepts of 'class habitus' and 'institutionalized cultural capital' from the theory of Pierre Bourdieu.

According to Bourdieu (1986, 1994), cultural capital occurs in three states: the 'engendered' state – habitus (embodied ways of perception, appreciation and action of the social subject), the 'objectified' state (cultural goods which are visible and transferable to the heirs) and the 'institutionalized' state in the form of educational titles.

'Institutionalized' cultural capital (a form of objectification) refers to the academic qualifications and credentials which are legitimized by authorized social institutions, such as schools and universities. In particular, the academic qualification represents 'a certificate of

cultural competence which confers on its holder a conventional, constant, legally guaranteed value with respect to culture' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248; Bourdieu, 1994, p. 82).

Habitus, which each social subject possesses, and which is defined according to Bourdieu (1977, p. 86), as 'a subjective system of internalized structures, schemes of perception, thought and action common to all members of the same group or class', tends to shape his/her educational orientations and his/her school career (Naidoo, 2009, p. 264).

Bourdieu underlines the relationship between habitus and the individuals' social class. In fact, the 'similar or adjacent positions' that individuals occupy within the social sphere and their placement in similar social conditions depending on the volume and type of capital they have at their disposal, tend to define the social class to which they belong (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 17). The class habitus is perceived as the whole of the structures built up through socialization, which play the role of structuring structures for the placement of individuals within the social space while at the same time perpetuating the distinctions within it. In this respect, the class habitus is the common denominator of the different practices adopted by the social subject, as well as the common point of reference of the practices of the individuals who share the same or similar conditions of being within the social world (Accardo, 1991, pp. 95-99; Bourdieu, 2006, pp. 88, 99).

In this case, we could argue that the formation of the school career of the students, who participated in this research, tends to be defined by their class habitus, as well as by the differentiated 'institutionalized' cultural capital of their parents.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS – METHODOLOGY

In this paper, we attempt to answer the following research questions:

- What are the factors that contribute to the formation of the school career of the Day High School students in Greece?
- How is the students' school career outlined according to the type of High School (General/Vocational) they attend in Greece?

Research 'tool'

This study, which is part of wider ongoing research, was conducted during the school year 2017-2018, by administrating a questionnaire to Day General and Vocational High School students in Greece. The questionnaire was pilot tested with ten 2nd grade students of a Day General High School and seven 2nd grade students of a Day Vocational High School, who were then excluded from the research sample (Bryman, 2017; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2008).

The questionnaire that we drew up for this research is composed of two parts. The first part includes questions about the demographic data of the students and their parents. The second part includes questions which are designed to explore and highlight the students' school career, which is defined by the (dis)continuities in their school attendance, the choice of type and kind of school attendance from Kindergarten to the 2nd grade of General and Vocational High School, as well as the choice of an Orientation Group in the 2nd grade of General High School or the choice of a Sector in the 2nd grade of Vocational High School.

Sample

We used 'cluster sampling' for the questionnaire's data collection. Clusters, in this research, are the Day General and Vocational High Schools in Greece (Bryman, 2017; Cohen et al., 2008; Creswell, 2011). We chose to focus on 2nd grade High School students because in this grade they are obliged by the current legislation in Greece to choose a particular Orientation Group, if they attend a General High School, or a particular Sector, if they attend a Vocational High School. In fact, the specific choices made by students in the 2nd grade of Greek High Schools define their educational career and they have a decisive impact on shaping either their academic future or their transition to the labor market.

The research sample includes 1430 second grade students from 34 Day General and Vocational High Schools in Greece. In terms of the gender distribution of the students, 51.5% (736 subjects) of the students are boys and 48.5% (694 subjects) of the students are girls.

Data analysis

For the data analysis, the distributions of the variables used in this research are presented first. Then, Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) was conducted in order to explore and highlight the relationship formed between the variables that define the students' school career (Greenacre, 2007). This type of analysis was selected based on the fact that nominal variables are used in this study. For the Multiple Correspondence Analysis the algorithm adjusted joint correspondence analysis (JCA) was used, and in particular a simple adjustment of the MCA solution. This algorithm performs a correction of the Burt matrix based solution, focusing on off-diagonal sub tables only (Greenacre, 2007). Following the implementation of Multiple Correspondence Analysis, we performed hierarchical cluster analysis taking into account the factor scores of the most important factors of the analysis (Sharma, 1996). In this case, we created student clusters taking into account the variables under investigation. For research purposes, we used SPSS 24 and SPAD 5 (Lebart, Morineau, Lambert & Pleuvret, 2001).

RESULTS

Regarding the national origin of the students' families, 88.3% (1263 subjects) of the students and their parents are natives and 11.7% (167 subjects) of the students come from immigrant families. In particular, 2.9% (42 subjects) of the students' parents are immigrants and 8.7% (125 subjects) of the students and their parents have immigrant backgrounds. Moreover, out of the 167 students (11.7%) with an immigrant background, 144 students (10.1%) come from parents born in Balkan countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Romania and Serbia) and countries of the former Soviet Union (Kazakhstan, Moldova, Russia and the Ukraine). Twenty-three students (1.6%) with an immigrant background have parents born in economically developed countries of the modern western world (USA, Canada, Australia, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom).

In Table 1 the distribution of the 'institutionalized' cultural capital of the parents of the students in the sample is presented. As shown in Table 1, the majority of fathers (565 subjects, 39.5%) and mothers (599 subjects, 41.9%) of the students in the sample are High School graduates. Furthermore, the percentage of the students' parents who have a strong volume of 'institutionalized' cultural capital in the form of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Diplomas is significant (Bourdieu, 1986, 1994) (Higher Education graduates: 319 fathers, 22.3% and 343 mothers, 24.0% / Postgraduate Diploma holders: 53 fathers, 3.7% and 59 mothers, 4.1%).

TABLE 1

Educational level of the parents of the students in the sample

Education of students' parents	Father (%)*	Mother (%)*
Primary School	169 (11.8)	139 (9.7)
Middle School	266 (18.6)	230 (16.1)
High School	565 (39.5)	599 (41.9)
Postsecondary Education	58 (4.1)	60 (4.2)
Higher Education	319 (22.3)	343 (24.0)
Postgraduate Diploma	53 (3.7)	59 (4.1)
Sum total	1430 (100.0)	1430 (100.0)

* Number and (percentage) of the sum total of fathers and mothers of the students in the sample

In Table 2 the distribution of the occupations of the parents of the students in the sample is presented. The coding system of OPCS 1990 Standard Occupational Classification (Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, 1990), which is internationally accepted and is used by a large number of surveys in the field of Social Sciences, was used to classify the occupations of the students' parents into specific occupational categories listed in the following Table (see: Koustourakis & Asimaki, 2011; Wakeling, 2005).

TABLE 2

Occupations of the parents of the students in the sample

Occupation of students' parents	Father (%)*	Mother (%)*
Managerial positions in the service sector	19 (1.3)	8 (0.6)
Higher scientific staff	83 (5.8)	48 (3.4)
Health care	29 (2.0)	49 (3.4)
Teachers	72 (5.0)	160 (11.2)
Administrative scientific staff in the public or private sector	97 (6.8)	93 (6.5)
Clerical staff in the public or private sector	201 (14.1)	253 (17.7)
Technicians	344 (24.1)	69 (4.8)
Security corps	87 (6.1)	8 (0.6)
Commerce	197 (13.8)	75 (5.2)
Unskilled craftsmen/craftswomen	94 (6.6)	78 (5.5)
Farmers	181 (12.7)	51 (3.6)
Housewives	0 (0.0)	413 (28.9)
Unemployed	26 (1.8)	125 (8.7)
Sum total	1430 (100.0)	1430 (100.0)

* Number and (percentage) of the sum total of fathers and mothers of the students in the sample

Study of the data in Table 2 shows that a significant percentage of the students' fathers are technicians (344 subjects, 24.1%), while a significant percentage of the students' mothers are housewives (413 subjects, 28.9%).

Regarding the kind of Kindergarten the students in the sample attended, 89.7% of the students (1282 subjects) had attended a public Kindergarten and 10.3% of the students (148 subjects) had attended a private Kindergarten.

Concerning the (dis)continuity in the students' school career, the results showed that 97.8% (1399 subjects) of the students have continuous school attendance, while 2.2% (31 subjects) of the students had stopped attending school at some point. 96.6% (1381 subjects) of the students had not repeated a grade during Middle School compared to 3.4% (49 subjects) of the students who had repeated a grade. Moreover, 96.7% (1383 subjects) of the students have not repeated a grade during their studies at High School compared to 3.3% (47 subjects) of the students who have repeated a grade.

Multiple Correspondence Analysis

Regarding the variables that reflect the students' school career, which we describe as active variables, we included the following:

a) National origin of the students' families, which is defined by the native and immigrant background of the students and their parents [categories: Natives All (Students and Parents), Immigrant Parents and Immigrants All (Students and Parents)],

b) Father's level of education (categories: Primary School, Middle School, High School, Postsecondary Education, Higher Education and Postgraduate Diploma),

c) Mother's level of education (categories: Primary School, Middle School, High School, Postsecondary Education, Higher Education and Postgraduate Diploma),

d) Kind of Kindergarten the students attended (categories: Public and Private),

e) Discontinuity in the students' school career, which is defined, in particular, by whether the student had stopped attending school at some point (categories: No Discontinuity and Yes Discontinuity),

f) Repetition or not of a grade by the students during their studies at Middle School (categories: Yes Repeat grade and No Repeat grade). And,

g) Repetition or not of a grade by the students during their studies at High School (categories: Yes Repeat grade and No Repeat grade).

Furthermore, in the context of this research, we included the following five illustrative qualitative variables, i.e. the variables that will contribute to the interpretation of the students' school career:

a) Gender (categories: Female and Male),

b) Father's occupation (categories: Managerial positions in the service sector, Higher scientific staff, Health care, Teachers, Administrative scientific staff in the public or private sector, Clerical staff in the public or private sector, Technicians, Security corps, Commerce, Unskilled craftsmen, Farmers and Unemployed),

c) Mother's occupation (categories: Managerial positions in the service sector, Higher scientific staff, Health care, Teachers, Administrative scientific staff in the public or private sector, Clerical staff in the public or private sector, Technicians, Security corps, Commerce, Unskilled craftswomen, Farmers, Housewives and Unemployed),

d) Type of High School the students attended in the 1st and 2nd grade of High School, where this complex variable includes the following categories: i) attending the General type of school in the 1st and 2nd grade of High School (General-General), ii) attending the General High School in the 1st grade of High School and the Vocational High School in the 2nd grade of High School (General-Vocational), and iii) attending the Vocational type of school in the 1st and 2nd grade of High School (Vocational-Vocational). And,

e) Choice of an Orientation Group in the 2nd grade of General High School (categories: Humanities Studies and Positive Studies) and choice of a Sector in the 2nd grade of Vocational High School (categories: Geoponics, Administration, Electrical Engineering, Mechanics, Shipping Occupations, Computer and Health care).

As shown in the Scree plot (Table 3), the second factor defines the point beyond which the remaining eigenvalues are relatively small. Following this study, we present and analyze the first two factors, since these factors contribute to the interpretation of the most important part of the variance. These two factors (national origin of the students' families and educational level of the students' parents) account for 47.8% of the total inertia (a term used in the analysis and which describes the variance) of the cloud of 1430 students.

TABLE 3

Eigenvalues of adjusted joint correspondence analysis and Screeplot

Factors	Eigenvalue	%	Cum%	Screeplot
1	0.040529	37.2	37.2	**********
2	0.011563	10.6	47.8	****
3	0.007694	7.1	54.8	***
4	0.006326	5.8	60.6	**
5	0.005421	5.0	65.6	**
6	0.003119	2.9	68.5	*
Total:	0.109010			

Table 4 of the Appendix shows the contribution of each category to the interpretation of each factor (see: column Contributions of active categories), as well as the relation of each category to each factor (see: column Cosine2 of active categories). In order to interpret the two factors (national origin of the students' families and educational level of the students' parents), we present and analyze the categories that contribute statistically significantly more to the definition of each factor (values test>2). Namely, the category coordinate is significantly different from zero (see: column Coordinates of categories).

In particular, the first factor, which refers to the national origin of the students' families, shows the relationship between the national origin of their families and the students' school career. This factor is mainly related to the category 'immigrant background of students and parents', which is contained in the complex variable 'national origin of the students' families'. In fact, this category, which is placed on the negative half-axis, appears to contribute to the interpretation of this factor at 7.574% (see: Table 4 of the Appendix). In addition, the first factor is related to the following categories: a) 'Middle School graduate' (7.638%), b) 'Higher Education graduate' (13.484%) and c) 'Postgraduate Diploma holder' (6.302%) included in the variable 'father's educational level'. These three categories contribute to the interpretation of the first factor by 27.424% and are located at the two different poles of the axis. Accordingly, the categories: a) 'Middle School graduate' (7.585%), b) 'Higher Education graduate' (14.354%) and c) 'Postgraduate Diploma holder' (6.350%), included in the variable 'mother's educational level', appear to have almost the same effect on the formation of the specific factor (28.289%) and are placed on the same side of the axis. More specifically, the categories 'father High School

graduate' and 'mother High School graduate' are located on the negative half-axis, while the positive semi-axis identifies the categories 'mother Higher education graduate' and 'mother holder of a Postgraduate Diploma'. In addition, the negative axis is the 'Yes Repeat grade' of the variable 'Repetition or not of a grade at Middle School' and 'Yes Repeat grade' of the variable 'Repetition or not of a grade at High School'. In fact, these categories contribute to the interpretation of the factor of the national origin of the students' families by almost the same percentage (5.503% and 5.926%, respectively). On the positive axis of the specific factor is the category 'student's attendance at a private Kindergarten', which appears to contribute to its interpretation by 8.860%. Finally, the negative half-axis is the category 'Yes Discontinuity' of the variable of discontinuity in the student's school course, which contributes little to the interpretation of this factor (3.518%).

The second factor, referring to the educational level of the students' parents, highlights the variations found among the students in the sample under the influence of the differentiations in terms of the 'institutionalized' cultural capital in the form of educational titles held by their parents. More specifically, this factor is related to the categories 'father High School graduate' (7.600%) and 'father holder of a Postgraduate Diploma' (29.295%) of the variable 'father's educational level' and the categories 'mother High School graduate' (6.764%) and 'mother holder of a Postgraduate Diploma' (28.901%) included in the variable 'mother's educational level' (see: Table 4 of the Appendix). Indeed, these categories are in different half-axes and appear to contribute in an analogous way to the interpretation of the second factor.

As far as the illustrative qualitative variables used in this research are concerned, statistically significant differences from zero are found in the coordinates of almost all categories. The relationship formed between these categories and the categories of active variables is shown in the following cluster analysis.

Cluster analysis

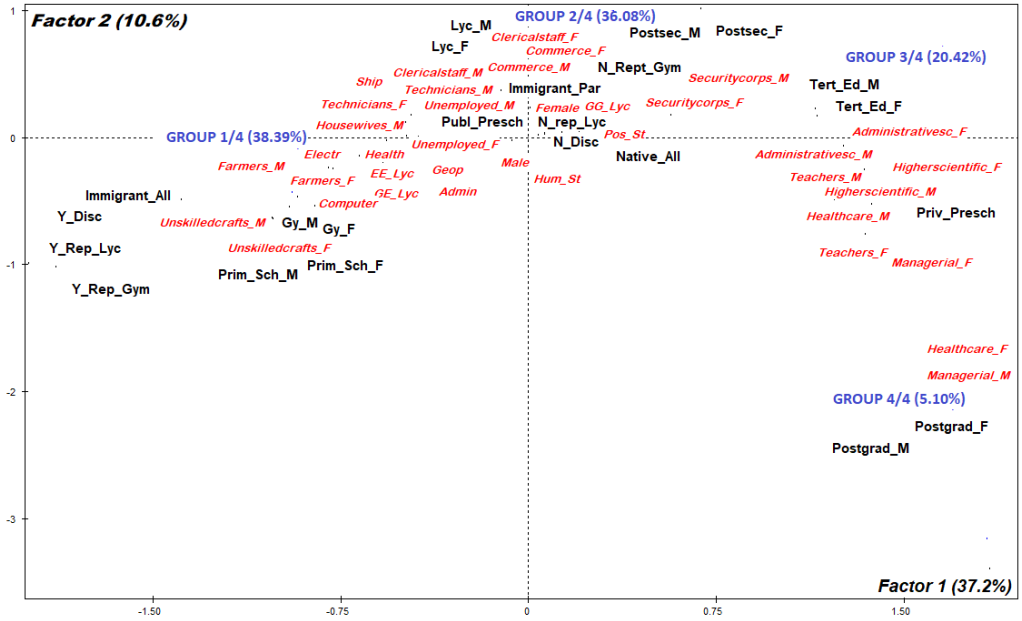
Based on the scores of the two factors, which refer to the national origin of the students' families and the educational level of their parents, derived from Multiple Correspondence Analysis, we performed a hierarchical cluster analysis on the sample of 1430 students. The detection of the correlations between the categories of variables, which is summarized in the above two factors and is illustrated in Figure 1, led to the formation of four groups which present the proximity formed between the characteristics of the students. In order to define the four specific groups, we take into account the statistically significant higher rates of student responses to the questions corresponding to the active and illustrative variables used in the Multiple Correspondence Analysis (see: Table 5 of the Appendix).

From the study of the content in Figure 1, the following findings arise, regarding the categorization of the students in the sample into groups according to the 'institutionalized' cultural capital of their parents:

The first group comprises 38.39% of the students in the sample. This group consists mainly of students whose fathers and mothers are Primary School graduates (29.33% and 25.14%, respectively) and Middle School graduates (46.63% and 41.53%, respectively). The fathers and mothers of the students in this group are unskilled craftsmen/craftswomen (16.58% and 13.84%, respectively) and farmers (25.32% and 8.01%, respectively). Moreover, the students' fathers are employed in technical occupations (34.97%) and their mothers are housewives (43.17%). 21.32% of the students, like their parents, have an immigrant background. 98.73% of the students started their schooling at a public Kindergarten. 5.46% of the students have temporarily suspended their school attendance. Almost one out of ten students have

repeated a grade at Middle School (8.93%) or High School (8.38%). 31.69% of the students attended the Vocational type of school both in the 1st and 2nd grade of High School, while 8.56% of the students attended the General type of school in the 1st grade of High School and chose to attend the Vocational type of school in the 2nd grade of High school. 11.84% of the students chose the 'Mechanics' Sector during their studies in the 2nd grade of Vocational High school, 7.29% of the students chose the 'Administration' Sector, 5.1% of the students chose the 'Electrical Engineering' Sector, 4.55% of the students chose the 'Computer' Sector, 4.74% of the students chose the 'Health care' Sector and 3.83% of the students chose the 'Geoponics' Sector.

FIGURE 1



Factorial map of 1st factor and 2nd factor. Active, illustrative variables and clusters are denoted in black, red and blue, respectively

The second group includes 36.08% of the students in the sample. This group is mainly made up of students whose parents possess a medium level of 'institutionalized' cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986, 1994), since their fathers and mothers are High School graduates (82.17% and 79.46%, respectively) and Postsecondary Education graduates (7.17% and 9.69%, respectively). The students' fathers and mothers hold clerical positions in the public or private sector (28.68% and 32.95%, respectively) or are employed in commercial occupations (21.9% and 8.33%, respectively). 95.74% of the students are natives. Furthermore, 93.99% of the students started their school career at a public Kindergarten. None of the students have repeated a grade or have stopped their school attendance at some point. Just over eight out of ten students (81.01%) attended the General type of school in the 1st grade of High School and almost half of the students (49.61%) chose the Orientation Group of Positive Studies in the 2nd grade of High School.

The third group includes 20.42% of the students in the sample. This group includes students whose fathers and mothers possess a high level of 'institutionalized' cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986, 1994), since they are Higher Education graduates (88.36% and 93.84%,

respectively). In addition, the majority of the students' parents hold mainly high-status occupations. More specifically, 26.37% of the fathers and 22.26% of the mothers hold administrative scientific positions in the public or private sector, 14.73% of the fathers and 34.93% of the mothers are teachers, 21.58% of the fathers and 12.67% of the mothers hold higher scientific positions, and 9.25% of the mothers are employed in health care occupations. Almost all the students (95.21%) are natives and 28.77% of the students started their school career at a private Kindergarten. None of the students have repeated a grade or have stopped their school attendance at some point. In addition, over nine out of ten students (93.15%) attended the General type of school in the 1st and 2nd grade of High School and almost six out of ten students (58.56%) chose the Orientation Group of Positive Studies in the 2nd grade of High School.

Finally, the fourth group consists of 5.10% of the students in the sample. This group includes students whose parents have a very large volume of 'institutionalized' cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986, 1994), since their fathers and mothers are Postgraduate Diploma holders (78.08% and 72.6%, respectively). The parents of students in this particular group are mainly employed in high-status occupations. More specifically, 26.03% of the fathers and 16.44% of the students' mothers hold positions in the health care sector, 15.07% of the fathers and 9.59% of the mothers hold higher scientific positions, 17.81% of the fathers and 19.18% of the mothers hold administrative scientific positions in the public or private sector, and 24.66% of the fathers and 42.77% of the mothers are teachers. 98.63% of these students are natives. Also, 35.62% of the students attended a private Kindergarten. 93.15% of the students attended the General type of school in the 1st grade and 2nd grade of High School. Moreover, 69.86% of the students chose the Orientation Group of Positive Studies in the 2nd Grade of High School.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

From the processing and analysis of the research data the following findings arise:

The national origin of the students' families, and in particular their immigrant background, as well as the differentiated educational level of their parents, seem to contribute significantly to the shaping of the students' school career. This finding is consistent with the findings of relevant studies that reveal the impact of these socio-demographic factors on the formation of the students' educational choices which then define their educational career (see: Thomas & Webber, 2009; Trusty, Ng, & Plata, 2000).

The students who participated in the research are placed in four groups in which the characteristics of their families' social background are presented. The first group of students, whose parents have lower educational qualifications, tends to show more 'deviations' in terms of the characteristics that compose the social profile of their family members in relation to the other three groups (Bourdieu, 1977, 2006). More 'vicinities' in terms of the social characteristics of the students' families are found between the third and fourth group (parents who hold Higher Education degrees and Postgraduate Diplomas) which displays an almost 'homotropic' system of educational choices that leads them to a homogeneous school career. However, the second group of students seems to follow a relatively similar school career despite the variations in the volume of their parents' 'institutionalized' cultural capital and their occupational status in relation to the other two groups of students (third and fourth group) whose parents have high educational qualifications (Bourdieu, 1977, 1986, 1994, 2006).

In particular, the first group, which emerged from the statistical analysis of the research data, includes students whose parents have a low volume of 'institutionalized' cultural capital and

hold low-status occupations (Bourdieu, 1986, 1994). About two out of ten students, like their parents, have an immigrant background. The overwhelming majority of these students have followed a course of public education, ranging from Kindergarten to the 2nd grade of High School. Approximately three out of ten students show a continuous course of study at the Vocational type of school in the 1st and 2nd grade of High School, while almost one in ten students show discontinuities in their school career. As the findings of a series of studies show, Vocational Education schools tend to bring together students who display lower school performance and who come mainly from less-favored social strata whose parents usually have lower educational and occupational status (see: El-Hamidi, 2006; Kostopoulos, 2001; Meer, 2007; Sidiropoulou-Dimakakou, 1993).

The second group includes students whose parents hold a medium level of 'institutionalized' cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986, 1994). The overwhelming majority of these students are of native origin. Moreover, almost all of the students in this group seem to have followed a course of public and general education without showing discontinuities in school attendance. Nearly half chose the Orientation Group of Positive Studies in the 2nd grade of High School.

The third group is composed of students whose parents have a high level of 'institutionalized' cultural capital and are employed in high-status occupations (Bourdieu, 1986, 1994). Almost all of the students in this group are of native origin. None of the students show discontinuities in school attendance. One in three students started his/her school career by attending a private Kindergarten. The overwhelming majority of students chose the General type of school in the 1st and 2nd grade of High School and the system of their educational choices in the 2nd grade of High School is 'shaped' by their choice of the Orientation Group of Positive Studies.

The fourth group includes students whose parents have a very large volume of 'institutionalized' cultural capital and whose occupations are high in the social hierarchy (Bourdieu, 1986, 1994). The overwhelming majority of these students are of native origin. Nearly one in three students began their schooling in a private Kindergarten, followed by a public school. As shown by some research findings, attending either a public or a private school tends to lead students to an almost undifferentiated successful school career (see: Horowitz & Spector, 2005), while other studies highlight the possibility of a more successful career being formed during attendance at a private school (see: Sander, 1997; Stevans & Sessions, 2000). Almost all the students in this group attended the General type of school in the 1st and 2nd grade of High School. Almost seven out of ten students chose the Orientation Group of Positive Studies in the 2nd grade of High School.

The above groupings, which outline the formation of the students' school career at General and Vocational High School, reveal a 'class' character in the two types of High School (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977, 1996), which is governed by a 'style distinction' linked to the social origin of the students' families (Bourdieu, 1979). More specifically, the Vocational High School tends to have a greater concentration of students from less-favored social strata, who have more frequent discontinuities in their school attendance – expressed either through type of school-change in the 1st and 2nd grade of High School, or through a temporary interruption of school attendance and/or the repetition of a grade at Middle School or High School – and whose parents have a lower volume of 'institutionalized' cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986, 1994), in comparison with the General High School. This finding largely agrees with the findings of related research which reveal a link between the social profile of students and choosing to attend the Vocational High School. These are, in particular, students from less privileged socio-economic backgrounds

whose parents usually have low educational qualifications (see: Chatzikyriakou & Askouni, 2018; El-Hamidi, 2006).

Finally, from this study we arrive at the following conclusions:

- The national origin of the students' families, and in particular their immigrant background, as well as the differentiated 'institutionalized' cultural capital of their parents (Bourdieu, 1986, 1994) seem to contribute decisively to the formation of the students' school career, which is determined by their specific educational choices.
- In the context of shaping the students' school career, a 'class' character is presented, which is indicated by the social composition of the students attending the General and Vocational High School in relation to the differentiated 'institutionalized' cultural capital of their parents and their occupational status. In particular, the tendency towards an over-concentration of students from less privileged socio-economic environments, whose parents have a lower volume of 'institutionalized' cultural capital and are employed in occupations of lower social status, at the Vocational High School, underlines this 'intensity' of class 'boundaries' which are mainly found in this type of High School (Bourdieu, 1979, 1986, 1994; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977, 1996).
- It could therefore be argued that the school career of the students in the sample, which intersects in the two types of High School (General/Vocational), tends to be shaped by the influence of the specific social characteristics that make up the profile of the students' families and which are identified by their class habitus, which leads students to different educational choices and outlets (Bourdieu, 1977, 2006).

The findings of this research are interesting because they reveal the factors that contribute to the shaping of the students' school career in General and Vocational High Schools in Greece and which at the same time reflect their school career on the basis of each type of High School. Similar research on a larger scale both in Greece and in other countries abroad would be useful for revealing the factors that contribute to the shaping of the students' school career in relation to their educational system and their cultural particularities.

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APPENDIX

TABLE 4

Multiple correspondence analysis results: categories' coordinates with contributions and correlations to the first two factors

			Coordinates of categories		Contributions of active categories		Cosine2 of active categories	
Categories	**Rel. weight**	**Distance from origin**	**Factor 1**	**Factor 2**	**Factor 1**	**Factor 2**	**Factor 1**	**Factor 2**
ACTIVE VARIABLES								
NATIONAL BACKGROUND								
Immigrants All (Students and Parents)	1.25	10.44	-1.383	-0.489	**7.574**	1.271	0.183	0.023
Immigrant Parents	0.42	33.05	0.009	0.233	0.000	0.097	0.000	0.002
Natives All (Students and Parents)	12.62	0.13	0.137	0.041	0.746	0.089	0.141	0.012
EDUCATION OF FATHER								
Primary School	1.69	7.46	-0.816	-0.555	**3.565**	2.210	0.089	0.041
Middle School	2.66	4.38	-0.952	-0.546	**7.638**	3.373	0.207	0.068
High School	5.64	1.53	-0.213	0.563	0.809	**7.600**	0.030	0.207
Postsecondary Education	0.58	23.66	0.692	1.010	0.879	2.516	0.020	0.043
Higher Education	3.19	3.48	1.155	0.168	**13.484**	0.384	0.383	0.008
Postgraduate Diploma	0.53	25.98	1.938	-3.606	**6.302**	**29.295**	0.144	0.501
EDUCATION OF MOTHER								
Primary School	1.39	9.29	-0.949	-0.727	**3.962**	3.126	0.097	0.057
Middle School	2.30	5.22	-1.020	-0.631	**7.585**	3.895	0.200	0.076
High School	5.98	1.39	-0.259	0.515	1.270	**6.764**	0.048	0.191
Postsecondary Education	0.60	22.83	0.308	0.996	0.181	2.532	0.004	0.043
Higher Education	3.43	3.17	1.149	0.228	**14.354**	0.755	0.417	0.016
Postgraduate Diploma	0.59	23.24	1.843	-3.395	**6.350**	**28.901**	0.146	0.496
KIND OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AT NURSERY SCHOOL								
Public	12.81	0.12	-0.159	0.061	1.023	0.200	0.218	0.032
Private	1.48	8.66	1.375	-0.525	**8.860**	1.733	0.218	0.032
TRAJECTORY SECONDARY EDUCATION DISCONTINUITY								
No Discontinuity	13.98	0.02	0.042	0.019	0.078	0.021	0.079	0.016
Yes Discontinuity	0.31	45.13	-1.893	-0.854	**3.518**	0.961	0.079	0.016
REPEAT GRADE MIDDLE SCHOOL								
Yes Repeat grade	0.49	28.18	-1.883	-1.022	**5.503**	2.174	0.126	0.037
No Repeat grade	13.80	0.04	0.067	0.036	0.195	0.077	0.126	0.037
REPEAT GRADE HIGH SCHOOL								
Yes Repeat grade	0.47	29.43	-1.995	-0.990	**5.926**	1.959	0.135	0.033

No Repeat grade	13.82	0.03	0.068	0.034	0.201	0.067	0.135	0.033
ILLUSTRATIVE VARIABLES								
GENDER								
Female			0.070	0.030			0.377	0.039
Male			-0.060	-0.020			0.377	0.039
OCCUPATION OF FATHER								
Managerial positions in the service sector			1.350	-0.760			0.625	0.149
Higher scientific staff			1.260	-0.150			0.710	0.008
Health care			1.590	-1.980			0.417	0.483
Teachers			1.280	-0.650			0.739	0.143
Administrative scientific staff in the public or private sector			1.260	-0.060			0.655	0.001
Clerical staff in the public or private sector			-0.080	0.550			0.012	0.372
Technicians			-0.490	0.120			0.730	0.034
Security corps			0.570	0.170			0.465	0.032
Commerce			-0.020	0.370			0.002	0.376
Unskilled craftsmen			-1.020	-0.640			0.523	0.153
Farmers			-0.790	-0.240			0.770	0.053
Unemployed			-0.440	0.010			0.371	0.000
OCCUPATION OF MOTHER								
Managerial positions in the service sector			1.670	-2.260			0.343	0.470
Higher scientific staff			1.350	-0.250			0.778	0.021
Health care			1.220	-0.490			0.807	0.095
Teachers			1.180	-0.340			0.758	0.046
Administrative scientific staff in the public or private sector			1.230	-0.140			-0.068	0.007
Clerical staff in the public or private sector			-0.210	0.500			0.079	0.324
Technicians			-0.360	0.210			0.323	0.081
Security corps			0.800	0.470			0.386	0.098
Commerce			-0.110	0.370			0.029	0.266
Unskilled craftswomen			-1.100	-0.620			0.640	0.151
Farmers			-0.920	-0.470			0.619	0.118
Housewives			-0.490	0.010			0.817	0.000
Unemployed			-0.220	0.140			0.426	0.118
TYPE OF HIGH SCHOOL (1ST GRADE-2ND GRADE)								
General-General			0.210	0.050			0.713	0.031
General-Vocational			-0.580	-0.200			0.428	0.038
Vocational-Vocational			-0.670	-0.150			0.736	0.026
CHOICE AT 2ND GRADE HIGH SCHOOL								
Humanities Studies			0.080	0.100			0.156	0.151
Positive Studies			0.290	0.020			0.861	0.003
Geoponics			-0.430	-0.040			0.274	0.002

Administration			-0.520	-0.160			0.488	0.034
Electrical Engineering			-0.800	-0.090			0.578	0.005
Mechanics			-0.780	-0.250			0.609	0.046
Shipping Occupations			-0.470	0.180			0.307	0.032
Computer			-0.850	-0.540			0.497	0.149
Health care			-0.560	-0.020			0.735	0.001

Bolded numbers denote an important contribution of the category to the Factor.
Underlined numbers denote that category coordinate is significantly different from zero.

TABLE 5

Description of the clusters by categories with statistically significant higher presence in the cluster

Variables	**Categories**	**% of the category in the cluster**	**% of the category in the sample**	**% of the cluster in the category**	**Value-Test**
Cluster 1/4 (38,39%)					
NATIONAL BACKGROUND	Immigrants All (Students and Parents)	21,31	8,74	93,6	13,59
EDUCATION OF MOTHER	Primary School	25,14	9,72	99,28	16,49
EDUCATION OF FATHER	Primary School	29,33	11,82	95,27	16,72
EDUCATION OF MOTHER	Middle School	41,53	16,08	99,13	21,96
EDUCATION OF FATHER	Middle School	46,63	18,6	96,24	22,39
OCCUPATION OF FATHER	Unskilled craftsmen	16,58	6,57	96,81	12,5
OCCUPATION OF MOTHER	Unskilled craftswomen	13,84	5,45	97,44	11,46
OCCUPATION OF FATHER	Farmers	25,32	12,66	76,8	11,2
OCCUPATION OF MOTHER	Farmers	8,01	3,57	86,27	7,05
OCCUPATION OF FATHER	Technicians	34,97	24,06	55,81	7,48
OCCUPATION OF MOTHER	Housewives	43,17	28,88	57,39	9,28
KIND OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AT NURSERY SCHOOL	Public	98,73	89,65	42,28	9,94
TYPE OF HIGH SCHOOL (1ST GRADE-2ND GRADE)	Vocational-Vocational	31,69	18,6	65,41	9,85
REPEAT GRADE MIDDLE SCHOOL	Yes Repeat grade	8,93	3,43	100	9,5
REPEAT GRADE HIGH SCHOOL	Yes Repeat grade	8,38	3,29	97,87	8,8
TRAJECTORY SECONDARY EDUCATION DISCONTINUITY	Yes Discontinuity	5,46	2,17	96,77	6,84
TYPE OF HIGH SCHOOL (1ST GRADE-2ND GRADE)	General-Vocational	8,56	5,45	60,26	3,9
CHOICE AT 2ND GRADE HIGH SCHOOL	Mechanics	11,84	6,29	72,22	6,62
CHOICE AT 2ND GRADE HIGH SCHOOL	Computer	4,55	2,45	71,43	3,84
CHOICE AT 2ND GRADE HIGH SCHOOL	Electrical Engineering	5,1	3,15	62,22	3,13
CHOICE AT 2ND GRADE HIGH SCHOOL	Administration	7,29	4,97	56,34	3,02
CHOICE AT 2ND GRADE HIGH SCHOOL	Health care	4,74	3,01	60,47	2,82
CHOICE AT 2ND GRADE HIGH SCHOOL	Geoponics	3,83	2,31	63,64	2,79

Cluster 2/4 (36,08%)					
NATIONAL BACKGROUND	Natives All (Students and Parents)	95,74	88,32	39,11	6,92
EDUCATION OF FATHER	High School	82,17	39,51	75,04	25,41
EDUCATION OF MOTHER	High School	79,46	41,89	68,45	22,05
EDUCATION OF FATHER	Postsecondary Education	7,17	4,06	63,79	4,24
EDUCATION OF MOTHER	Postsecondary Education	9,69	4,2	83,33	7,56
OCCUPATION OF FATHER	Commerce	21,9	13,78	57,36	6,48
OCCUPATION OF MOTHER	Commerce	8,33	5,24	57,33	3,73
OCCUPATION OF FATHER	Clerical staff in the public or private sector	28,68	14,06	73,63	11,67
OCCUPATION OF MOTHER	Clerical staff in the public or private sector	32,95	17,69	67,19	11,07
KIND OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AT NURSERY SCHOOL	Public	93,99	89,65	37,83	4,1
REPEAT GRADE MIDDLE SCHOOL	No Repeat grade	100	96,57	37,36	6,27
REPEAT GRADE HIGH SCHOOL	No Repeat grade	100	96,71	37,31	6,12
TRAJECTORY SECONDARY EDUCATION DISCONTINUITY	No Discontinuity	99,81	97,83	36,81	4,17
TYPE OF HIGH SCHOOL (1ST GRADE-2ND GRADE)	General-General	81,01	75,94	38,49	3,34
CHOICE AT 2ND GRADE HIGH SCHOOL	Positive Studies	49,61	45,24	39,57	2,44
Cluster 3/4 (20,42%)					
NATIONAL BACKGROUND	Natives All (Students and Parents)	95,21	88,32	22,01	4,34
EDUCATION OF FATHER	Postsecondary Education	7,19	4,06	36,21	2,72
EDUCATION OF FATHER	Higher Education	88,36	22,31	80,88	28,76
EDUCATION OF MOTHER	Higher Education	93,84	23,99	79,88	30,23
OCCUPATION OF FATHER	Administrative scientific staff in the public or private sector	26,37	6,78	79,38	12,97
OCCUPATION OF MOTHER	Administrative scientific staff in the public or private sector	22,26	6,5	69,89	10,65
OCCUPATION OF FATHER	Teachers	14,73	5,03	59,72	7,41
OCCUPATION OF MOTHER	Teachers	34,93	11,19	63,75	12,8
OCCUPATION OF FATHER	Higher scientific staff	21,58	5,8	75,9	11,19
OCCUPATION OF MOTHER	Higher scientific staff	12,67	3,36	77,08	8,48
OCCUPATION OF FATHER	Security corps	14,04	6,08	47,13	5,69
OCCUPATION OF MOTHER	Health care	9,25	3,43	55,1	5,32
KIND OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AT NURSERY SCHOOL	Private	28,77	10,35	56,76	10,32
TYPE OF HIGH SCHOOL (1ST GRADE-2ND GRADE)	General-General	93,15	75,94	25,05	8,41
REPEAT GRADE MIDDLE SCHOOL	No Repeat grade	100	96,57	21,14	4,24
REPEAT GRADE HIGH SCHOOL	No Repeat grade	100	96,71	21,11	4,13
TRAJECTORY SECONDARY EDUCATION DISCONTINUITY	No Discontinuity	100	97,83	20,87	3,17
CHOICE AT 2ND GRADE HIGH SCHOOL	Positive Studies	58,56	45,24	26,43	5,05
Cluster 4/4 (5,10%)					

NATIONAL BACKGROUND	Natives All (Students and Parents)	98,63	88,32	5,7	3,09
EDUCATION OF FATHER	Postgraduate Diploma	72,6	3,71	100	18,9
EDUCATION OF MOTHER	Postgraduate Diploma	78,08	4,13	96,61	19,41
OCCUPATION OF FATHER	Health care	26,03	2,03	65,52	8,88
OCCUPATION OF MOTHER	Health care	16,44	3,43	24,49	4,56
OCCUPATION OF FATHER	Teachers	24,66	5,03	25	5,8
OCCUPATION OF MOTHER	Teachers	42,47	11,19	19,38	6,98
OCCUPATION OF FATHER	Higher scientific staff	15,07	5,8	13,25	2,82
OCCUPATION OF MOTHER	Higher scientific staff	9,59	3,36	14,58	2,36
OCCUPATION OF MOTHER	Administrative scientific staff in the public or private sector	19,18	6,5	15,05	3,63
OCCUPATION OF FATHER	Administrative scientific staff in the public or private sector	17,81	6,78	13,4	3,15
KIND OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AT NURSERY SCHOOL	Private	35,62	10,35	17,57	5,89
TYPE OF HIGH SCHOOL (1ST GRADE-2ND GRADE)	General-General	93,15	75,94	6,26	3,76
CHOICE AT 2ND GRADE HIGH SCHOOL	Positive Studies	69,86	45,24	7,88	4,23