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DIFFERENCES IN SOCIAL BACKGROUND, STUDY CHOICE MOTIVATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION EXPERIENCE BETWEEN PRE-SERVICE CLASS TEACHERS AND PRE-SERVICE SUBJECT TEACHERS

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Abstract

Considering that the disregard in teacher profession seems to be an observed problem in contemporary western societies which can result in a deficit of teachers, it is important to research reasons for enrolment into faculties of teacher education, factors which create a resistance towards the teacher education and teaching profession and possible differences between pre-service subject and pre-service class teachers related to these issues. Thus, the purpose of this research was to examine the differences in social background (level of human, financial, and social capital), motivation for selection of program of study and the experience of studying in higher education between pre-service class teachers and pre-service subject teachers. Theoretical background of research was based on Coleman's theory of social mobility (1988) and the theory of motivation (Watt & Richardson, 2007). A quantitative research design was employed, and the survey was conducted. Sample comprised 455 pre-service (subject and class) teachers studying at the University of Zagreb, Croatia. The results of Welch ANOVA test showed that pre-service subject teachers possess a higher level of financial and human capital, more often are extrinsically motivated in choosing the program of study and have more positive experiences of studying than pre-service class teachers. The results of logistic binary regression showed that participants are more likely to select the subject teaching profession (instead of class teaching profession) if they take into consideration status and financial benefit of their future occupation more frequently, if, on average, they spend more money and if they have more family members who held university degrees. Findings led to the conclusion that programs of study for the education of subject teachers are more prestigious which is not in line with the Coleman's theory of social mobility (1988) but are closer to the theory of cultural reproduction (Bourdieu, 1986).

Keywords*: pre-service class teachers, pre-service subject teachers, social background, study choice motivation, study experience, quantitative research.*

Introduction

Conforming to the theory of social mobility (Coleman, 1988), social capital (quality of the relationships within a family and educational institutions) can compensate the deficit in the possession of financial and human capital (parent's educational level) and can help an individual of a lower socio-economic status achieve high educational aims which would otherwise be difficult to attain (compared with individuals of a high socio-economic status). Adhering to and expanding Coleman's conceptual foundation and operationalization of various types of capital,

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numerous research have been carried out, among which the influence of the mentioned types of capital on the selection and enrolment into programs of study, success in programs of study, etc. (e.g. Rogošić, 2016). Findings have shown that, following the average grade in high school, the strongest predictors of enrolment into first-choice programs of study are components of an individual's social and financial capital (Rogošić, 2016). What is more, research results have shown that various components of social capital such as the quality of relationships between students and teachers and students and peers had a positive effect on enrolment of a desired program of study (e.g. Mozie-Ross, 2011; Parcel, Dufur, & Zito, 2010; Shumba & Naong, 2012) followed by the quality of family relationships (e.g. Bait-Almal, 2012; Dryler, 1998; Simmons, 2011). Research conducted on a sample of students in the final grades of high school, have shown that the influence of family, friends, teachers and peers are important factors in the selection of the teaching profession (Lai, Chan, Ko, & So, 2005). Often, the type of school and the setting where a student attends high school (rural/urban) are significant predictors of educational aspirations. For example, Ristić Dedić & Jokić (2014) have found that in Croatia, programs of study in the area of pedagogy (which in addition to pedagogy programs of study include programs of study for the education of primary school teachers and preschool teachers) are dominated by students coming from vocational schools. In addition to that, high school students coming from rural areas often get lower scores on exams which are required when enrolling a program of study (Hu, 2003; Klepač 2016). Therefore, the probability that they enrol second choice programs is greater, which is often the case with enrolment at faculties of teacher education (according to research by Richardson & Watt, 2006). Numerous research have confirmed the strong influence of the financial and human capital of the family (level of education of family members) on the selection of program of study, i.e. future occupation according to which children of more educated and more affluent parents more frequently enrol desired and more prestigious programs of study (e.g. Doolan, 2009; Pishidam & Zabihi, 2011)

Edmonds, Sharp & Benefield (2002) have given an overview of research which focuses on examining motivation for the teaching profession which can be transferred to intrinsic (interest for the subject, contribution to the community, liking work with children, etc.) and extrinsic (financial income, possibility of advancement, free time, etc.). In addition to the traditional separation into intrinsic and extrinsic motivation when selecting program of study, some authors (e.g. Čudina-Obradovic, 2008, Richardson & Watt, 2006 etc.) have observed that a frequent reason for enrolling programs of teacher education is the inability to enrol another program of study so the teaching profession is often chosen as the alternative. Furthermore, a number of students in teacher education programs of study, in a research conducted by Watt and Richardson (2007), have not seen themselves in the teaching profession in the future. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the extent to which pre-service teachers find their studies to be fulfilling experiences, i.e. whether their program of study can help them realize their personal potentials.

Based on the analysis of scientific publications focused on educational research (available at Google Scholar, ERIC and Science Direct), published in the period between 2005 and 2015, Gole et al. (2015) have emphasized that the majority of authors claimed that the most important factors in selecting a teacher profession (subject teaching and class teaching) were intrinsic motivation (Bick Har, 2012; Low et al., 2011; Roness & Smith, 2010), status and financial benefit of the future profession to a lesser extent (Bick Har, 2012; Chong & Low; 2009; Chung & Yi-Cheng, 2012), and negative factors such as the inability to select any other program of study (e.g. Cross & Ndofirepi, 2015). Also, education of parents was a better predictor for educational aspirations of individuals than financial capital (according to Hossler & Maple, 1993).

Differences in social background among students of class teacher's education and subject teaching programs of study in Croatia and wider have not been frequently researched. Gole, Smith, Holmes and Fray (2015) have claimed that future research should, to a greater extent, examine the impact of social background on the selection of the class teaching/subject teaching

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profession. Watt et al. (2012), in their recommendations for future research have pointed to the necessity for further research on the differences in motivation between pre-service class teachers and pre-service subject teachers from rural and urban areas as well as research of those of higher and lower economic status. Based on the mentioned analyses (Rogošić, 2016) on selecting of program of study, we assumed that pre-service subject teachers in the Republic of Croatia possess a higher level of various types of capital (social, human and financial) than pre-service class teachers. Subject teaching faculties can be considered more prestigious and attractive than faculties for class teachers' education considering they enable education for a greater spectrum of professions[3] where earnings can be significantly higher than earnings in the teaching profession. Therefore, there is a higher probability that subject teaching faculties are enrolled by individuals of a higher socio-economic status as they more frequently have higher achievements in high school (Baranović, Jugović, & Puzić, 2012) which are considered as best predictors of enrolment into the desired program of study (Rogošić, 2016).

Furthermore, differences in motivation for enrolment into programs of study between students of different faculties in Zagreb have been established. For example, students at the Faculty of Science (subject teaching module) took into consideration status and financial benefit of the future occupation more than their colleagues who selected the profession of class teacher (Rogošić, 2016). Considering that the disregard in the class teacher and subject teacher profession seems to be an observed problem in contemporary western societies (Richardson & Watt, 2006), which can result in a deficit of teachers in primary education and subject teaching, it is important to research reasons for enrolment into faculties for teachers in primary schools and secondary/high schools as well as factors which create a resistance towards the teacher education and teaching professions. Furthermore, educational achievements such as enrolment into desired program of study and successful completion of program of study determine the career path of individuals and their economic situations which indirectly influence social productivity and standard of living. Understanding factors which influence the selection of the class teacher/subject teacher profession (i.e. social and educational differences between mentioned groups of pre-service teachers) can be the foundation for creating new employment policies in primary education teaching and in subject teaching and for the development of more quality programs of study for their education.

Considering that a large number of sociological research which have examined factors of enrolment into programs of study were mostly focused on the socio-economic status, while educational literature is abundant in papers where enrolment into programs of study is related exclusively to various types of motivation, in this research the tendency was to comprise sociological and educational factors of enrolment into program of study.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The aim of this research was to examine the differences in social background (level of human, financial, and social capital), motivation for selection of program of study and the experience of studying in higher education between pre-service class teachers and pre-service subject teachers. One of the objectives was to examine the extent to which intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, human, financial and social capital predict enrolment into a faculty for class teachers/subject teachers. Specifically, the following research questions were put forward to guide the research: 1. Are there any significant differences between pre-service class teachers and pre-service subject teachers in social background, study choice motivation and study experience? 2. If exist, what are the differences? 3. To what extant mentioned variables contribute to the explanation of enrolment into the two programs of study (class teachers/subject teachers)?

Hypotheses were based on previous research (overview is presented in the introduction):

Hypothesis 1: Pre-service subject teachers have a greater level of financial, human and social capital than pre-service class teachers.

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Hypothesis 2: Pre-service subject teachers take into consideration status and financial benefit when selecting programs of study more than pre-service class teachers.

Hypothesis 3: Pre-service class teachers more frequently select their future profession because of their limiting factors (such as inability to enrol other programs of study) than pre-service subject teachers.

Hypothesis 4: Pre-service subject teachers have more positive experiences of studying than pre-service class teachers.

Hypothesis 5: The socio-economic status (human and financial capital of the family) and status and financial benefits of the future profession are best predictors of selection of programs of study and are positively correlated with the selection of subject teacher profession.

Methodology of Research

General Characteristics

In order to answer research questions quantitative research design (i.e. survey research) was employed and research was carried out in Zagreb, capital of Croatia.

Results of the research can be generalized (applied) on the population of pre-service teachers at the University of Zagreb which is the largest of the six Croatian universities with the faculties of subject and class teacher education.

Procedures and Data Collection

Research was approved by a Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Teacher Education in Zagreb (University of Zagreb). Participants were asked to voluntarily participate in the scientific research project from which they could withdraw at any moment. They were also informed that the survey and their data were to remain anonymous. In agreement with university teachers, appointments before or after lectures were scheduled when the 20-minute survey took place.

Sample

Although the original plan was to include almost the entire population of pre-service class and pre-service subject teachers studying at the University of Zagreb (respondents who were in the 4th and 5th year of the integrated or in the 1st or 2nd year of the graduate program of study; as pre-service subject teachers chose teaching module in that period of study) into this study, it turned out to be impossible for students to fill out the questionnaire in the range of more than 60%. Namely, one part did not attend the classes when the survey was conducted. According to the data of the total number of students in the mentioned years of study, submitted by the administrative staff from the faculties of teacher education, the sample covered 60% of the class and subject pre-service teachers in the 4th or 5th year of the integrated or in the 1st or 2nd year of the graduate program of study which represents the mentioned population well. The research included 455 students at eight faculties of the University of Zagreb. Table 1 shows the distribution of the participants according to the faculty they attend. The research comprised 25% men and 75% women who were between 22 and 29 years of age, on average 24 years of age.

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Table 1. Distribution of participants according to the faculties they attend (*N*=455).

	f	%
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences	64	14.1
Faculty of Science	67	14.7
Centre for Croatian Studies	75	16.5
Academy of Music	8	1.8
Academy of Fine Arts	23	5.1
Faculty of Kinesiology	65	14.3
Catholic Faculty of Theology	35	7.7
Faculty of Teacher Education	118	25.9
Total	455	100

Operationalization of Variables and Instruments

The operationalization of the used concept of human, financial and social capital is theoretically grounded in Coleman's theory (1988) and empirically tested in before (Rogošic, 2016). Financial capital was measured according to the sum of monthly income of the student's family, the student's monthly expenditure and financial support from parents (i.e. whether parents support the student financially or not). The human capital indicator was the final level of parents' education, so the students could select one of the eight offered answers (1- did not complete primary school to 8- master's degree or doctoral degree) and the number of brothers or sisters who have a higher education. For measuring social capital (available in family and in school), two scales created by Rogošic (2016) were used: (1) *Quality of family relationship scale* and (2) *Quality of relationships in high school scale.* Factor analysis of the mentioned scale (1) resulted in two factors: *Relationship with parents* - subscale's Cronbach's alpha was 0.76 and *Relationship with other family members* - subscale's Cronbach's alpha was 0.77. The factor analysis of scale (2) resulted in two factors: *Relationship with teachers and students* - subscale's Cronbach's alpha was 0.76 and *Relationship with the school's support staff* - subscale's Cronbach's alpha was 0.87. The questionnaire contained items which referred to attending school in the village / town or city and attending grammar school (dichotomous variables with answers *yes* and *no*). Extrinsic motivation was tested using the scale *Factors of enrolment into program of study* (Rogošić, 2016) and the factor analysis resulted in two factors: (2) *Financial and status benefit of the future profession* – subscale's Cronbach's alpha was 0.73 and (2) *Limiting factors of selecting program of study* (such as low educational achievements) – subscale's Cronbach's alpha was .64. Intrinsic motivation was measured with one statement *I enrolled the program of study because I was extremely interested in the subject of study* (Rogošić, 2016). Questions which aimed at testing social capital (of the family and educational institutions) and motivation for selecting a program of study were constructed in the way the participants had to mark the extent to which they agreed with the statements (they were offered answers on a five-point Likert scale). The experience of studying was examined in a manner according to which students had to provide the extent to which they considered a statement *Studying helps me realize my own potentials* (taken from Rijavec & Golub, 2017) accurate (the answers were offered on a 7-point Likert scale).

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Data Analysis

Welch ANOVA test which is used when there are differences in the size of examined sub-samples (as in total 118 pre-service class teachers and 337 pre-service subject teachers participated in this research) examined the existence of significant differences between pre-service class teachers and pre-service subject teachers with respect to motivation in selecting program of study, social background and study experience. Considering that this is a case of testing differences between two (sub)samples, the Welch ANOVA is equivalent to the Welch t-test. Descriptive statistics was calculated for all variables in the questionnaire, separately for each of the sub-samples (pre-service class teachers and pre-service subject teachers) in order to get a detailed insight into the differences in arithmetic means between the mentioned groups of participants. Using logistic regression analysis, the extent to which intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, human, financial and social capital predict enrolment into a faculty for pre-service class teachers/ subject teachers was examined. The program SPSS 19 was used for the statistical analysis of data.

Results of Research

Table 2 shows the results of the Welch ANOVA test of differences in social background, study choice motivation and study experience between pre-service class teachers and pre-service subject teachers.

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Table 2. Welch ANOVA test of differences in social background, study choice motivation and study experience between pre-service class teachers and pre-service subject teachers (*N*=455).

Variables	Sub-samples	M	SD	Welch ANOVA			
				df^y	df^w	*F*	*p*
Mother's education	Class Ts	4.237	1.412	1	250.12	9.661	.001
	Subject Ts	4.790	1.741				
Father's education	Class Ts	4.271	1.539	1	221.691	5.920	.12
	Subject Ts	4.700	1.681				
Number of brothers and sisters with a higher education	Class Ts	.288	.524	1	289.973	8.841	.001
	Subject Ts	.504	.744				
Sum of monthly income in a family	Class Ts	2.992	1.128	1	215.392	1.668	.186
	Subject Ts	0.154	1.195				
Average monthly expenditure of a student	Class Ts	1233.475	662.230	1	352.942	22.974	.001
	Subject Ts	1765.074	1138.732				
Relationship with parents	Class Ts	3.711	.770	1	209.196	25.707	.001
	Subject Ts	3.281	.799				
Relationships with other family members	Class Ts	3.427	.997	1	176.352	24.953	.001
	Subject Ts	2.961	.826				
Relationship with teachers and students	Class Ts	3.533	.864	1	199.941	1.739	.194
	Subject Ts	3.414	.841				
Relationships with support staff in school	Class Ts	2.264	1.132	1	180.829	1.455	.264
	Subject Ts	2.133	.971				
Intrinsic motivation in selecting program of study	Class Ts	4.424	.890	1	194.834	.201	.663
	Subject Ts	4.383	.841				
Limiting factors in selecting program of study	Class Ts	1.339	.540	1	239.744	6.114	.008
	Subject Ts	1.501	.639				
Status and financial benefit of the future profession	Class Ts	1.635	.633	1	290.102	42.023	.001
	Subject Ts	2.216	.898				
Realization of personal potential through program of study	Class Ts	4.883	1.421	1	195.135	10.302	.002
	Subject Ts	5.352	1.344				

df^y=degrees of freedom between groups; df^w= degrees of freedom within groups

The results show statistically significant differences (p<.001) between pre-service class teachers and pre-service subject teachers in the following: 1. the level of financial capital they possess; 2. characteristics of social capital of the family, 3. with respect to which they took status and financial benefit of the future profession into consideration when selecting programs of study. Furthermore, findings showed statistically significant differences (p≤.01) between pre-

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service class teachers and pre-service subject teachers in: 1. human capital; 2. in the perception of accomplishing their own potential through the program of study; 3. with respect to limiting factors (such as low educational achievement in high school) which determined enrolment into desired program of study.

The logistic regression comprised five steps. The order of insertion of variables into the regression analysis was aligned with the findings of the previous research (overview is presented in the introduction). Types of motivation comprised the first step of the regression analysis. This was followed by the education of parents in the second step. The third step included financial capital while the fourth step included high school's social capital. The final step comprised social capital of the family. Social capital was included as the final steps of the analysis in order to test whether it significantly predicts enrolment into one of the two types of faculties after controlling the students' socio-economic status and motivation. With respect to selecting the program of study (for class teachers or for subject teachers) the convenience index in the logistical regression indicated the adequacy of the model which included only variables of motivation as opposed to the null model. In the first step, a significant contribution to explaining the dependent variable was the status and financial benefit of the future profession (B=.960; Wald χ^2=35.465; p<.001) and between 10.4 and 15.2% of the variance was explained (Cox & Snell R^2=.104; Nagelkerke R^2=.152). In the second step, mother's degree of education contributed significantly to explaining the dependent variable (B=.180; Wald χ^2=4.170; p <.05), while financial and status benefit of the future profession maintained the significant contribution to explaining the dependent variable (B=1.012; Wald χ^2=37.009; p<.001) and explained between 14.3 and 20.9% of the variance (Cox & Snell R^2=.143; Nagelkerke R^2=.209). In the third step, total monthly expenditure of students emerged as a significant predictor of dependent variable (B=.001; Wald χ^2=19.556; p< .001), where status and financial benefit of the future profession, as a type of motivation, maintained a significant contribution (B=1.075; Wald χ^2=38.687; p< .001). Mother's degree of education in the third step lost its predictive value (B=0,162; Wald χ^2=3.050; p=.081) and between 19.2 and 28.1% of the variance was explained (Cox & Snell R^2=.192; Nagelkerke R^2=.281). In the fourth step, neither one of the included variables showed a significant contribution to explaining the dependent variable, but the significant predictors from the previous step maintained their significant contributions to explaining enrolment into the faculty for class teachers/faculty for subject teachers. In the fourth step between 20.6 and 30.2 % of the variance was explained (Cox & Snell R^2=.206; Nagelkerke R^2=.302). In the fifth step, a significant contribution to explaining the dependant variable was given by relationship with parents (B=-.466, Waldχ^2=6.777; p<.001) and relationship with other members of the family (B=-.509; Wald χ^2=9.388; p<.01). Predictors from the previous step maintained their significant contribution to explaining the dependent variable in the last step (see Table 3) which shows entire regression model which explains between 25.1 and 36.9% of the variance (Cox & Snell R^2=.251; Nagelkerke R^2=.369) and accurately classifies 79.1% enrolments into the teacher education programs of study (for subject and for class teachers). The value, sensitivity and specificities were greater than 50%, which is considered to be an acceptable model (according to Marôco, 2011).

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Table 3. Results of the binary logistic regression analysis (N=455).

	B	*S.E.*	Wald χ^2	*df*	*p*	Exp. *B*
Intrinsic motivation in selecting program of study	.004	.167	.001	1	.980	1.004
Limiting factors in selecting program of study	.306	.252	1.481	1	.224	1.358
Status and financial benefit of the future profession	1.112	.185	36.247	1	<.001	3.040
Mother's education	.130	.101	1.663	1	.197	1.139
Father's education	.127	.094	1.823	1	.177	1.136
Number of other family members with higher education degree	.831	.246	11.460	1	.001	2.297
Financial support of parents	.291	.338	.743	1	.389	1.338
Students' average monthly expenditure	.001	.000	16.771	1	<.001	1.001
Sum of monthly family income	-,360	.127	.082	1	.775	.964
Attending grammar school or other high school	.197	.302	.426	1	.514	1.218
Attending high school in village / city	-.048	.265	.033	1	.856	.953
Relationship with school support staff	-.186	.144	1,636	1	.201	.832
Relationship with teachers and students	-.503	.179	.086	1	.769	.949
Relationship with parents	-.466	.179	6.777	1	.009	.627
Relationship with other family members	-.509	.166	9.388	1	.002	.878
Constant	-.130	1.271	.010	1	.918	.878
Cox & Snell R^2	.251					
Nagelkerke R^2	.369					
Hosmer and Lemeshow Test:	χ^2=7.64; *df*=8; *p*=.343					
Classification	Total: 79.1 %					

Discussion

The findings indicate that pre-service class teachers and pre-service subject teachers differ with respect to the level of family human capital. Therefore, pre-service class teachers on average, had mothers with a lower education and fewer brothers and sisters who have completed higher education than pre-service subject teachers. In addition to that, the level of financial capital is also lower among pre-service class teachers considering that, on average, they spend 1233KN per month while pre-service subject teachers, on average, spend 1764KN per month, which shows that future class teachers are, on average, of a lower socio-economic status. However, pre-service class teachers evaluated their relationship with parents and other family members (components of social capital) as better than did pre-service subject teachers. Accordingly, Hypothesis 1 (*Pre-service subject teachers have a greater level of financial, human and social capital than pre-service class teachers*) is only partially confirmed. It is assumed that the high level of social capital of pre-service class teachers was necessary for compensating the deficit in financial and human capital which enabled their continuation at the level of higher education and enrolment into a class teacher education program of study. In support to that there is the finding that the majority of the students in the area of pedagogy (among which are pre-service class teachers) in Croatia completed vocational schools (Ristić Dedić & Jokić, 2014) which are frequently attended by children of lower socio-economic status (Klepač, 2016). Therefore, future class teachers needed a higher level of social capital to overcome the negative effects of socio-economic status on educational achievement, which most likely is the result of differences between these two tested samples. Although relevant literature indicated that more educated and affluent parents have, on average, a better relationship with their children from

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those of a lower socio-economic status (Bogenschneider, 1997; Hill et al., 2004), the results of this research show the opposite. That is, close relationships within a family can play a key role in the process of social mobility and help children of a lower socio-economic status realize their educational goals, which is in agreement with Coleman's theory (1988).

Pre-service subject teachers more frequently took into consideration the status and financial benefit of the future profession which is in agreement with previous research (Rogošić, 2016) and which proved Hypothesis 2. (*Pre-service subject teachers more frequently take status and financial benefit into consideration when selecting a program of study from pre-service class teachers*). In a quantitative research carried out by Rogošić (2016), students at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (pre-service subject teachers) claimed to have enrolled the teaching program because it was 1. *Easier than the translation module*, 2. *They could, after completion of study and certain examinations become court interpreters, etc*., and 3. *Because they have more opportunities for employment*. It has been assumed that the situation is similar among students at other faculties where pre-service subject teachers are educated. Although there is no statistical difference in the income between class teachers and subject teachers in Croatia, pre-service subject teachers took more account of the status and financial benefit of the future profession because the completion of study offers, besides education, more and different possibilities of employment. However, the limiting factors in selecting a program of study were more typical for pre-service subject teachers which is not in agreement with the initial assumptions and Hypothesis 3. (*Pre-service class teachers more frequently than pre-service subject teachers have chosen their future profession due to limiting factors such as inability to enrol other programs of study)* was not confirmed.

Pre-service subject teachers to a greater extent than pre-service class teachers have found that studying helps them achieve their own potentials which confirmed Hypothesis 4 (*Pre-service subject teachers have more positive experiences of studying than pre-service class teachers).* It is assumed that this finding can be explained by the nature of educational content of the program for subject teachers which is more complex than content in the program for the education of class teachers, which implies more intellectual challenges and possibilities for individual development. Therefore, it is logical to expect that pre-service subject teachers, to a greater extent than their colleagues (pre-service class teachers), find that studying enables the realization of their potentials. Students in the scientific area of *education*[3] in the USA have showed significantly lower results on CLA tests[4] than their colleagues studying in other areas of science (e.g. natural sciences, social sciences, and similar) which is explained with the fact that educational studies for teacher education place more emphasis on practical skills which are necessary for future class teachers than on their intellectual development (Arum & Roksa, 2011). However, future class teachers should have some intellectual standards just as other students do. In line with the said, it is not preferable that their knowledge of the subject matter is limited, as research indicated (e.g. Ball, 1990; Ma, 1999). Rather, it is necessary that their knowledge of the subject matter is advanced for the purpose of greater teaching efficiency (Ambrose, 2004) and development of personal potentials which higher intellectual challenges enable. Hypothesis 5 (*The socio-economic status (human and financial capital) and status and financial benefits of the future profession are best predictors of selection of programs of study and are positively correlated with the selection of subject teacher profession.)* is also confirmed. Although pre-service class teachers and pre-service subject teachers differ with respect to many components of social background and motivation, their choice of study is best explained by status and financial benefit of the future profession and financial capital, followed by human and social capital of the family. Taking into consideration the standpoint that the subject teaching profession in Croatia is more prestigious than the class teacher profession (with respect to greater possibility of employment it offers), the logistic regression shows that socio-economic status is in the function of social reproduction, according to which children of better educated and affluent parents enrolled more prestigious faculties (according to Bourdieu's theory, 1986). On the other hand, according to the results of this research, the increase in the level of

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family social capital increased the probability that the students select a program of study for class teachers. Such a finding cannot be interpreted in the spirit of Coleman's theory of social mobility (1988) as quality relationships in the family did not manage to overcome influences of socio-economic status. Regardless of the high level of social capital, students selected a less prestigious program of study (faculty for class teachers). Still, we are of the opinion that the level of social capital of students, in this case, did not work as a mechanism of social mobility when referring to the type of faculty chosen (for subject teachers/for class teachers), but it most likely worked as a mechanism of social mobility in deciding to continue education at the higher level and successful enrolment into a program of study. In that sense, social capital can help individuals of a lower socio-economic status to continue their education at the tertiary level but does not help overcome the influences of human and financial capital when referring to the selection of prestigious/less-prestigious professions.

Conclusions

Pre-service subject teachers were of higher socio-economic status and to a greater extent studying helped them to realize their own potential (their faculties provides higher intellectual challenges then faculties for class teachers) which led to the conclusion that faculties of subject teacher education are more prestigious. Furthermore, pre-service subject teachers took status and financial benefit into consideration more often when selecting a program of study because in the future they saw themselves in the professions more profitable then teaching profession (which is not typical for the class teachers). Such situation could lead to a greater disadvantage of subject teachers compared to the class teachers. Also, for the purpose of greater teaching efficiency it would be desirable to increase the intellectual challenges faced by pre-service class teachers. Accordingly, it is necessary to adjust education policy (attract more pre-service subject teachers to choose the teaching profession after graduation) and improve educational programs of the faculties for class teachers (make the program content more demanding in order to have high quality class teachers).

Research findings do not support the theory of Coleman as social capital failed to overcome the impact of socioeconomic status on educational choices (though they have a higher level of social capital pre-service class teachers enrolled the less prestigious program of study).

Pre-service subject teachers more often have chosen their future profession due to limiting factors such as inability to enrol other programs of study. This finding indicates that future research should focus on examining the first choices of pre-service subject teachers, i.e. whether they frequently differ with respect to the subject of study (e.g. Mathematics teacher as 1st choice / history teacher as 2nd choice) or whether students were, on average, more frequently enrolled teaching faculties because limiting factors (weaker school achievement or lack of financial means) did not allow them to enrol other programs which do not imply a teaching profession (e.g. Law, medicine, etc.). In that case, the established differences between the tested (sub)samples would be more transparent and inclined for interpretation.

Notes

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[2] Students at subject teaching faculties in the Republic of Croatia are educated for various occupations which is not the case with prospective class teachers. For example, a teacher of Croatian language (in subject teaching) can, at a future time, work as a proof-reader, a physical education teacher can work as a personal trainer, etc. which those who finish a faculty for class teachers do not have such possibilities.

[3] Considering the differences which exist between educational systems in Croatia and the USA, students studying in the area of education (in the USA) are equivalent to students studying in the area of pedagogy in Croatia (which implies faculties for class teachers) while subject teachers in Croatia study in different areas (natural science, social science etc.)

[4] CLA tests examine the extent to which higher education institutions contribute to the development of critical thinking, analytical abilities and written communication skills among students of different faculties.

[5] Paper is based on dataset also used in doctoral dissertation: Rogošić, S. (2016). Socijalni kapital i obrazovna postignuća studenata nastavničkih fakulteta Sveučilista u Zagrebu [Social Capital and Educational Achievements of Students Studying at the Faculties of Teacher Training at the University of Zagreb]. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Zagreb, Croatia.

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