

EXPLORING THE PERSONAL FACTORS INVOLVED IN THE DECISION OF HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM RURAL AREAS TO PURSUE UNIVERSITY STUDIES

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Received: July 10, 2014

Accepted for publication: July 31, 2014

Abstract. The objectives of the study were to assess a set of personal factors influencing the transition to university and other forms of post-secondary education in 160 rural high-school students, with special emphasis on: (a) the pattern of career intentions and attitudes towards higher education; (b) the degree to which these attitudes are related to academic interests, measured with Jackson Vocational Interest Survey, intellectual ability and to personality traits, measured with DECAS Personality Inventory (a Romanian validated instrument for the Five-Factor model of personality); (c) the last objective was to study the association between the self-reported interests, interests measured with the JVIS and the actual implementation of the decision to follow an academic major. The personal factors were assessed a year prior to the faculty admission. Attitudes towards higher education, indecision, intellectual level and academic satisfaction were correlated with the decision to follow university. These conclusions are useful for school counselors from rural high-schools, in the design of their vocational interventions.

Key words: adolescent; academic interest; university transition.

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