

PREVENTION OF EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING REPORT ON THE NATIONAL SITUATION

Interviews in Greece

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Interviews with Pupils

Interview 1

Pupil 1

Name: Dimitris

Age 17 (Lyceum Grade III)

Place of residence: town (Patras)

1. What factors make you think of dropping out from school?

I wanted to work and be financially independent. I wanted to go to a Technical Lyceum, but my father did not let me go. I wanted to drop out but I promised my grandmother last summer, when I had finished the Lyceum Grade I, that I would continue. I did not want her to find out that I lied to her.

2. What are your main problems (in relation to school)? For instance, do you consider the course of studies to be difficult? Does it concern your relationship with your classmates? Is it lacking interest in schooling?

I do not understand the lessons, nor do I try to. I want to become an electrician-mechanic and the school does not provide such knowledge to me. I shall go to the O.A.E.D as soon as I finish

3. What is your relationship with your teachers like?

It depends on the teachers. As I used to wear ear-rings and odd clothes in the Lyceum Grade I they looked down on me, I am at the same time a bad pupil. Yet, some of them like me.

4. What is your relationship with your parents like?

Good, especially with my father. The only thing I do not discuss with them is my relationships with women.

5. Do you think that the school tries in some way to meet your needs?

No, since it does not offer the kind of knowledge I need for the field in which I want to work.

6. What or who could convince you to stay in school and complete your class course?

My grandmother. I love her and would not like to disappoint her. Although I thought many times of dropping out from school, I knew that she would be upset to hear that and that is why I carried on.

7. What is the job you would like to do?

That of an electrician - mechanic.

8. Do you think that the school subjects you are taught prepare you for that job?

No.

9. Do you think that your consistent attendance of your school course increases your chances of finding a good job?

No, because what I want is to be obtained from the OAED.

10. Do you think that your teachers are interested in your option and that they want to support you to achieve what you want to do in your life?

They discuss with me what I want to do and some of them have even helped me with my marks.

Interview 2

Pupil 2

Name: Medin

Age: 16

Place of residence: town (Patras)

1. You are the best to talk about the causes of school dropout. Can you describe the reasons why you dropped out from school?

I had a lot of absences; I used to work as a DJ in a shop and was late in getting up in the morning. I really wanted to go to a Technical Lyceum, but I came here because my friends came too.

2. How long (approximately) did it take you before making that decision?

In December, a letter came to my home stating that I had absences. By Christmas, I was told that I had 60 unjustifiable absences. My mother had given reasons for a lot of them and could not do that any more. I had decided then to stop and join the Technical Lyceum the following year.

3. What were your relationship with your teachers and your classmates like?

My relationship between myself and my teachers was indifferent. I did not bother them and they did not bother me. As to my classmates, I had three friends from them and the remaining ones do not attract my interest in any way although I am a sociable person.

4. How did they react when they heard that you would drop out from school?

My friends told me to go back and that the school might possibly rub out my absences, but I did not want.

5. In which way did the school try to meet your needs?

Nothing of the sort happened.

6. Apart from your teachers, did you contact any other educational officials – specialists, within or without the school?

No.

7. What is your relationship with your parents like?

Good, although we do not talk much.

8. How did they react when they realized that you would drop out from school?

My father told me off but did not really insist, since I work and earn my pocket money. They, too, did not carry out any studies.

9. What do you think could the school do to convince you not to drop out from school?

If they told me that they could help me, that, in spite of my absences, they would let me complete the school year.

10. What, do you think, could your parents have done to convince you not to drop out from school?

To have begged the school to let me finish the school year.

11. With the experience you have acquired so far, do you think that you have made the right decision?

No; if I am not accepted in the Technical Lyceum next year, I shall return here and we will see what will happen.

12. What are your future plans for participation in some kind of educational or training program?

I would like to attend a sound engineering and music school but I do not know where such schools exist and whether I could join one of them now. I do not know where I could get advice. Do you know of any such school? Should I be a Lyceum graduate in order to be accepted? I can pay, is there any such school in Patras?

13. Do you think that your decision to drop out from school is to affect your future income and, if yes, in which way?

Yes, qualifications are important and that is why I am going to continue my schooling by next year in an attempt to complete it.

Interview 3

Pupil 3

Name: Nikos G.

Age: 21

Place of residence: town (Patras)

1. You are the best to talk about school dropout? Can you describe the reasons why you dropped out from school?

I did not want to study in a university. I wanted to open a car service workshop and, so, I decided to join a school. I wanted to do something together with my brother (we are twins). Besides, the lessons were difficult, although I could have coped with them.

2. How long (approximately) did it take you to make that decision?

I had decided about it from the start of Gymnasium Grade I, but I did not know how much would my parents press me and my brother to continue.

3. What was your relationship with your teachers and classmates like?

With some of the teachers who did not criticize my school performance I was in good terms. With some others I was at odds and sometimes ended up in the schoolmaster's office for punishment. With my classmates I had no problems. Admittedly, I was not very sociable.

4. How did they react when they heard that you would drop out from school?

Some of the teachers expected it as they used to tell my mother that it would be better if she sent her sons to a kind of technical school because they were not good enough for the Lyceum. As to my classmates, I lost track of them because they joined different Lyceums (Technical and General).

5. In which way did the school try to meet your needs?

I cannot say that the school helped me. The only thing it achieved was to alienate me from it because of the teachers' indifference about my weakness in learning. One thing, at least, that it achieved was to make me realize that I was not good enough for the General Lyceum. The bad thing was that they did not direct me towards the Technical Lyceum whereby I could have obtained a professional license for the work I do (electrician-mechanic).

6. Apart from your teachers, did you contact other educational officials-specialists within or without school?

No, I was angry with my teachers.

7. What is your relationship with your parents like?

Good, especially with my mother. With my father we talked rather about the essentials as he was more severe.

8. How did they react when they realized you would drop out from school?

My father accepted it because he was aware that we (myself and my brother) did not do well with our school performance. He wanted us to learn a trade. My mother wanted us to continue in the General Lyceum.

9. What, do you think, could the school do to convince you not to drop out from school?

To have explained to me how important it would be to complete, if nothing else, the Technical Lyceum. Because, when I realized that the Technical Lyceum Leaving Certificate was required in order to open a workshop of my own, I had to attend evening classes, while working at the same time. I went through a lot of difficulties.

10. What, in your opinion, could your parents have done to convince you not to drop out from school.

They should have compelled continue my schooling a Technical Lyceum. Who knows, I could have entered a Technical Vocational Institute.

11. With the experience you have acquired so far, do you think that you made the right decision?

No, I should have continued in the Technical Lyceum. My mother was right. I wasted time and it proved hard for me to work and study at the same time.

12. What are your future plans for participation in some educational or training program?
I finished, last year, the evening Lyceum in the specialization of my choice and I am now saving money to open my own workshop.

13. Do you think that your decision will affect your future income and, if yes, in which way?

Since I have completed it, however belatedly, no.

Interview 4

Pupil 4

Name: Nikos M.

Age: 18

Place of residence: town (Patras)

1. You are the best to talk about the reasons of school dropout. Can you describe the reasons that made you drop out from school?

I stood up to the teacher of Mathematics set course and I thought it would be better if I did not attend his classes. As a result, I lost the school year (hourly expulsions) and I just did not want to repeat the class while my friends would have gone ahead.

2. How long (approximately) did it take you to make that decision?

From the time of my conflict with the teacher involved, I realized that I was bound to lose the school year on account of absences. That happened during the first quarter of the school year.

3. What was your relationship with your teachers and classmates?

With my classmates my relationship was the best possible! But, also, with most of my teachers my relationship was good (apart, of course, with the teacher that I stood up to).

4. How did they react when they heard that you would drop out from school?

My classmates felt rather sad (because we were together since Gymnasium Grade III). The teachers, apart from three of them who approached me and showed interest in me, were indifferent.

5. In which way did the school try to meet your needs?

Some urged me to carry on, just that.

6. Apart from your teachers, did you contact any other educational officials-specialists within or without the school?

No.

7. What is your relationship with your parents like?

Perfect! The best possible!

8. How did they react when they realized that you would drop out from school?

Initially, they were upset and shouted at me. Subsequently, they supported me and at the school (when they were invited) they took my side.

9. What, do you think, could the school have done to have convinced you not to drop out from school?

Nothing more than what my three teachers did. Overall, they could have covered my absences giving me the chance to complete the class course.

10. What, in your opinion, could your parents have done to persuade you against dropping out from school?

My parents from the start were telling me to finish my schooling. They could not do anything more.

11. With the experience you have acquired so far, do you think you made the right decision?

No, I made a superficial decision. I should have talked to those teachers of mine who were willing to help me. I did not do that and I was wrong.

12. What are your future plans for participation in some educational or training program?
If I will have time left from my football training (this pupil has been distinguished in football), I will try to continue, under the OAED, with studies to become a car mechanic; otherwise I will join evening classes to get my school leaving certificate.

13. Do you think that your decision to drop out from school will affect your future income and, if yes, how?

If I don't continue my studies, it is clear that my income will not be high. Without a "paper", when my football career is over, I will be unable to do anything.

Interview 5

Pupil 5

Name: Tassos

Age: 19

Place of residence: town (Patras)

1. You are the best to talk about the reasons of school dropout. Can you describe the reasons why you dropped out from school?

Up to Gymnasium Grade III I was a good pupil (I was getting an average mark of about 17); in the Lyceum Grade I I failed in 6 lessons, as I did not study properly and did not care less. I found it hard to understand my lessons and no one helped me. I came from a different country (Albania) and while I I was suffering from dyslexia, the relevant certificate was not approved; I was hearing remarks about my origin and received indifference. I joined the evening Lyceum, but I did not make it because the timetable was hard to follow.

2. How long (approximately) did it take you to make that decision?

From the start up to halfway Lyceum Grade I (of the evening classes), when I dropped out because I was working for a bakery and could not cope any longer with the load.

3. What was your relationship with your teachers and classmates like?

My teachers were indifferent and I received rough treatment. My relationship with my classmates was good.

4. How did they react when they heard that you would drop out from school?

One or two of the teachers advised me to carry on and that I could do a lot of things. Those two only showed interest in me. My classmates urged me to continue and complete my schooling ("you have just two more school years, yes you can!").

5. In which way did the school try to meet your needs?

They erased my absences and were willing to let me pass the class

6. Apart from your teachers, did you contact any educational officials-specialists within or without the school?

No, none.

7. What is your relationship with your parents like?

Quite good, even though they do not understand certain things...; anyway, it is generally good. My parents are divorced and I have very little contact with my father. (I live with my mother and I met my father a few years ago... they divorced when I was a baby).

8. How did they react when they realized that you would drop out from school?

My father was not aware of it, I did not know him at the time. My mother tried to persuade me to continue my schooling, but when I explained to her the reasons she told me to do as I wanted.

9. What, do you think, could the school have done to persuade you against dropping out from school?

To have been less demanding, since they knew that I was working, to have allowed me more room. In my view there should be a program with less class hours for working children. In

particular, there should be special programs providing specialization in some trade; such program should be run within the General Lyceum and not the Technical Lyceum ensuring their value.

10. What, do you think, could your parents have done to persuade you against dropping out from school?

They should not have sent me out to work.....

11. With the experience you have acquired so far, do you think you had made the right decision?

No, but there was nothing to be done – I had no choice.

12. What are your future plans about participation in some educational or training program?

I want to go to a Technical Lyceum, by next year, to specialize as a car electrician and then sit the exams for entrance in a Department of Electrical Engineering at University level!!!

13. Do you think that your decision to drop out from school will affect your future income and, if yes, how?

Surely! With a degree it will be easier for me to find a job, I shall be more qualified and I may, as well, open a business of my own and earn more money for myself and my family (my future wife and children).