# THE IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL GUIDANCE ACTIVITIES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE NECESSITY OF KNOWING THE VOCATIONAL INTERESTS IN A DYNAMIC EUROPE

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**Abstract:**

*Strategy Europe 2020 aims to ensure an economic growth: smart, more efficient throught investment in education, reseatch and innovation; durable, by decisive orientation to a new economy with low-emisions of carbon dioxide and favorable to inclusion, by focusing on creating jobs and redcuing poverty. The priorites of the strategy will be achieved through five objectives, one which is linked to emplyment, namely: employment rate of 75% for population aged between 20 and 64 years.*

*Providing such rate of occupancy implies policies at microeconomical level, but we consider also at individual level. So the young, future employees must be properly trained, and have the right to be able to handle a job.*

*Current realities show that employers are interested in having by their side in accomplishing their goals, employees who are proactive, who improvise, who can cope with various demands in which they are involved, and respond positively to companies. They require a career choice to meet the vocational interests. Based on these issues, this paper aims to analyze the importance of knowing the vocational interests in school orientation by highlighting the correlation between the selected profile and personality of each. However, in this paper we try to show that school guidance is an early process and that if they knew their vocational interests, young people would be more decisive in the choice of future profession.*

*We believe that, if the counseling activites and school oriantation would be conducted in a professiona way, youth might focus on those occupations which best define them and also could access appropriate university programs with favorable effects on employment levels.*

***Keywords:*** *education, counseling and guidance, vocational interests, occupational profile, personality*

**JEL Classification:** J24

*"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."*
Nelson Mandela

## 1. Youth in Romania

Human Resources, addressed as a human capital are a powerful comparative advantage for countries that invest in this direction (Dindire L, 2013,). They are characterized by educational capital, defined by skills aquired by individuals in training school and beyond and by the biological capital represented by the physical abilities of individuals, often summarized by health (Rosca Gh.I, p.5).

The quality of human capital resources draws attention of national, regional and global authorities and to the need to develop strategies and policies good enough to ensure their efficient and effective use.

EU strategy of becoming an economy with a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth aims in human resources, **two objectives**: ***employment***: providing an employment rate of 75% among people aged 20 to 64 years, ***and in education***: 10% reduction in the rate of early school leaving and increasing to 40% the share of university graduates in the population aged 30-34 years. The two objectives demonstrate that investing in people is the only solution to economic problems, solution that provides growth and progress of a country.

If employment policies seek employment through active and passive measures, increase youth employment, education policy must be so constructed as to provide career education.

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### *1.1. Labor market situation of young people in Romania*

Employment and activity rates among young people in Romania were in 2012 among the lowest in the EU (23.9% and, 30.9%), while the youth unemployment rate was high, hovering at 22.7% in 2012 (European Commission, Brussels, 29.05.2015, COM 373 final, COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION on the National Reform Programme 2013 of Romania). According to Eurostat data, in 2013, the employment rate for the age group 20-64 years was 63.9%, up by 0.1 pp than previous year, standing at a distance of 6.1 pp from the national target for 2020 (National Reform Programme 2014, p. 30).

### *1.2. The situation of young people in the Romanian educational system*

The EU Council of Education estimated that in times when resources are limited, efficient and appropriate investments in areas that promote growth, such as education and training are a crucial component of economic development and competitiveness, which in turn , are essential for creating jobs. (Council Conclusions from 26 November 2012 on education and training in Europe 2020 - education and training contribution to recovery, growth and creating jobs 2012 / C 393/02 http: //eur-lex.europa. I / legal content / RO).

At national level the two European indicators on education have been translated into: early school leaving rate of 11.3% AND 26.7%; graduates in the population ranging in age from 30-34 years (OVERVIEW of Europe 2020 targets, http://ec.europa.eu/ europe2020/pdf/targets_en.pdf).

In Romania the degree of inclusion in education in 2011/2012 school population was 81% for the age group of 15-18 years and 50.3% respectively for the age group of 19-23 years and over.(Statistical Yearbook 2012. http://www.anofm.ro/files/situatie%20statistica %20somaj%20august%202014.pdf.)

Regarding the rate of early school leaving the National Report 2014 indicates a value of 18.4% in 2010 and 17.4% in 2012 (NRP 2014, the Romanian Government in April 2014, p. 37).

School dropout rate is also very high (table 1).

**Table no.1. Dropout rate in secondary education**

| Type | 2006/2007 | 2007/2008 | 2008/2009 | 2009/2010 | 2010/2011 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Secondary education | 3,3 | 2,9 | 2,4 | 2,2 | 3,2 |
| Vocational education | 8,2 | 8,5 | 8,3 | 8,6 | 19,8 |
| Post-secondary education and trades | 7,5 | 4,8 | 5,9 | 5,5 | 6,3 |

Source: Statistical Yearbook 2012, NIS, p.273

Regarding higher education, even if there is still not enough information to provide an accurate imagine of the dropout rate, the level is very high (table 2).

**Table no. 2. Situation of young people enrolled and university graduates**

| | 2006/2007 | 2007/2008 | 2008/2009 | 2009/2010 | 2010/2011 | 2011/2012 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Students enrolled | 785506 | 907353 | 891098 | 775319 | 673001 | 539852 |
| Graduates | 125499 | 232885 | 214826 | 191291 | 186900 | - |

Source: Statistical Yearbook 2012, p.263 and 268

We appreciate that there are multiple explanations for the high margin between the number of persons enrolled in some form of higher education and the number of graduates who are interested in: the low interest for preparation of the students, the low financial level that generates their inability to sustain, and the discovery of the incompatibility between the selected profile and what every young person wants. This last argument is the subject of our study considering that as far as school education system goes, together with the universitar one, they will pay more attention to school guidance and counseling activities so that students can choose career paths that represent them, thus reducing abandonment.

## 2. Aspects of advisory work and school

The specialists appreciate that the advice and guidance activity can provide the school a high external efficiency and adesired prestige, wanted by whole team of teachers. It should not be considered as an object of study or academic discipline in its everyday meaning, but as a ***range of applications, practical developments, experiences and attitudes to be learned and to be practiced in life*** (Jigău M., 2000).

The Declaration of the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance adopted in Paris in September 2001 estimated that advisory work and effective educational and vocational guidance can help individuals to realize their talent and potential and enable them to predict the activities that must follow in order to develop the essential skills to lead a professional, economic and social development and for them as individuals for the family, community and nation.

Association also believes that such advice and guidance menus as regular and continuous processes, do not limited themselves to single interventions. This activity accompanies and highlights the education carried throughout life and helps the individual to avoid periods of unemployment.

## 3. Research Methodology

This paper represents an exploratory research that was conducted in April 2013- 2014 and uses as a research method the quantitative method (questionnaire Holland) and the qualitative method. Investigation of vocational interests was made based using Holland questionnaire consisting of 120 questions, which describe different types of activities and skills. Establishing specific personality type, ESS will perform in relation to two criteria: the average final scores and frequency of a hierarchical place occupied by each of the six personality types in the structure pattern of interest, ie the first two types with the highest score recorded.

**The research purpose** is to highlight and emphasize how teenagers' interests determines the choices they make regarding their studies.

**In the current context there has been formulated the following hypothesis**: Assumming that the profile chosen by pupils, namely Mathematics-Informatics is corresponding to the Realistic (R) Investigative (I) and probably Conventional (C) personality profile and Philology Bilingual and Social Sciences profiles correspond to social scale (S) and Fantasy (F).

**The main research objective** is to develop profiles of vocational interests for both students of Mathematics and Informatics profile and for students of philological-Bilingual and Social Sciences, highlighting and comparing vocational profiles in order to grasp the differences.

The paper demonstrates the importance of counseling activities and school that can give students the correct image of vocational interests when choosing a career path.

## 4. Data analysis and findings

### Socioeconomic characteristics of the subjects

The research had as subjects 52 pupils from XII class aged 18-19 years, of both sexes from National College of Computer Science Matei Basarab Rm. Valcea.

**Table no. 3. Characteristics of subjects investigated**

| Category | Features | Nr. | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sex | men | 10 | 20 |
| | women | 42 | 80 |
| | total | 52 | 100 |
| Age | 18 | 34 | 65 |
| | 19 | 18 | 35 |
| | total | 52 | 100 |

| Category | Features | Nr. | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Profile secondary | Mathematics Informatics | 10 | 19 |
| | Bilingual Philology | 30 | 58 |
| | Social Sciences | 12 | 23 |
| | total | 52 | 100 |

Figure no 1 shows that 20% of respondents are male, the other 80% are female.

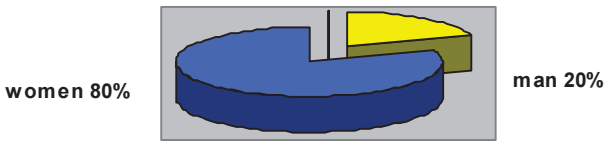


**Figure No. 1. Share of subjects by gender**

Taking into account demographic characteristics, subjects were divided into two age groups: group 18 years- 65% of subjects, 34 people, and the group of 19 years and 35% of subjects, 18 persons.

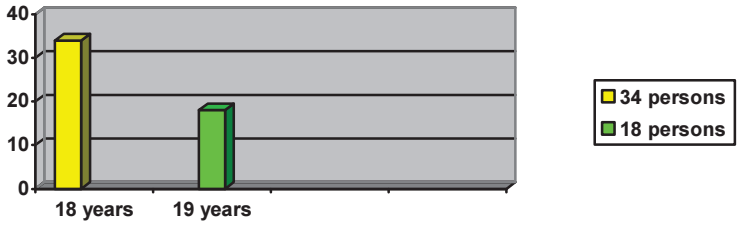


**Figure No. 2. Share of subjects by age**

Regarding the studies, it is important that 19% of students are from Mathematics-Informatics profile, (ie 10 students), 30 students, 58% are bilingual Philology profile, while 23%, 12 students are Social Sciences.

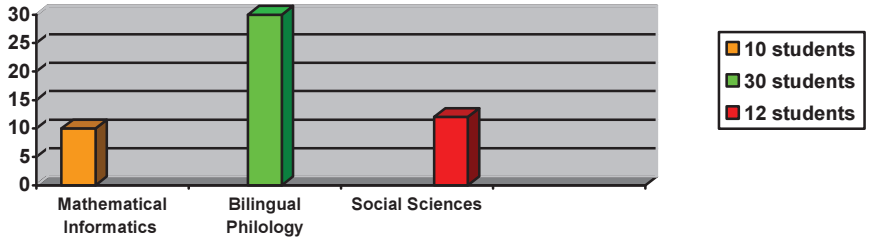


**Figure No. 3. Share of subjects based on secondary profile**

After processing the information the following results emerged

► *Mathematical Informatics Profile*

**Table no. 4. Results personality types mathematics computer**

| Personality types | Nr. Subjects |
|---|---|
| 1. Realistic | 0 |
| 2. Investigator | 1 |
| 3. Artistic | 2 |
| 4. Social | 1 |
| 5. Enterprising | 4 |
| 6. Conventional | 2 |

According to Table 4 and Figure 4 we observe that the type E (entrepreneur) occurs with the highest frequency, which requires subjects preference for using verbal skills, leadership skills acquisition, persuasion, interpersonal, carrying out activities involving initiative, activities buying and selling, running a business.

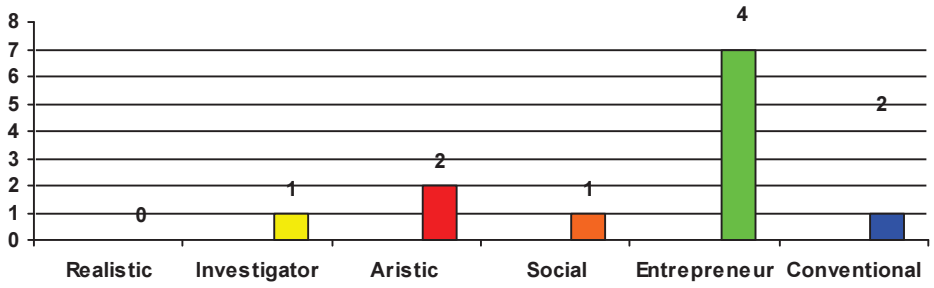


**Figure no. 4. The distribution of personality types for mathematics computer profile**

**Table no. 5. Variations of personality types for mathematics-informatics profile**

| Variants of types | Code Personality | Number of subjects |
|---|---|---|
| Investigator | -Investigator- Entrepreneur | 1 |
| Artistic | -Artistic Investigator<br>-Artistic- Entrepreneurial | 1<br>1 |
| Social | -Social artistic | 1 |
| Entrepreneur | -Entrepreneur Social<br>-Entrepreneur -Conventional<br>-Entrepreneur-Investigation | 2<br>1<br>1 |
| Conventional | -Conventional- Entrepreneur | 2 |

After correlating goals it was resulted according to the table and figure No.5 No.5 the following personality types.

Dominant personality type according to Table 3 and Figure no. 5 specific to students with the mathematics-informatics profile. What appears with the highest frequency of interest in the patterns of this category is the E (Entrepreneur) with the following: E-S; E-C, E-I, followed by the type C (conventional) with the C-E variant. The following places are occupied by type A (artistic) variants A-E, A-I. On 3rd appears I (investigator) variant I-E.

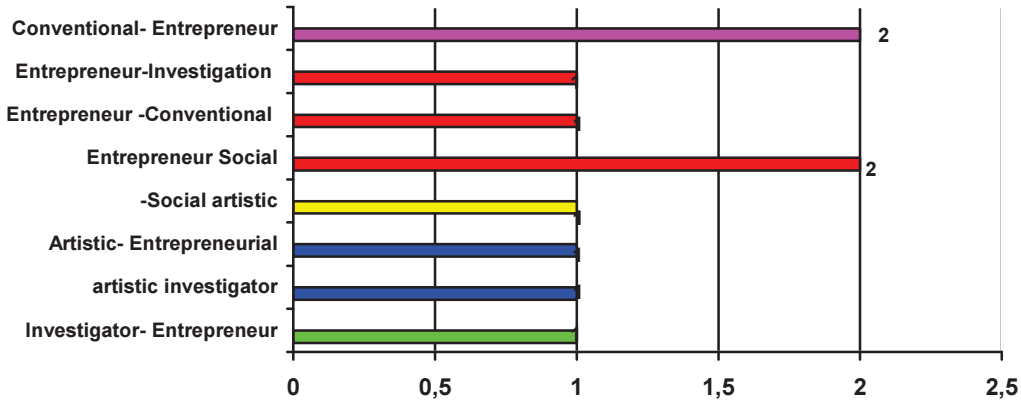


**Figure 5. Variations of personality types for the mathematics-informatics profile**

**a)** Taking into account the type with the highest frequency, E (Entrepreneur) resulted in the following: E-S; E-C, E-I.

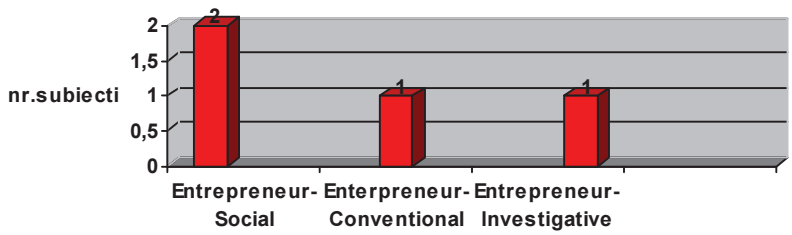


**Figure No. 6. Variants of type E (entrepreneur)**

For **E-S** version (**Entrepreneur-Social**) opted two subjects, both females of 18 and 19 years. E-S (Social Entrepreneur), subjects assumed inclination towards sales activities, management, social services. Also this profile does not match the profile chosen by students.

For **E-C (Enterpreneur-Conventional**) opted for a male subject. This variant involves inclination towards management activities, sales activities, data analysis, for administrative activities.

**For E-I (Entrepreneur-Investigative**) opted for a female subject. This variant involves the inclination of students towards management activities, sales activities, exact sciences.

**b)** For type **A (Artistic**) according to figure 5 we see the following variants revealed:

**-A-I (Artistic-Investigator**). Opted for a female subject. This variant involves literary activities, sciences, art activities.

**-A-E** (**Artistic-Entrepreneur**). This variant requires managerial skills, artistic inclination . The subject chosen was a male subject.

**c)** For the **Social** type there is the variant **S-A (Social-Artistic**), opted for a female subject. This variant involves activities aimed at social, educational work, musical activities, performances.

**d)** For type **Investigator** the following variant resulted with a single female subject:

**-I-E (Investigator-Entrepreneur**) assuming exact sciences, management, technical activities.

**e)** For the type C (conventional) the following variant CI (conventional entrepreneur) opted by two female subjects. They prefered activities aimed at data analysis, management and administrative activities.

► *For philological bilingual*

**Table no. 6. Results of personality types for bilingual philology profile**

| Personality types | Nr. Subjects |
|---|---|
| 1. Realistic | 0 |
| 2. Investigator | 5 |
| 3.Artistic | 4 |
| 4. Social | 6 |
| 5. Entrepreneur | 14 |
| 6.Conventional | 0 |

According to Table 6 and Figure 7 we see that for secondary profile it is predominate type E (entrepreneur), which requires subjects to have preference for using verbal skills, leadership skills acquisition, persuasion, interpersonal, carrying out activities involving initiative , buying and selling activities, running a business.

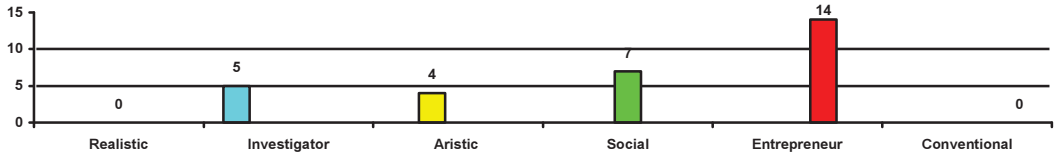


**Figure no. 7. The distribution of personality types from the results of the philological bilingual profile**

**Table no. 7. Variations of personality types for the philological bilingual profile**

| Variants of types | Code Personality | Nr. subiects |
|---|---|---|
| Investigator | -Investigator- Entrepreneur<br>-Investigator-Social | 2<br>3 |
| Artistic | -Artistic- Entrepreneur<br>-Artistic-Social | 1<br>3 |
| Social | -Social Artistic<br>-Social Entrepreneur | 2<br>5 |
| Entrepreneur | - Entrepreneur-Social<br>- Entrepreneur-Conventional<br>- Entrepreneur-Investigative<br>- Entrepreneur- Artistic | 4<br>4<br>3<br>3 |

After correlating scores with Table 7 and Figure No.8 the following personality types resulted.

✍ Dominant personality type in table 7 and figure no. 8 specific for bilingual philology student profile. What appears with the highest frequency of interest in the patterns of this category is the E (Entrepreneur) with the following:

**-E-A, (Entrepreneur-Artistic**). This variant assumes that subjects preferre activities like management and artistic activities.

**-E-I, (Entrepreneur-Investigative**). It Assumes management activities, sales activities, exact sciences. Opted for two male subjects and one female subject.

**-E-C, (Entrepreneur-Conventional**). This variant involves inclination of subjects in the area of management, sales activities, data analysis, activities administrative. Opted for three male subjects and one female subject.

**-E-S (Entreprenour-Social)** prefers management activities, sales activities, social services. Opted for three female subjects and one male subject.

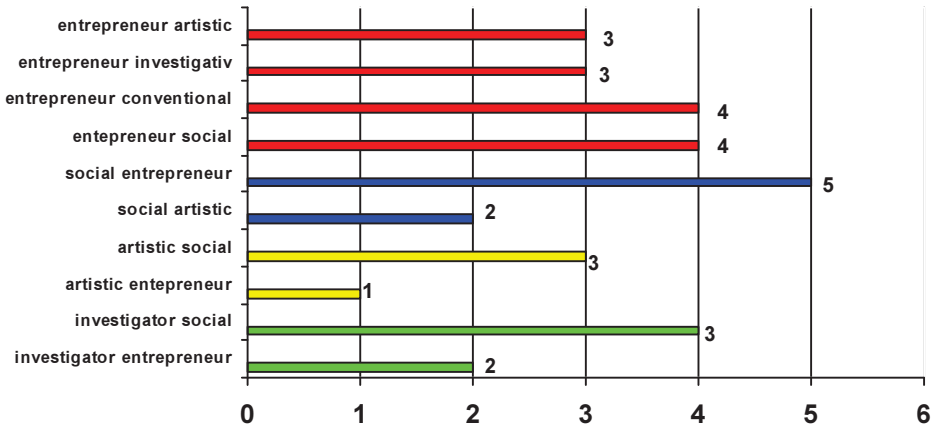


**Figure 8. Variations of personality types for philological bilingual profile**

The next place is occupied by the type **S (social)** with the following:

**- S-E, (Social-Entrepreneur**) prefer social services, activity management, sales activities. Opted for four female subjects.

**- S-A,(Social-Artistic)** prefer work in social services, educational work, musical activities, performances. Opted for two female subjects.

Type **I (Investigator)** with the following:

**-I-S, (Investigative-Social),** prefer the medico-dental, mathematical sciences, social services. Opted for two female subjects and one male subject.

**-I-E (Investigative-Entrepreneur)** prefer exact sciences, management, technical activities Opted for two female subjects.

Type **A (Artistic)** variants:

**-A-S, (Artistic-Social)** prefer work in social services, musical activities, educational activities. Opted for two female subjects and one male subject

**-A-E, (Artistic-Entrepreneur)** prefer organizing shows, managerial activities, artistic activities. Opted for a female subject.

► ***For social sciences profile***

**Table no. 8. Results of personality types for social sciences profile**

| Personality types | Nr. Subjects |
|---|---|
| 1. Realistic | 0 |
| 2. Investigator | 3 |
| 3.Artistic | 1 |
| 4. Social | 3 |
| 5.Entrepreneur | 3 |
| 6.Conventional | 2 |

According to Table 8 and Figure 9 we see that for this profile it predominates type **E (Entrepreneur), S (Social),** and **I (Investigator).** For type **E (Entreprenour)** there have been chosen three subjects, which implies preference for use of verbal skills, leadership skills acquisition, persuasion, carrying out activities, initiative, buying and selling activities, management of business.

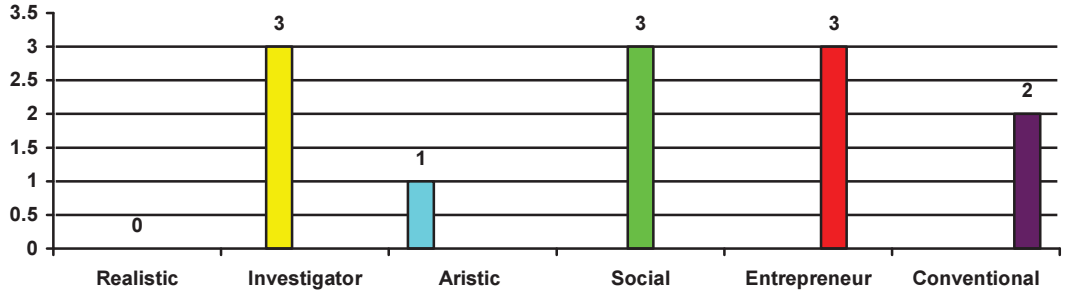


**Figure no. 9. The distribution of personality types for philological bilingual profile**

**Table no. 9. Variations of personality types for philological bilingual profile**

| Variants of types | Code Personality | Nr. subjects |
|---|---|---|
| Investigator | -Investigator-Entrepreneur<br>-Investigator-Social | 1<br>2 |
| Artistic | -Artistic-Social | 1 |
| Social | -Social Conventional<br>-Social Entepreneur | 1<br>2 |
| Entrepreneur | -Entrepreneur-Social<br>-Entrepreneur-Conventional<br>-Entrepreneur-Realistic | 1<br>1<br>1 |
| Conventional | -Conventional-Entepreneur<br>-Conventional-Investigator | 1<br>1 |

After correlating the scores with Table No.9 and No.10 the following personality types were shown.

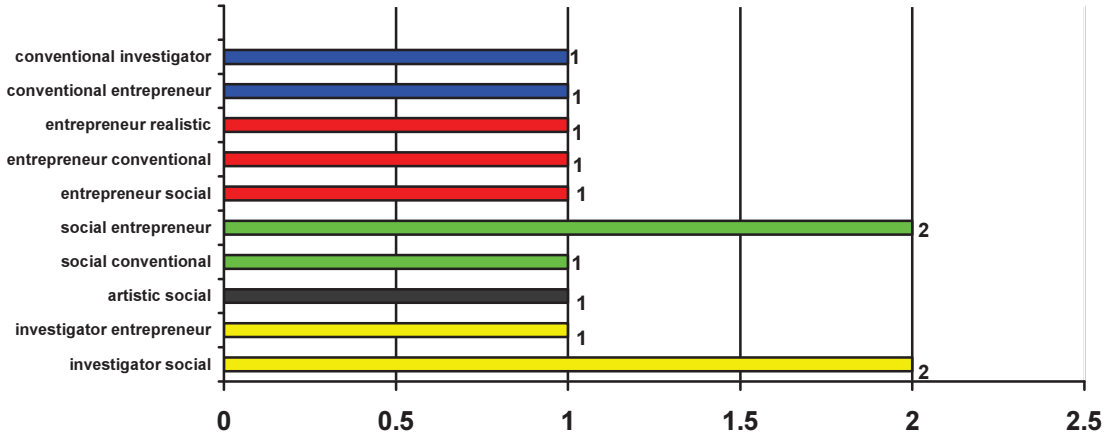


**Figure 10. Variations of the types of personality for social sciences profile**

As shown in Figure 10 the following choices resulted:

► Type **I (Investigator)** is presented with the following:

**-I-S, (Investigator-Social**), prefers activities like Medico-Dental, mathematical sciences, social services. For this type opted for two female subjects.

**-I-E, (Investigator-Entrepreneur)** preferrs activities in the sciences, management, technical domains opted for this variant a female subject.

► Type **A (Artistic),** with **A-S** variant (**Artistic-Social**), preferrs social, musical activities, educational activities. Opted for this variant a female subject.

► Type **S (Social**) withthe following variants:

**-S-E (Social Entrepreneur**) prefer social services, management, sales activities. Opted for this variant two female subjects.

**-S-C (Social-Conventional)** prefer the social service, administrative activities and management activities. Opted for this variant a female subject.

► Type **E (Entrepreneur**) variants:

**-E-S (Entrepreneur-Social)** prefer management activities, sales activities, social services Opted for this variant a female subject.

**-E-C (Entrepreneur-Conventional**) prefer management activities, sales activities, data analysis, administrative activities. Opted for this variant a female subject.

**-E-R (Entrepreneur-Realistic**) prefer management activities, craft-type activities, work with the public. Opted for this variant a male subject.

► Type **C (Conventional)** with:

**-C-E (Conventional-Entrepreneur)** prefer data analysis, administrative activities and management. Opted for this variant a female subject.

**-C-I (Conventional-Investigator)** prefer data analysis, exact sciences, administrative activities. Opted for this variant a female subject.

**Conclusions**

As it emerges from the survey, we see that the dominant personality in the philology-bilingual and mathematics-informatics is the Entrepreneur, which requires subjects preference for using verbal skills, leadership skills acquisition, persuasion, interpersonal activities ,initiative, involving the activities of buying and selling, running a business. For Social Sciences profile personality types that occur with the highest frequency are investigator, socialite andentreprenour, implying that subjects possess mathematical skills, are analytical, do not like the rules, they have verbal and interpersonal skills, they prefer driving activities. All these do not confirm the hypothesis from which we started, the other personality types having a low frequency, especially realist and conventional type, where we expected to prevail in mathematics- informatics profile.

We believe that educational and vocational guidance plays a vital role in maintaining of a company highly qualified and economically viable, but also in supporting economic development and social stability.

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