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The Application of Self-Determination Theory on Students' Career Choice and Learning Outcomes under the Multiple College Admission System

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Abstract

The multiple college admission system, one of the major recent educational reform policies in Taiwan, may exert a great impact on students' career choices and learning processes. This study examined if differences existed in students' career choices and learning outcomes when they were admitted through different admission channels. Utilizing the Taiwan Integrated Higher Education Database System, 18,566 students were traced from their entry to college in 2003, through their junior year in 2005 and on to their graduation in 2006. Statistical analysis including Chi-square test, ANOVA and MANOVA were conducted. The results showed that compared with their peers admitted through the "examination" channel, those admitted through the "application" channel tend to be more intrinsically motivated, more engaged in their academic work, have better learning outcomes and enjoy a higher degree of satisfaction. Self-determination theory was employed to infer and explain such results. The significance of the study is also discussed.

Keywords: multiple college admission system, self-determination theory, choice of college major, learning outcomes, academic engagement