

Why Did They Make More Efforts? -- Examining the Explanation of Academic Motivation and Resilience

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This study examined the prediction of competence beliefs, academic interest, career goal setting, and academic resilience on academic efforts in terms of social cognitive theory and self-determination theory. Out-of-school time for academic activities was used as the indicator of academic efforts. The 2005 freshman samples from the Taiwan Higher Education Data System were used, and only those from departments of mathematics, science, engineering, medicine, and science education in technology universities were analyzed. The participants were 10,749 freshmen. Student's t-test showed that the freshmen from national universities performed significantly greater academic efforts, competence beliefs, interest, and career goal setting than those from private universities. Cross-sample structural equation modeling showed that the prediction of academic interest, goal setting, and academic resiliency on academic efforts was significant among the samples from national universities as the same as among those from private universities. Competence beliefs predicted academic efforts indirectly through interest, goal, and resiliency. The prediction of competence beliefs on interest, college life plan, and academic resiliency was greater in the samples from private universities than in those from national universities. Freshmen who spent 4 hours or above in previewing, reviewing, and homework everyday were defined effortful, and those who did not spend any time were defined effortless. For private university freshmen, logit regression analysis showed that effortful ones performed greater academic interest, goal setting, and academic resiliency significantly than effortless ones, and that academic resilience was the most explanatory. In conclusion, compared with private college freshmen, national college ones made more efforts because of their greater academic interest and goal setting. Compared with their effortless colleagues, effortful freshmen from private universities spent more time in learning because of greater academic resiliency. The integration of motivation theories was discussed. Implications for counseling practices and further research were suggested.

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