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Are college rankings an indicator of quality education? Comparing Barron's and TEDS-M.

Blömeke, Sigrid (ed.) et al., International perspectives on teacher knowledge, beliefs and opportunities to learn. TEDS-M results. Dordrecht: Springer (ISBN 978-94-007-6436-1/hbk; 978-94-007-6437-8/ebook). Advances in Mathematics Education, 503-514 (2014).

Summary: Although students at more selective schools generally demonstrate greater academic performance, it is unclear whether the gains from attending an elite postsecondary institution are due to the quality of educational services provided, or merely from peer and/or selection effects. Employing data drawn from the US-TEDS study, we assess the relationship between college selectivity and the mathematics learning of future teachers controlling for previous SAT scores using two different models. In an institution-level analysis, gains in student knowledge are measured by the difference between standardized SAT scores and standardized mathematical content knowledge (MCK) scores. In a multi-level model institutional and student-level data are used to examine the effects of selectivity on MCK scores, including measures of course-taking and prior achievement. In both analyses we find that college selectivity has little relationship with added mathematical knowledge.

Classification: D20 B20 D60

Keywords: mathematics content knowledge; SAT; program quality; selectivity; lower secondary; course hours; course indicators

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