

Title: The relationship between homeschooling and college readiness

Date: November 2016

Question: Could you provide information on the efficacy of homeschooling, as compared to traditional public schools, on college readiness?

Response:

We have prepared the following memo with information on the relationship between homeschooling and college preparedness. Citations include a link to a free online version, when available. All citations are accompanied by an abstract, excerpt, or summary written by the author or publisher of the document. We have not done an evaluation of the methodological rigor of these resources, but provide them for your information only.

References

Bolle-Brummond, M. B. & Wessel, R. D. (2012). Homeschooled students in college: Background influences, college integration, and environmental pull factors. *Journal of Research Education*, 22 (1), 223-249. Retrieved on November 11, 2016, from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1098414.pdf>

Abstract: How do pre-entry attributes of homeschooled students influence their college experience? What are their academic and social integration patterns? What role did outside factors play in their college experience? Using Tinto's research as a foundation, this study examined the influence of pre-entry attributes on the college experience, academic and social integration patterns, and environmental pull factors of college students who were homeschooled in high school. The authors found that homeschooled students were equipped to succeed academically and socially. Outside influences encountered by the participants included work, family, and finances.

Cogan, M. F. (2010). Exploring academic outcomes of homeschooled students. *Journal of College Admission*, 208, 18-25.

Abstract: This exploratory study examines the academic outcomes of homeschooled students who enter a medium size doctoral institution located in the Midwest. Descriptive analysis reveals homeschool students possess higher ACT scores, grade point averages (GPAs) and graduation rates when compared to traditionally-educated students. In addition, multiple regression analysis results reveal that students who are homeschooled earn higher first-year and fourth-year GPAs when controlling for demographic, pre-college, engagement, and first-term academic factors. Further, binary logistic regression results indicate there is no significant difference between homeschooled student's fall-to-fall retention and four-year graduation rates when compared to traditionally-educated students while controlling for these same factors.

Drenovsky, C. K. & Cohen, I. (2012). The impact of homeschooling on the adjustment of college students. *International Social Science Review*, 87 (1-2). Retrieved on November 9, 2016, from <http://www.biomedsearch.com/article/impact-homeschooling-adjustment-college-students/294895885.html>

Abstract: Homeschooling is an option for education that has increased considerably since the 1970s. Stereotypes of homeschooled children often include labels such as "backward" or "on the fringe" of society. This study seeks to determine whether these stereotypes have any lasting effect on homeschooled students' adjustment to college. An online survey resulted in a sample of 185 students from a variety of colleges and universities, both public and private. The results show that as compared to traditionally educated students, college students who were homeschooled do not exhibit any significant differences in self-esteem, and they experience significantly lower levels of depression than those with no homeschooling in their educational background. This research also reveals that homeschooled students report that they achieve higher academic success in college and view their entire college experience more positively than traditionally educated students.

Duggan, M. H. (2009). Is all college preparation equal? Pre-community college experiences of home-schooled, private-schooled, and public-schooled students. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 34 (1-2), 25-38. Retrieved on November 11, 2016, from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10668920903388131>

Abstract: The goal of this descriptive cross-sectional pilot study was to increase researcher knowledge of precollege preparation in three populations of traditional students attending a community college in a mid-Atlantic state: public-school students, home-schooled students, and private-schooled students. By its exploration of precollege experiences and their perceived impact among these three populations, this research extends the conversation on traditional student college preparation to include students from home-schooled and private-schooled backgrounds, two groups attending the community college in increasing numbers. Findings suggest that precollege preparation differs amongst the groups. Home-schooled students were more likely to credit their current abilities, skills, and knowledge to their previous educational experiences than were either of the remaining groups. Private-schooled student responses tended to be the next highest, followed by public-schooled student responses. In general, more home-schooled students rated themselves as above average and in the top 10% of their peers on their general academic ability, mathematical ability, reading comprehension, and their drive to achieve than the other student groups. More private-schooled respondents rated themselves as above average and in the top 10% of their peers on their study skills compared to the other groups, and more public-schooled respondents rated themselves as above average and in the top 10% of their peers on their computer skills and in their writing ability. Responses differed among respondents as to their intent to return to the community college within in the next 12 months although a two-sample *t*-test between proportions was not significant. Implications for research and practice are included.

Kelly, D. (2015). *Determinants of proficiency of homeschooled students: The college admissions process and its relationship to homeschooling*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University. Retrieved on November 11, 2016, from <http://discoverarchive.vanderbilt.edu/bitstream/handle/1803/7139/Determinants%20of%20Proficiency%20in%20Homeschooled%20Students.pdf?sequence=1>

Abstract: This Capstone project explores the relationship between homeschooled students and the college admission process. Specifically, this essay is designed to answer the following question: Are homeschooled learners being adequately prepared to meet the challenges of the college admissions process now and into the foreseeable future? Peer-reviewed, scholarly articles and research data

provide the basis for understanding homeschooling considerations and rationales from the perspective of homeschooled students and their families. In addition, this paper uses in-person and telephone interviews with undergraduate admissions personnel at five representative American universities of varying degrees of admissions selectivity to conclude that there exists a separate and distinct methodology to the college admissions process for homeschooled students. In particular, research indicates that there exists a substantial disconnect between achievements and aspirations of homeschooled students and their perception and treatment by college admission departments in United States institutions of higher learning. This paper examines the rationales behind the growth of homeschooling in America since the 1960s by delving into the following: 1-exploration of the research done regarding current homeschooled learner profiles, 2-examining homeschooling in the context of college “readiness” and the admissions process through the lens of achievement and success criteria, 3- examining the impact, acceptance and variants of homeschool curricula and 4- indicating the relationships of homeschooler secondary school graduation G.P.A. data and the role of standardized college entrance examination scores and other measures of achievement in the college admittance process. This homeschool learner and learning profile will be synthesized with the admission department interview data to yield a clear picture of where homeschooled students fit into established admissions policies and procedures at five representative institutions of varying degrees of undergraduate selectivity in the United States. Lastly, the implications for both homeschooled students and for future accommodations of homeschooled students in the admissions process at the collegiate level will indicate important points of discussion for continued development and investigation.

Morgan, R. (2003, January 16). Homeschooling: Growing force in higher education. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved on November 10, 2016, from <http://hsllda.org/docs/news/hsllda/200301/200301161.asp>

Excerpt: Many college officials point out that it is up to individual states to determine whether their students who have been home schooled are to be recognized as having earned the "recognized equivalent of a high school diploma" or need to pass additional tests before being admitted to college.

Ray, B. D. (2004). Homeschoolers on to college: What research shows us. *The Journal of College Admission*, 185, 5-11. Retrieved on November 10, 2016, from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ682480.pdf>

Abstract: Experience and anecdotes have led many people to believe that homeschool parents were either move-to-the-country anarchist goat-herders, or right-wing Bible-thumpers, and their children were either mathematically-limited, due to Mama’s fear of math, or child prodigies in rocket-science who were unthinkably socially hindered. Although one can find statistical deviants in every group, homeschooling research tells a different story from the experience-based stereotypes and biases concerning those involved in home education.

Saunders, M. K. (2009). Previously homeschooled college freshmen: Their first year experiences and persistent rates. *Journal of College Student Retention*, 11 (1), 77-100.

Abstract: Utilizing survey research on the entire 2004-2005 freshmen class of a private, interdenominational Christian college ($n = 261$), this study examined the social experiences and persistence rates of college freshmen who were homeschooled prior to attending higher education, and compared this group to college freshmen who were educated in a classroom setting. Findings revealed that homeschooling positively affects two variables proposed as antecedents to the social integration process—the variables of communal potential and institutional integrity. Additionally, homeschooling was found to be positively correlated with the variable of subsequent institutional

commitment to the institution of higher education. Subsequent institutional commitment affects the students' persistence rates into their sophomore year.

Sorey, K. & Duggan, M. H. (2008). Homeschoolers entering community colleges. *Journal of College Admission*, 22-28. Retrieved on November 9, 2016, from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ829457.pdf>

Abstract: An estimated 1.1 million students were homeschooled in the United States in spring 2003, according to the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (2006). This figure represents a sizeable increase from the homeschooling rate of 1.7 percent—or 850,000 students—in 1999 (Biellik, Chandler, and Broughman, 2001). With the popularity of homeschooling strengthening, particularly homeschooling at the secondary level, the prevalence of homeschoolers attempting to enter higher education is escalating. Despite this trend, many college admission officers across the U.S. seem unprepared in evaluating these candidates for admission (Callaway, 2004; Jones and Gloeckner, 2004a).

Methods

Keywords and Search Strings Used in the Search

- Homeschooling
- Homeschooling and college
- Homeschooling and college readiness
- Homeschooling and college preparedness
- Homeschooling and higher education

Search of Databases

EBSCO Host, ERIC, PsychInfo, PsychArticle, Google, and Google Scholar

Criteria for Inclusion

When REL West staff review resources, they consider—among other things—four factors:

- **Date of the Publication:** The most current information is included, except in the case of nationally known seminal resources.
- **Source and Funder of the Report/Study/Brief/Article:** Priority is given to IES, nationally funded, and certain other vetted sources known for strict attention to research protocols.
- **Methodology:** Sources include randomized controlled trial studies, surveys, self-assessments, literature reviews, and policy briefs. Priority for inclusion generally is given to randomized controlled trial study findings, but the reader should note at least the following factors when basing decisions on these resources: numbers of participants (Just a few? Thousands?); selection (Did the participants volunteer for the study or were they chosen?); representation (Were findings generalized from a homogeneous or a diverse pool of participants? Was the study sample representative of the population as a whole?).
- **Existing Knowledge Base:** Although we strive to include vetted resources, there are times when the research base is limited or nonexistent. In these cases, we have included the best resources we could find, which may include newspaper articles, interviews with content specialists, organization websites, and other sources.

This memorandum is one in a series of quick-turnaround responses to specific questions posed by educators and policymakers in the West Region (Arizona, California, Nevada, Utah), which is served by the Regional Educational Laboratory West (REL West) at WestEd. This memorandum was prepared by REL West under a contract with the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES), Contract ED-IES-12-C-0002, administered by WestEd. Its content does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

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