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Abstract

Choice of institution and field of study for a bachelor's degree in Israel was found essentially meritocratic although influenced by socioeconomic status (SES) as well. As expected, students of higher ability attend universities and those of lower apply to academic colleges. However, among students of higher ability, those of higher SES opt for prestigious professions, such as medicine and law, or natural or social sciences, while those of lower SES choose economics and management, computer science, paramedical professions, and engineering. For students of lower learning ability, the differentiating effect of SES is smaller. Those of higher SES prefer university to college, even if they have to study in a less prestigious field, such as education or the humanities. On the other hand, students of lower ability and lower SES apply to colleges for studies such as education, social sciences, computer science, economics and management, and engineering. Overall, students who master financial resources and higher cultural capital prefer more 'theoretical' fields in a more

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extended course of study, while students of lower SES assume more "practical" studies, which will enable them a faster entry to paying positions on the job market. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Dar, Yechezkel, E-Mail: dar@vms.huji.ac.il