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**Title**

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**Abstract**

The modernization of central China may highly affect the overall well-off society in China. Meanwhile, higher education plays a prominent role in determining the competitiveness of a country or region. Hence, how to bring the promotional role of higher education in economic growth of central China into play has become a focus for the government and the academia. Under this circumstance, this paper develops a comprehensive index of education and then employs the panel data model to investigate the influence of both higher education scale and quality on economic growth in the six provinces of central China from 2003 to 2014. The empirical results show that the contribution of higher education to comprehensive education level in the six provinces was all [1% within the sample period, and its contribution to economic growth was [5%, far lower than that of basic education to economic growth. Moreover, in general, higher education scale exerts significant positive effect on economic growth in central China while the effect of higher education quality appears insignificant. In addition, technological innovation plays a remarkably positive role in

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economic growth of all the six provinces in central China.(HRK / Abstract übernommen)