



Career Development during the School-to-Work Transition among the Students of Middle-Ranked Universities in Japan

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ABSTRACT

One in three youth who graduated from university and became employed but quit their jobs within three years in Japan. The students attending middle-ranked universities now constitute the majority of the higher learning students in Japan. The poor job sustaining may be due to several factors. Hence, the aim of this research was to examine the career development during the school-to-work transition among the students of middle-ranked universities in Japan. The research design used in this study was the explanatory sequential design of a mixed method. The study began with a quantitative strand, and then continued with a qualitative research. In terms of sampling, 475 students who attended regular classes were selected randomly from seven middle-ranked universities in Tokyo (N = approximately 55,000). The were two main instruments used in this study – a set of questionnaires and an interview protocol. The questionnaire was developed based on Kato's *Identity Status Scale* and *Loneliness Scale* of Ochiai and then they were administered to the sample. Next, a three-year longitudinal study of eight students from their sophomore to senior year was conducted to examine their career development process which was analyzed by using the Trajectory Equifinality Modeling. In conclusion, the key findings showed that the students in the successful job-hunting activity group displayed high mutual empathy but low consciousness of aloneness. In addition, they possessed good ability of metacognitive self-awareness. This study contributes to the corpus of knowledge in profiling the career development during the school-to-work transition among the students of middle-ranked universities in Japan.

Keywords: Career development, middle-ranked university in Japan, identity, individuality, trajectory equifinality modeling (TEM)