

The Effects of Need for Autonomy and Vocational Motivation on Employment Anxiety

Self-determination theory

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The purpose of the present study was to examine the effects of need for autonomy and vocational motivation on employment anxiety in the framework of self-determination theory. Self-determination theory is concerned primarily with explicating the psychological processes that promote optimal functioning and health (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Based on self-determination theory, a scale to measure vocational motivation was constructed, and a survey was administered to 150 university students. The questionnaire included the Need for Autonomy Scale (Ando, 2003), Vocational Motivation Scale, and Employment Anxiety Scale (Fujii, 1999).

In this study on motives for vocation, factor analysis found four factors: “external regulation,” “introjected regulation,” “identified regulation,” and “intrinsic regulation.” The Need for Autonomy Scale was measured using self-determination and independence, while the Employment Anxiety Scale was measured using three factors for the anxiety items of employment-seeking activity, vocational aptitude, and workplace.

A co-variance structure analysis was performed to examine the effects of need for autonomy and vocational motivation on employment anxiety. The results showed that self-determination promoted intrinsic regulation; intrinsic regulation then inhibited vocational aptitude anxiety. This finding suggests that university vocational guidance should take self-determination and vocational motivation into account.