

SAT prep tools offer great advantages

August 14 2006

U.S. students from higher-income families are most likely to use SAT preparation tools, thereby giving them an advantage in getting into college.

Results from a nationwide study show students who took private SAT prep classes averaged scores 60 points higher on their SAT tests compared with those who didn't take such classes.

"SAT prep tools have become a tool of advantaged families to ensure their children stay ahead in the competition for college admissions," said Claudia Buchmann, co-author of the study and associate professor of sociology at Ohio State University.

"The SAT test was supposed to level the playing field, and allow people from all social classes to have equal access to college," Buchmann said. "But this study shows that students from advantaged families still have better opportunities to reach college, and access to test preparation tools is one reason."

Buchmann -- who conducted the study with Vincent Roscigno, Ohio State professor of sociology, and Dennis Condron of Emory University -- presented the results Monday in Montreal during the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association.

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Citation: SAT prep tools offer great advantages (2006, August 14) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2006-08-sat-prep-tools-great-advantages.html>

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