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IJED volume 89 article summaries

Volume 89 has quite a variety of important discoveries. Among them are three which find that the length of exposure to education, (as a sort of ‘treatment’), has an independent effect. In their paper titled: “The Effects of an Early Childhood Education Care Program on Child Development as a Function of Exposure in Ecuador,” Martina Alvarado-Suarez and Nicolas Acosta-Gonzalez discover that the effects on cognitive and socio-emotional development of early childhood education increase as the time of exposure to the program is increased.

As in other countries, in Vietnam it is common for parents to prefer male children. However, this changes as females become more educated. In their paper titled: “Maternal Education and Son Preference,” My Nguyen and Lien Le conclude that ‘a one-year increase in material education reduces the preferred number of sons over daughters by 0.17% points’ and that these effects are ‘much larger for rural and low-income populations’.

Time of exposure can also apply across generations as well as within individuals. Like many countries, China has rapidly expanded access to schooling, but has increased access altered the strength by which education has determined socio-economic status? In their remarkable article titled: “Generational Persistence in Schooling in China over a Half-Century: Implications for Schooling Inequality”, authors Anil Deolaikar and Jinchun Zhou discover that as educational access has increased over time, the effect of parental education on children’s education has declined. Here is how they put it: ‘the effects of fathers’ and mothers’ education on children’s schooling have fallen sharply over time, with large differences across cohorts and gender. Our estimates suggest that the decline in the marginal effects of parents’ schooling on child schooling has accounted for roughly one-half of the reduction in schooling inequality in China over the last half-century’. This is quite encouraging.

The effects of pupils on each other was one rationale behind desegregation in the United States, in hopes of encouraging greater understanding, tolerance and patterns of peer relations over time. This anticipated social cohesion effect seems to be the case within some school populations in Nigeria. In the paper titled: “The Shaping of National Identity in Diverse Nigerian Secondary Schools’ author Marlana Salmon-Letelier finds that school populations help shape one’s relationship to the nation. She says that ‘as students progress through the system, particularly in unity schools, they shift from a deterministic national identity belonging to a particular ethnic group toward a more interconnected concept of civic national identity’. She points out that this ‘interconnected identity’ of the students can help reshape their relationship to their nation and can lend strength to peace-building efforts.

The issues of shadow education and private tutoring have gained

significant interest. Concerns have been raised as to whether they have widened socio-economic disparities and whether they threaten education’s social cohesion function. The fact shadow education is so prevalent in Asia suggests that perhaps the demand for may be associated with particular cultures. But even within those cultures where the demand is high, is it uniform? This is the question addressed by Jonathan Jarvis, Amy Read, Mikaela Dufur and Shana Pribesh in their article titled: “Impacts of Family Structure on Shadow Education and Educational Achievement Among South Korean Youth”. They discover that the demand for private tutoring is higher among traditional families. They say that ‘students in non-traditional families not only used shadow education less frequently but their ability to translate shadow education into college entrance exam success differed’.

While universities may be competitive in attracting students and faculty, how information and decision mechanisms function is not well understood. In their article titled: “Academic Reform and Sustainability of Higher Education in Indonesia,” authors Suyadi Suyadi, Sutrisno Sutrisno, Baidi Baidi and Zalik Nuryana describe the role of one institution in influencing the reforms and operational procedures of others. Sunan Kalijaga Islamic State University (UNI) has had a ‘massive impact’ on the other Islamic universities. After UNI inaugurated an international study program, integrated postgraduate management into the faculty and opened a program of teacher certification, other universities followed their lead.

Conditional cash transfer (CCT) programs have often proven successful at assisting the poor and at the same time, stimulating a socially positive outcome such as school attendance. But how CCT programs are administered can vary. In Columbia the number of children within the same household who are allowed to receive CCT assistance is limited. What about the other children in the same household? In their article titled: ‘The Effects of Conditional Cash Transfers on Schooling and Child Labor of Non-Beneficiary Siblings’, authors Karen Camilo and Blanca Zuluaga find that ‘there is a negative effect on the school enrollment of non-beneficiary siblings as well as an increase in their absenteeism’.

It would seem reasonable to expect children to have more difficulty mastering a curriculum if they are hungry and the results from developing countries reiterate this assumption. How true would this be in a wealthy environment such as Norway? Froydis Nordgard, Trude Nilsen, and Nina Overvy ask this question in their article titled: ‘Aspects of Nutritional Deficits and Cognitive Outcomes – Triangulation Across Time and Subject Domains Among Students and Teachers in TIMSS’. They find that hunger among Norwegian 9th graders explains one third of the decrease in science achievement and over half of the decrease in math achievement.

Traditionally corporal punishment was common place in schools.

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Recently its use has declined, but the decline has not meant that it has disappeared. It remains common in many parts of the world. What effect does it have? Deepak Kumar, Debasmitha Padhi, Bhanu Pratap and Archana Aggarwal investigate this question in their article titled: "Corporal Punishment and Praise in Indian Schools: Caste-based heterogeneity on Children's Cognitive Skills". They find that the use of praise increases academic achievement and that the use of corporal punishment decreases academic achievement. They also find that the impacts are greater on children from marginalized family backgrounds.

Augmented impact on those who are marginalized also appears to be

the case in the article written by Audrey Au Yong Lyn titled: "Vocational Training and Employment Outcomes of Domestic Violence Survivors: Evidence from Chihuahua City". She finds that domestic violence survivors with vocational training significantly increase the chances of obtaining formal employment and potentially escaping their previous marginalized environment.

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