



Editorial

IJED Editorial – Volume 50



The 11 articles in volume 50 fall into three categories. There are important technical discussions (2), there are results which lend confidence in the impact of education (2), and then there are those which report disappointing results. Articles in the last category (7) are the most numerous.

Technical discussions

It has been suggested that using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) as a regression technique may bias the results when there are not sufficient individuals in a category to compare with individuals in a more common category. This issue was tested in a paper by Sara Gundersen in her paper titled: “Disappointing Returns to Education in Ghana: A Test of the Robustness of OLS Estimates Using Proportional Score Matching”. She concludes that the matching estimates are not statistically different from the OLS results. OLS effects by comparison to other methods was the topic of discussion in a paper titled: “Do ‘Better’ Teachers and Classroom Resources Improve Student Achievement? A Causal Comparative Approach in Kenya, South Africa, and Swaziland” by Andrey Zakharov, Gaelebale Tsheko, and Martin Carnoy. They find that the quality of teachers and classroom resources affect student academic achievement in both OLS and fixed effect models.

Hopeful results

The above-mentioned paper on the effect of teachers and classroom resources could also be categorized as a hopeful and not just a technical paper. Whether parents ‘value’ education is the topic of two papers. Zellynne Jennings and Loraine Cook in their paper titled: “Perspectives of Jamaican Parents and the Secondary School Children on the Value of Education: Effects of Selected Variables on Parents’ Perspectives” find that Jamaican parents and children both value education highly, regardless of age or employment status. In India Nidhi Singal analyzed the value which parents of children with disabilities place on education. In the paper titled: “Schooling Children with Disabilities: Parental Perceptions and Experiences” the author finds that mothers believe that education will help their particular children. On the other hand, they have a realistic knowledge of the poverty of the local schools and feel that they are ‘without agency’ (i.e. power) to access more meaningful education services.

Problematic results

Much attention has been placed on the need to develop ‘green skills for the future green economy’. However, Simon McGrath and Lesley Powell in their paper titled: “Skills for Sustainable Development: Transforming Vocational Education and Training Beyond 2015” argue that such adaptation of vocational education will be inadequate and that the typical vocational education does not develop skills which are likely to lead to ‘decent, life-enhancing, solidaritic, environmentally sensitive and inter-generationally-aware types of work’.

In a paper by Stephanie Simmons Zuilkowski, Matthew Jukes and Margaret Dubeck titled: “‘I failed, no matter How Hard I Tried’: A Mixed-Methods Study of the Role of Achievement in Primary School Dropout in Rural Kenya,” the authors find that the propensity to drop out of primary school is negatively affected by prior lower literacy and numeracy performance.

Much attention has been paid to the need for governments, using tax-payer resources, to finance uniforms, textbooks, school supplies, and the like. In their analysis of per capita grants titled: “Universal but Not Free: Household Costs and Equity Effects of Uganda’s Universal Secondary Education Policy” Carina Omoeva and Charles Gale find that the USE (USE) is associated with a large reduction in per-pupil household spending suggesting that public supplanted rather than supplemented private spending.

School exclusion is the topic of a paper titled: “Exploring School Exclusion Through the Perspective of Child Laborers Living in Sultanbeyli on the Periphery of Istanbul, Turkey”, Ozden Bademci, Figen Karadayi and Narin Bagdatli find that despite considerable effort, universal education completion will not be possible without a reduction in poverty associated with school dropout.

It has been suggested that economic migration of parents and the subsequent remittances tend to advantage children at home. However, in a paper by Jason Davis and Noli Brazil titled: “Disentangling Fathers’ Absences from Household Remittances in International Migration: The Case of Educational Attainment in Guatemala” the authors discover that the circumstance in which absent fathers send remittances is negatively associated with enrollment thereby creating a ‘culture of migration’ effect. On the other hand, they also find that for students who do remain in school, remittances can neutralize the harmful effect of fathers’ absence of grade progression.

Two articles speak to the pernicious impact which institutional corruption has on the positive effects of education. In a paper by Amra Sabic-El-Rayess titled: “Favor Reciprocation Theory in Education: New Corruption Typology” the author discovers that

the poor in Bosnia-Hezegovina tend to bribe whereas elites tend to use non-monetary forms to corrupt the system in their favor. In the paper titled: "Does Education Lead to Higher Generalized Trust? The Importance of Quality of Government" Nicholas Charron and Bo Rothstein find that the positive effect of education in creating generalized trust is neutralized where governmental institutions

have been corrupted. In those circumstances, those with more education are more likely to view the system as 'rigged'.

Editor-in-Chief
Stephen P. Heyneman