



Editorial



In this volume articles cover a wide variety of interesting areas – the returns to investment in vocational education, the influences of society and resources on school outcomes, influences of gender education spending within families, education and migration, and student bullying.

Two articles pertain to the influence of gender. In the article titled: “Domesticated Gender (in) Equality: Women’s Education and Gender Relations among Rural Communities in Pakistan” Ayesha Khurshid argues that the effect of schooling reproduces gender hierarchies in the public sphere but transforms them in the private (home). In their article titled “We don’t play with gays, they’re not real boys...they can’t fight’: Hegemonic Masculinity and (homophobic) Violence in the Primary Years of Schooling” authors Deevia Bhana and Emmanuel Mayeza find that ‘real boys’ in primary school in South Africa lead to violence on the playground and that playground violence translates to claiming playground space excluding, marginalizing and denigrating others.

The question of how changes in the wider society may influence school outcomes is a long-standing concern and two articles address themselves to it in volume 51. In their article titled: “The Relationship between Parental Education and Children’s Schooling in a time of Turmoil: the Case of East Zimbabwe, 2001–2011” Erica Pufall et al., find that when the wider economy declines school attendance declines, but not uniformly. Dropouts rise more with girls and low income children. In the article titled: “How the Mexican Drug War Affects Kids and School: Evidence on Effects and Mechanisms,” authors Brenda Rabling, Beatriz Magaloni and Edgar Franco find that the prevalence of criminal gang violence increases teacher and student absenteeism, tardiness and the tendency to drop out of school. As we may have feared, gang violence decreases instructional time and student achievement.

Much debate has occurred over vocational education and whether it was more productive than academically-oriented education. In an article titled: Is Meister Vocational High School More Cost Effective?” Kye Wo Lee calculates the economic rate of return to public investments in a new (and very expensive) Korean vocational school and compares them to traditional vocational schools and to academically-oriented schools. He finds that the Meister Vocational School is less economically productive by comparison to the traditional vocational school, the latter being more economically productive than either the Meister Vocational School or the general high school.

Migration is now a world-wide phenomenon, not only for the traditional reasons of seeking a better life but because of having to

flee circumstances of danger and general political collapse. But what are the effects on those left at home? What effect does migration of one or both parents have on the education of the children at home? In their article titled: “Migration and the Education of Children who Stay Behind in Moldova and Georgia” authors Victor Cebotari, Melissa Siegel, and Valentina Mazzucato find that the effects are not uniform. When fathers migrate, the achievement of children in Georgia declines but the achievement of children in Moldova increases. When both parents migrate, achievement of children in Moldova continues to increase. However, if remittances decline so does the school achievement of children at home.

Does education affect how resources for education are allocated within families? This question was approached in the article titled: “An Empirical Analysis of Household Education Expenditures in Turkey” by Burak Gunalp, Seyit Cilasun and Elif Acar. They find that in Turkey as education in the family increases, a higher portion of family income is allocated to education but there is more elasticity with middle-income families than with either wealthy or low-income families.

Can experience in school help resolve social conflict? In his article titled: “Building Peace Through Education in a Post-Conflict Environment: A Case study Exploring Perceptions of Best Practices” Solvor Mjoberg Lauritzen describes the experience in a single Kenyan school where a peace education program was implemented following local post-election violence in 2008. The program encouraged peace-building at the individual, interpersonal and community level. The experience challenged other approaches which concentrate only on the interpersonal level.

A child’s experience at school is far greater than the contact with classroom teachers. The most important influence may be the experience with peers. It has been discovered that peer experience can be very negative. Peer groups can exclude and can bully children in one way or another. In the article titled: “Bullying, Identity and School Performance: Evidence from Chile” authors Dante Contreras, Gregory Elacqua, Matias Martinez, and Alvaro Miranda find that a decline in achievement is observed in both the perpetrator of bullying and the victim of bullying. On the other hand, the achievement of high IQ children goes up when they are victims of bullying. Why? This is a good reason to pay attention to their article.

The relationship between socio-economic status (SES) and academic achievement is a long-standing issue in Comparative Education. In the article titled: “Social Reproduction in Vietnam:

Educational Attainment, Employment, and Skills Gap” Tuan Dinh Nguyen finds that SES increases the chance of attending university and to have a higher income even in a Communist society.

Five articles in volume 51 pertain to the effect of resources and school personnel. In the article titled: “Assessment of Efficiency in Basic and Secondary Education in Tunisia: Regional Analysis” Sourour Ramzi, Antonia Afonso and Mohamed Ayadi find that an increase in school monetary resources and greater quality help to explain declines in student repetition and hence increase educational efficiency. In the article titled: “Does School Breakfast make a Difference? An Evaluation of an In-School Breakfast Program in South Africa,” Tessa Hochfeld, Lauren Graham, Leila Patel, Jacqueline Moodley, and Eleanor Ross find school feeding programs positively affect anthropometric and school performance. In the article titled: “Principal Leadership Changes and their Consequences for School Performance in South Africa,” Gabrielle Wills poses the question of what happens when school principals retire. It might be thought that retirement of the more

elderly administrators might leave open the possibility of replacing them with younger and potentially more effective personnel. Instead it is discovered that retirement and other forms of principal change is associated with a decline in achievement especially in lower-income schools. In the paper titled: “Leadership and Teacher Learning in Urban and Rural Schools in China: Meeting the Dual Challenges of Equity and Effectiveness” Philip Hallinger and Shengnan Liu find that ‘learning-centered’ leadership is associated with teacher learning, particularly in urban schools. In the article titled: “The Impact of Effective Teaching Characteristics in Promoting School Achievement in China” John Azigwe, Leonidas Kyriakides, Anastasia Panayiotou and Bert Creemers confirm a long-held assumption: teacher behavior influences student achievement.

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