



## IJED volume 54 Editorial



The seven articles appearing in volume seven have unusual diversity, ranging from a world-wide estimate of dropout cost to the change in student performance resulting from a relaxation of China's one child policy. In their article titled: "Measuring the Holes of the Ship: Global Cost Estimates of International Efficiency in Primary Education", Suguru Mizunoya and Htet Thiha Zaw estimate that the total cost is the equivalent to 8.1% of total education spending and five times the level of financial assistance to developing countries in education foreign aid.

In the article titled: "Analysis of Factors Affecting Pupil Performance in Malawi's Primary Schools Based on SACMEQ Survey Results," David Mulera, Ken Ndala and Richard Nyirongo note that the level of available inputs and services usually predicts the differences in district performance but it is not uniform. Some relatively under-resourced districts performed as well as more privileged districts. Lower performance was generally associated with family poverty, high pupil/teacher ratios and the necessity of headmasters needing to teach instead of manage.

In the article titled: "Relaxed Population Policy, Family Size and Parental Investments in Children's Education in Rural Northwestern China," Qihui Chen experiments with different analytic techniques to discover significant differences in the one child policy effect. When using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) the result is a tradeoff between quality and quantity, as quantity of children increases, the quality of performance decreases. However, when using a causal model, the conclusion is quite different. No quality/quantity tradeoff is discovered implying that when increases in quantity among rural children result from a relaxed one/child policy, performance does not decline.

In the article titled: "Chronic Under-nutrition, Short-Term Hunger, and Student Functioning in Rural Northwest China," Emily Hannum and Li-Chung Hu uncover the tendency for hunger and malnutrition to have different effects. Short term hunger tends to lead to behavioral problems whereas under-nourishment tends to lead to lower literacy and lower school persistence.

The the article titled: "The Role of Parent, Classmate, and Teacher Support in Student Engagement: Evidence from Ghana," authors David Ansong, Moses Okumu, Gary Bowen, Anne Walker, Sarah Eisensmith, Mustapha Alhassan and Abena Ampomah discover that peer influences on student engagement are stronger than either the influence from teachers or families.

In the article titled: "Discriminations Against Children with Disabilities in Mainstream Schools in Southern Ghana: Challenges and Perspectives from Stakeholders," Efua Mantey quantifies the cultural prejudice against children with disabilities on the part of teachers, administrators and fellow pupils.

The role of textbooks has been a long-standing interest (Heyneman, Farrell, and Sepulveda-Stuardo, 1978; Heyneman and Jamison, 1980; Jamison, Searle, Galda and Heyneman, 1981; Heyneman, Jamison and Montenegro, 1984; Heyneman, Farrell (1989); Heyneman, 2006) but has often concentrated on textbook availability rather than on use. In the article titled: "Textbook Availability and Use in Rwandan Basic Education: A Mixed Methods Study," Lizzi Milligan, Leon Tikly, Timothy Williams, Jean-Marie Vianney, and Alphonse Uworwabayeho discover considerable variability in textbook utilization based on inconsistencies in availability and perceptions that some textbooks are of lower quality.

## 1. Summary

These articles tend to lead us in new directions. The cost of inefficiency is greater than the total investment in education foreign aid. Peer effects can be more powerful than either teacher or families. High quantity of pupils may be less important than family demand for their particular children. Hunger and malnutrition effects should not be assumed to be identical. Children with disabilities suffer long term discrimination resulting from long-standing cultural prejudice not easily ameliorated through public policy. And books, when available, may not be fully utilized – a sign perhaps that quality has improved since work started on textbooks in the 1970's

## References

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*Editor-in-Chief*  
Stephen P. Heyneman