



Editorial

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Several articles in volume 67, are of particular importance. It has long been the case that children have a harder time in school if they were born into families in which mothers were not well educated. It has been assumed that this was so because the influence of education, passed through the mother, would be less. This assumption is being challenged. In the article by Dante Contreras, Gabriela Riveros, Jose Delgadillo Uribe titled: "Is Home Over-crowding a Significant Factor in Children's Academic Performance? Evidence from Latin America" the authors discover that the negative influence of over-crowding exceeds the impact of maternal education. This does not imply that the influence of maternal education is low. What it suggests is that growing up in an over-crowded home, can be even more detrimental.

The influence of international donors in low income countries has long been of concern from many points of view. Some suggest that the donors, with both monetary resources and ideas of how best to direct them, may unduly influence the direction of educational projects. It has been suggested that donor agencies allocate resources to promote interventions on the basis of preconceived ideas about what works and that countries in desperate need of development capital may agree to those interventions even when they believe they are not well suited.

This issue is the subject of the article by Hester van de Kuilen, Hulya Altinyelken, Joke Voogt and Wenceslas Nzabairwa titled: "Policy Adoption of Learner-Centered Pedagogy (LCP) in Rwanda: A case study of its rationale and transfer mechanisms." It is claimed that LCP has a long history of failure in developing countries which should have been obvious to the development assistance agencies operating in Rwanda. However, because of the interdependent relationship between them and the government agencies, the history of those problems was ignored. The end result was a distortion of the education system in Rwanda which was bent in ways which were not natural and hence, not successful. The article analyzes the policy transfer process and the mechanisms deployed by both the government and the aid agencies which

allowed the distortion to occur.

The connection between armed conflict and education is a global concern. It would not be surprising to find that education investments and enrollment suffer where conflict occurs. But are these assumptions born out by the evidence? Cem Oyvat and Hasan Tekguc explore this issue in their article titled: "Ethnic Factionalization, Conflict and Educational Development in Turkey." They discover that in conflict areas enrollment declines in the middle and high school levels but enrollment actually increases at the primary level. They also discover that public investments in education have been lower prior to the outbreak of conflict suggesting that ethnic discrimination (against Kurds) in educational investments may have been a contributing cause of the conflict.

Other articles in volume 67 emerge with interesting findings. In the article on transnational education, it is reported that off shore courses have low economic rates of return, foreign students are more uncertain about studying in the United Kingdom, and that the safer investments are with 'collaborative courses with off shore partners' instead of establishing branch colleges.

Teachers are reluctant to accept postings in rural areas. China has addressed this with a program called Special Teaching Positions (STP) which pays incentives for teachers to accept rural assignments. Because of transportation improvements and the availability of willing grandparents, STP teachers now make a habit of commuting to rural areas for weekly classes and being home in urban areas during weekends.

To what extent are children with disabilities unable to attend school? The question is raised about children in Cairo where about two percent of the children have disabilities and where about one third of them never enter a school.

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