

THE INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE (IEI) ANNOUNCES IEI WORKSHOP

How the Mexican Drug War Affects Kids and Schools: Evidence of Effects and Mechanisms

We investigate the impact of violence generated by Mexico's drug trafficking organizations on student academic achievement. Using panel data at school level from 2006 to 2011 and locality-level firearm murders, this paper exploits within-school variation in the intensity and persistence of drug-related violence during the academic year. Our findings suggest that exposure to high-intensity violence reduces math test scores. The analysis of heterogeneous effects shows that schools located in poor large-urban settings experience the largest negative effects. Further, in localities with increased youth gang presence around lower-secondary schools, we found stronger negative effects. Finally, we further examine potential mechanisms driving the achievement results. Our results indicate that high-intensity violence is associated with exacerbation of instructional time loss due to higher teacher absenteeism, teacher turnover, student absenteeism, student tardiness and their propensity to leave school early.

Impact of Teacher Mindset on Student Achievement: Evidence from RCT in Chile

This paper uses Dweck's growth mindset framework to explore the impact of elementary teacher's beliefs about the malleability of intelligence on their performance in online professional development courses and student achievement. The current study is unique in that it is the first randomized control trial designed to explore the effect of teachers mindsets in a field setting. I use an adaptation of the low-cost easy-to-scale intervention developed by Paunesku et al (forthcoming) to study if changing teachers' beliefs about intelligence from fixed to malleable affects completion rates and final grades. Among teachers with an initially fixed mindset (25% of the sample), those who were in the treatment group obtained, on average, significantly better scores in the final exam than the control group, which only received information about the structure of the brain.

