

On improving education opportunities

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Propositions accompanying the thesis

On Improving Education Opportunities: Preferences and Performance of High School Students in Response to Scholarships, Information, and Coeducation

By Gloria L. Bernal

1. Valuable merit-based scholarship programs for low-income students generate positive spillover effects on students' academic effort, particularly on those with the highest performance (Chapter 2).
2. Correcting misperceptions about higher education financial aid and costs among low-income high school students rises students' interest on receiving information on higher education opportunities and financial aid (Chapter 3).
3. The cessation of scholarships reduces low-income students' educational ambition and interest on higher education (Chapter 4).
4. A masculine schooling environment improves females' performance, but at the expense of males' achievement (Chapter 5).
5. When making decisions, policymakers should internalize the positive spillover effects that education policies generates on the non-beneficiaries.
6. Education is as a set of interventions: In order to improve education quality, it is critical to establish continuous and sustainable long-term policies capable of maintaining what does work, and be flexible to change what does not work. Education practices should be based on the best scientific evidence when available.
7. In fragile contexts, where falling classes are common and children dropout rates are alarming, it is important to remain that improving education is a task of many actors: Government working hard in guarantying opportunities, educators teaching at their best, families standing by their children for schooling, and students striving hard to reach their potential.
8. Provision of information is a powerful (and relatively low-cost) tool to correct the misperceptions of people (myths), which in turns serves to reduce poor decisions and increase efficiency in human capital accumulation.
9. "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance" (Anonymous).