Propositions Accompanying the Dissertation
Civil Conflict and Education: How Does Exposure to Civil Conflict Affect Human Capital Accumulation?
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1. “The current state of art of empirical research on violent conflict offers considerable opportunity for improving our knowledge of violent conflict itself, its functions and dynamics, as well as the impact of conflict on behaviour, welfare and overall development.” Bruck et al. (2010). Introduction.

2. Starting in the nineties, education started gaining even more importance in the public policy debate in Colombia thanks to the strengthening of the decentralization process that came about as a result of the new Constitution of 1991 and the establishment of important decrees related to the rights to education of the population. Chapter 3.

3. The lack of consistency in the existing literature studying the relationship between conflict and education casts doubts about the results obtained to date, and motivates further research in this topic in order to explore the relationship in more detail. Chapter 7.

4. “Education is particularly important at times of armed conflict [...] while all around may be in chaos, schooling can represent a state of normalcy [...] school children have the chance to be with friends and enjoy their support and encouragement [...] the ability to carry on schooling in the most difficult circumstances demonstrates a confidence in the future: communities that still have a school feel they have something durable and worthy of protection” (Machel et al 1996). Chapter 11.

5. The design of effective policies to guarantee that those students who stay in conflict zones have the adequate incentives and resources to continue with their studies is an essential task that should be prioritized in the agenda of Colombian policy makers. More governmental resources should be spent in order to meet the special needs of those students who have been affected by conflict (i.e. psychological help, school supplies, special remedial tutorials) and to supervise their progress at educational institutions. Addendum on valorisation.

6. Economists are social scientists whose job is to try to get a better understanding of how individuals make choices and use their resources. It is a particularly challenging task because human beings are extremely complex and unpredictable.

7. Economics is a powerful subject equipped with a full range of tools to study an endless number of problems. In that sense, the learning process of an Economist should never stop. Never stop learning!

8. A high quality education is the best instrument to change the world. Education empowers and by doing so, it helps people change their own realities.
9. It is impossible to force education on students. Individuals do not learn by force or harshness. Education should be an empowering process, and teachers should serve as guides in the process of finding students’ passions and strengths.