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NEWSLETTER
July 2024

Photo credit: Breakthrough

New Evidence to Policy Case Study: Reshaping gender norms through an interactive school curriculum

📍 **India**

Policy issue: Gender inequality and cultural norms can significantly limit women and girls' educational, professional, economic, and personal opportunities and achievements worldwide.

Evaluation: Researchers conducted a randomized evaluation of a curriculum promoting gender equality that was developed and implemented by the NGO Breakthrough in

seventh- to tenth-grade classrooms in Haryana, India.

Results: The curriculum led to more gender-equitable attitudes and behaviors among both boys and girls.

Research in action: A new Evidence to Policy Case Study shares how the findings led the state governments of Punjab and Odisha, with support from Breakthrough and J-PAL South Asia, to adapt and scale the curriculum across government schools—reaching over one million students to date in Punjab alone.

Read the case study

Research by: Diva Dhar (University of Oxford, Gates Foundation), Tarun Jain (Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad; J-PAL affiliated professor), and Seema Jayachandran (Princeton University; J-PAL affiliated professor; Co-Chair, J-PAL's Gender sector)

Three lessons on evidence-informed policymaking from J-PAL South Asia Executive Director Shobhini Mukerji

In a three-part series on the J-PAL blog, Shobhini Mukerji draws on her decades of experience to demystify the process of advancing evidence-based policymaking in India. The final post of the series underscores the importance of championing rigorous evaluations and emphasizes how their value can outweigh the methodology's complexity. Read the other posts in this series, including " Lesson #1: Don't look for the silver bullet" and " Lesson #2: Don't trade for short gains—play the long game" on the J-PAL blog. Read more »

NEW POLICY INSIGHT

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Low-cost strategies to improve take-up of safe water technologies

In a new Policy Insight, J-PAL's Health sector summarizes evidence from eight randomized evaluations across six low- and middle-income countries examining the impact of strategies aiming to promote the adoption of low-cost water treatments on access to and use of clean water.

Policy issue: Worldwide, approximately two billion people lack access to safe drinking water. While various solutions exist—such as spring protection, chlorine treatment, and water filtration—people without access to clean water sources face barriers to adopting these methods.

Results: Subsidies for simple water treatments can expand access to clean water, but other strategies are needed to encourage sustained use. In some cases, especially with new water treatment products, combining subsidies with nudges can increase their short-term use. Furthermore, targeting subsidies to the most likely users can help increase products' cost-effectiveness. Read more »

FEATURED EVALUATION SUMMARY

Photo credit: Liner, Shutterstock.com

Better management for airline efficiency: Reducing emissions and fuel costs

📍 **United Kingdom**

Policy issue: Managerial practices can significantly impact worker productivity, which in turn can greatly affect overall business performance and costs. In the aviation industry, firms are exploring whether better personnel management can lead to lower fuel costs, reduced flight delays, better safety, and reduced carbon emissions.

Evaluation: Researchers partnered with Virgin Atlantic Airways to rigorously evaluate how various management practices—including performance feedback, personalized targets, and incentives—impacted pilots' productivity. Measures of productivity centered on practices that reduce fuel usage, thus cutting carbon emissions, including pre-flight fuel load, efficient flight operations, and reduced-engine taxiing.

Results: Providing personalized targets led pilots to implement more fuel-saving practices, reducing carbon emissions without increasing flight delays.

Read more

Research by: Greer K. Gosnell (Rethink Priorities), John A. List (University of Chicago; J-PAL affiliated professor), and Robert D. Metcalfe (Columbia University; J-PAL affiliated professor)

FEATURED BLOGS

Photo credit: Malik Abaddi, J-PAL

Mobilizing agricultural development in Africa: J-PAL joins the Paris Peace Forum coalition

J-PAL's Agriculture sector has joined the Paris Peace Forum's coalition of international organizations dedicated to advancing sustainable agriculture in Africa through North-South collaboration and learning. J-PAL will play a crucial role by ensuring that evidence-based strategies that support farmers' productivity, profitability, and food security are central to coalition discussions. The partnership aims to drive evidence-based policymaking and foster impactful investment in agriculture and innovations in food systems. Read more »

Can product curation help businesses grow?

In a competitive economy like Indonesia, micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) can struggle to achieve sustained growth. Product curation, an approach that identifies high-potential products and helps businesses target relevant markets, has the potential to support businesses' expansion and sustainability. A new blog post by Erysa Poetry (Policy

Associate, J-PAL Southeast Asia) shares learnings from evidence on product curation programs in low- and middle-income countries and underscores the need for further research to help Indonesian policymakers and program providers effectively reach MSMEs. Read more »

Harnessing the power of partnerships through the Egypt Impact Lab

Through the Egypt Impact Lab, J-PAL Middle East and North Africa (MENA) has partnered with the Ministry of Education and Technical Education to foster an iterative evidence-generation process to inform the government's education policies. In a new blog post, J-PAL affiliated professor Adam Osman (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Scientific Director, J-PAL MENA), Arwa Adel (Policy, Training, and Event Associate, J-PAL MENA), and Nayera Adly (Policy Manager, J-PAL MENA) highlight this successful collaboration and emphasize the importance of partnerships in designing and running relevant, useful, and impactful randomized evaluations. Read more »

New partnership to enhance preschool education in Brazil

Quality preschool education can be fundamental to early childhood development, contributing to a strong foundation for future success. J-PAL Latin America and the Caribbean and the Bracell Foundation are joining forces to identify, implement, and evaluate promising programs in Brazil that are focused on improving the quality of education in preschools and that have the potential to be scaled up. Organizations working in this space that are interested in evaluating their program are invited to apply for training and matchmaking with researchers in the J-PAL network that can facilitate this work. Read more »

FEATURED MULTIMEDIA

Photo credit: J-PAL

Video interview: Partnering with the Government of Mexico City to prevent gender violence

J-PAL Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) has partnered with Mexico City Women's Secretariat (SEMUJERES) since 2020 to generate evidence to inform policies that promote gender equality and reduce intimate partner violence. In a new video interview on the J-PAL blog, Dulce Colín, general director for gender equality at SEMUJERES, answers questions about the partnership's main achievements and gives invaluable insights into this collaboration. Watch the video interview »

WELCOMING OUR NEW AFFILIATED PROFESSORS

Last summer, 33 talented researchers joined the J-PAL network. We are excited to feature the final three members of the 2023 cohort, and will begin featuring the 2024 cohort next month.

Paolo Falco	**Arman Rezaee**	**Danila Serra**
University of Copenhagen	University of California, Davis	Texas A&M University

FEATURED EVENT

Promoting early childhood development in Latin America and the Caribbean

📝 **July 25 and August 8**

J-PAL Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala will host a two-part webinar series to share rigorous evidence on early childhood development for the LAC region. First on **July 25**, J-PAL affiliated professor Karen Macours (Paris School of Economics; Co-Chair, J-PAL's Health sector) will present global evidence on the impact of nutrition on early childhood development. Register »

Then on **August 8**, with support from the Cotopaxi Foundation, J-PAL LAC Deputy Executive Director Claudia Macías will discuss key evidence from the region. Register »

FEATURED TRAININGS

Evaluating Social Programs course in Bali, Indonesia

📝 **Apply by August 24**

J-PAL Southeast Asia will offer an in-person Evaluating Social Programs training in Bali, Indonesia from **September 30 to October 4.** Tailored to the needs of policymakers and development practitioners, the five-day training will provide an in-depth look at why and when randomized evaluations can be used to rigorously measure social impact, methods and considerations for their design and implementation, and how findings can inform evidence-based policies and programs. Applications are due August 24. Learn more and apply »

Open enrollment for the DEDP MicroMasters Program

📝 **September 10**

In a recent MIT News article, three students—a quantum scientist, a nurse, and an economist—share how the MicroMasters program in Data, Economics, and Design of Policy (DEDP) helped them pivot in their careers to join the fight against global poverty.

Enrollment is now open for the fall term and courses begin **September 10**. The online program offers master's level courses that cover a variety of topics, including development economics, public policy, and data analysis. Participants who complete the program are eligible to apply for an accelerated master's program at MIT or one of the pathway universities. Learn more and enroll »

🔖 **MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS**

Education, employment and social protection are top GNU priorities, but must be evidence-based [Opinion]
Daily Maverick

Families given cash with no strings spend more money on kids
Nature

The time is now: Harnessing rigorous evaluation in a post-ARPA America [Opinion]
Route Fifty

Invested in the WFH argument? Home in on the evidence
Financial Times

📄 **NEW RESEARCH PAPERS**

Dynamic Targeting: Experimental Evidence from Energy Rebate Programs
Takanori Ida, Takunori Ishihara, Koichiro Ito, Daido Kido, Toru Kitagawa, Shosei Sakaguchi, and Shusaku Sasaki

Environmental Externalities and Free-Riding in the Household
B. Kelsey Jack, Seema Jayachandran, Flavio Malagutti, and Sarojini Rao

Can Gamified Online Training Make High School Students More Entrepreneurial?
Experimental Evidence From Rwanda
Jeanne Lafortune, Todd Pugatch, José Tessada, and Diego Ubfal

Unconditional Cash and Breastfeeding, Child Care, and Maternal Employment among
Families with Young Children Residing in Poverty
Laura Stilwell, Maritza Morales-Gracia, Katherine Magnuson, Lisa A. Gennetian, Maria
Sauval, Nathan A. Fox, Sarah Halpern-Meekin, Hirokazu Yoshikawa, and Kimberly G. Noble

FEATURED JOBS

Senior Research Associate, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Administrative Associate, Guatemala City, Guatemala

Senior Research Associate, São Paulo, Brazil

(Senior) Research Manager, Rabat, Morocco

Research Manager (Morocco Employment Lab), Rabat, Morocco

Senior Research Operations Associate, Amman, Jordan

Research Associate (Identifying Interventions to Improve Maintenance of Local Water Infrastructure), Bangalore, Karnataka, India

Senior Human Resources Associate (Assistant for Learning and Development), New Delhi, Delhi, India

Senior Finance and Operations Manager, Cambridge, MA, US

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