

From Persistence to Performance: The Effects of Elite High Schools on Retaking and Testing

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Abstract

This paper investigates the effects of elite school eligibility on retake probability and effort in the context of the centralized admission system in Mexico's metropolitan area, where upper secondary schools predominantly use entrance exam test scores to determine student admissions. Notably, elite high schools require an additional criterion: a middle school GPA of at least 7 out of 10. Using this policy rule, I employ regression discontinuity estimates comparing students that are eligible and ineligible to attend elite schools. I find that eligible students are more likely to retake the entrance exam and perform better. In addition, their families increase spending on private preparatory courses.

Keywords: effort, regression discontinuity design, student achievement, retaking.

JEL classification: I21, I25, I28.

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