Civic Engagement as a Result of Education

EC-Crell Conference:
Working towards Indicators of Active Citizenship

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Outline

1. Background
2. Learning and Civic and Social Engagement (CSE)
3. PIAAC
4. Next steps
1. Background

OECD and CERI
1. Background

OECD and CERI

Education and Training Policy Division

Indicators and Analysis Division

Directorate for Education

Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI)

IMHE/PEB
1. Background

Overview of CERI’s Social Outcome of Learning (SOL)

- A focus on “social outcomes” instead of “economic outcomes”.

- The 1st phase of SOL highlights:
  
  - Health outcomes
    (e.g., obesity, mental health, smoking, etc.)
  
  - Civic and social engagement outcomes
    (e.g., voting, volunteering, trust, etc.)
1. Background

Overview of CERI’s Social Outcome of Learning (SOL)

- The objectives of SOL Project is to:
  - Add to the conceptual and empirical knowledge base of SOL, and inform lifelong learning policies

- Which can be done by:
  - synthesizing what is known about SOL,
  - developing coherent models and
  - proposing better ways to measure the relationships
1. Background

Overview of SOL (cont.)

- The SOL Project aims to shed light on:
  - The type and timing of learning interventions
  - Pedagogical contents, methods and learning environments
  - Distinction between causality and correlation

- Main outputs:
  - Health and ‘Civic and Social Engagement’ papers
  - A synthesis report
  - Indicator paper (by OECD Network B)
2. Learning and Civic and Social Engagement

- SOL commissioned a paper to David Campbell, in order to investigate education’s impact on civic and social engagement.

- Focus on 6 dimensions of Civic and Social Engagement:
  - Political engagement
  - Civic engagement
  - Voting
  - Trust (interpersonal and institutional)
  - Tolerance
  - Political knowledge
2. Learning and Civic and Social Engagement

Main Questions (Campbell, 2006):

1. Does education have an effect on CSE?
   - Is the relationship causal?

2. What are the causal mechanisms?
   - How does education increase engagement?

3. Do schools matter?
   - What happens in schools?
2. Learning and Civic and Social Engagement

Question 1: Does education have an effect on CSE?

Large scale randomized experiments? → No
Natural experiments → Limited

- More education in the US
  - higher voter turnout, more tolerance (Dee, 2004)

- More schooling in the UK and US
  - Higher voter turnout, political attentiveness and discussion, more attendance of political meetings (Milligan, Moretti, Oreopoulus, 2003).
2. Learning and Civic and Social Engagement

Question 1: Does education have an effect on CSE?

- Yes, education appears to have a causal effect on CSE.
  - Observed relationship between education and CSE cannot be dismissed as spurious.

- However:
  - Rigorous empirical analysis available for only a limited number of countries.
  - We don’t know the level and type of learning that matters.
  - We don’t know why education has the observed effect.
2. Learning and Civic and Social Engagement

Question 2: What are the causal mechanisms?

Three possible mechanisms:

- **Absolute** education model
  - individuals with more education are more engaged without regard to the educational environment

- **Sorting** model
  - engagement is driven by individual’s level of education relative to her social environment

- **Cumulative** education model
  - educational environment matters
2. Learning and Civic and Social Engagement

Question 2: What are the causal mechanisms? Results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Models</th>
<th>Political Engagement</th>
<th>Political Engagement</th>
<th>Voting</th>
<th>Civic Engagement</th>
<th>Trust</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political Index</td>
<td>Expressive Index</td>
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<td>Voluntary Association</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Absolute Education</td>
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<td>●</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sorting</td>
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<td>○</td>
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<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cumulative Education</td>
<td></td>
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<td>●</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

● Stronger evidence  ○ Weaker evidence  
Data source: European Social Survey
2. Learning and Civic and Social Engagement

Question 2: What are the causal mechanisms?

- Yes, we can distinguish between absolute, sorting and cumulative models.
  - Which helps to answer some of the causal mechanisms:
    - e.g., More education leads to stronger political engagement (e.g., contacting political leaders) primarily due to the “sorting model” (i.e., since education raise socio-economic status).
  - However, other causal mechanisms remain unclear:
    - e.g., More education leads to increased probability of voting primarily due to the “absolute model”. But does this occur because education improves:
      - cognitive sophistication?
      - civic skills?
      - Adherence to democratic norms?
2. Learning and Civic and Social Engagement

Question 3: Do schools matter?

What happens in schools?

School factors that might matter:

- Bureaucratic competence
- Civic skills
- Cognitive capacity
- Curriculum
- Pedagogical method e.g., classroom climate.
- Student parliament
- Extracurricular activities
- Service learning
- Norms
## 2. Learning and Civic and Social Engagement

### Question 3: Do schools matter? Results

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Climate</td>
<td>↑</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confidence in School Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conventional Citizenship Norms</td>
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<td>↑</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Group Memberships</td>
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<td>↓</td>
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<td>↑</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frequency of Meetings</td>
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</table>

↑ Statistically significant, positive relationship  ↓ Statistically significant, negative relationship  --- No statistically significant relationship  
Source: CIVED Study (1999)
Question 3: Do schools matter? Main results

- School matters
- The most significant aspect of school that matters is “openness of the classroom climate”.
3. Programme for the international assessment of adult competencies (PIAAC)

Policy priorities:

- International expert group identified (through country consultations) the following policy priorities:
  - Adult competencies and their individual and aggregate economic and social outcomes
  - Quality of initial education and the development of adult competencies
  - Changing skill requirements/mismatch and training policies
  - Enhancing the labour-market prospects and socio-economic chances of at-risk groups
3. PIAAC

Key elements of the proposed PIAAC strategy

- Composed of
  - Direct measures of adult competencies
  - Indirect measures of job requirement
  - A background questionnaire
  - An assessment of policy and institutional settings

- An assessment with 5 years cycle, the 1st cycle scheduled 2009/2010
- A representative sample of all adults between 16~64 years of age in a household context
- With international options for over-sampling
3. PIAAC

Key elements of the proposed PIAAC strategy (cont.)

- **Direct measures** of competencies:
  - Focus on “literacy in the information age”
  - But also measure basic reading competencies that serve as the foundation for the development of literacy

- **Indirect measures** of job requirements
  - Possibly use the job-requirement survey

- **A background questionnaire**:
  - The usual suspects (individual background, LM outcome, etc.)
  - But also include social outcome of learning
4. Next Steps:

**Developmental work** on “Civic and Social Engagement” items in the PIAAC Background questionnaire.

- Broadly consists of:
  - developing conceptual and analytical framework, and
  - developing questionnaire items

- Various inputs are expected to contribute to the process:
  - Campbell paper (2006)
  - Indicator paper by OECD Network B (forthcoming, late-2006)
  - OECD paper(s) to be commissioned to experts (TBD)
  - Crell papers (TBD)
  - Experts meeting organised by OECD and Crell (TBD)
4. Next Steps

- SOL Phase 2 (under consideration)

- **Option 1**: Deepening analysis of existing domains
  - Lifelong learning, informal learning perspectives
  - Adding qualitative work
  - In depth analysis of sub-domains

- **Option 2**: Extend analysis to new domains
  - Crime, cultural activity, etc.
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