

Using the IEA International Datasets for Informing Policy and Practices

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Presenters

- **Linda Zuze** Human Sciences Research Council, South Africa
- **Maria Magdalena Isac** European Commission—Joint Research Centre, Italy
- **David Kaplan** University of Wisconsin—Madison, United States
- **Tom Loveless** Brookings Institution, United States
- **Silvia Montoya** UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Canada

- What can IEA studies tell us about education systems – *and what they can't?*
 - Monitoring educational quality indicators (intended, implemented, attained curriculum) against international benchmarks **Magda**
 - Describe differences within countries and compare such within-country differences across countries **Linda**
 - Estimate the (causal) effects of certain feature of the educational system on outcomes **Silvia**
- What are the most appropriate methods to tease policy and practice recommendations out of IEA studies?
 - Descriptions have to take into account complex sample and assessment design when reporting results **Tom**
 - Explanations about the determinants educational outcomes
 - The **possibilities to draw inferences** from cross-sectional studies (e.g. A+ countries) and single-case trend studies (e.g. Poland) **are very limited** **Tom**
 - Causal inferences require a sound **framework of causal inference**. For example, propensity score matching relies on the assumption that we observe all factor involved in the selection process. Other methods are available. **David**
- What considerations have to be taken into account when interpreting analysis results?
 - Descriptive analyses point out problems (possibly with reference to other countries) **Linda**
 - Explanations about the determinants of outcomes may suggest solutions but one should spell out the limitations and assumptions of the analyses **David**
 - Develop a communication strategy to disseminate the research to policymakers; make sure that the information is useful and used **Magda, Silvia**

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Exercise

Questions

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The IEA (Andres)

- Founded as a loose network of researchers in the late 1950s
- Interested in identifying determinants of edu outcomes
 - [Tom Loveless: key difference to OECD]

The IEA (Andres)

- The mission statement identifies different areas of activities:
 - (a) **monitoring** the features of educational systems and outcomes of educational systems in relation to international **benchmarks** to assist policymakers,
 - (b) provide high-quality **data for** the scientific community to **investigate educational systems** and student learning,
 - (c) **capacity building** in terms of how to use ILSAs to improve educational systems, and
 - (d) **promote networking** among researchers and organizations engaged in educational research and evaluation worldwide.

What is a policy? (Andres)

- Framework for **action** ... translate **ideas how to approach** .. an identified **issue** into concrete **measures** to achieve some objectives
- A vision about desirable outcomes (ideology)
- What is the role of IEA data?
 - Research + dissemination

Andres

Introductory Discussion

- Horse race discourse
- Descriptions, hypothesis generation, causality
- Hanushek, Woessmann, West... why aren't they in the room?
- Are policy-makers actually interested in causal effects? How does educational policy work? – illusion of evidence-based policy
- Do researchers have to promote themselves?

Linda Zuze

Bullying

- Descriptions of bullying in South Africa
 - In international comparison
 - Between school types, gender
- Advantages of IEA
 - Representative sample (generalizability)
 - Good instruments
- Disadvantage
 - Limited content coverage

Maria Magdalena Isac

European Commission

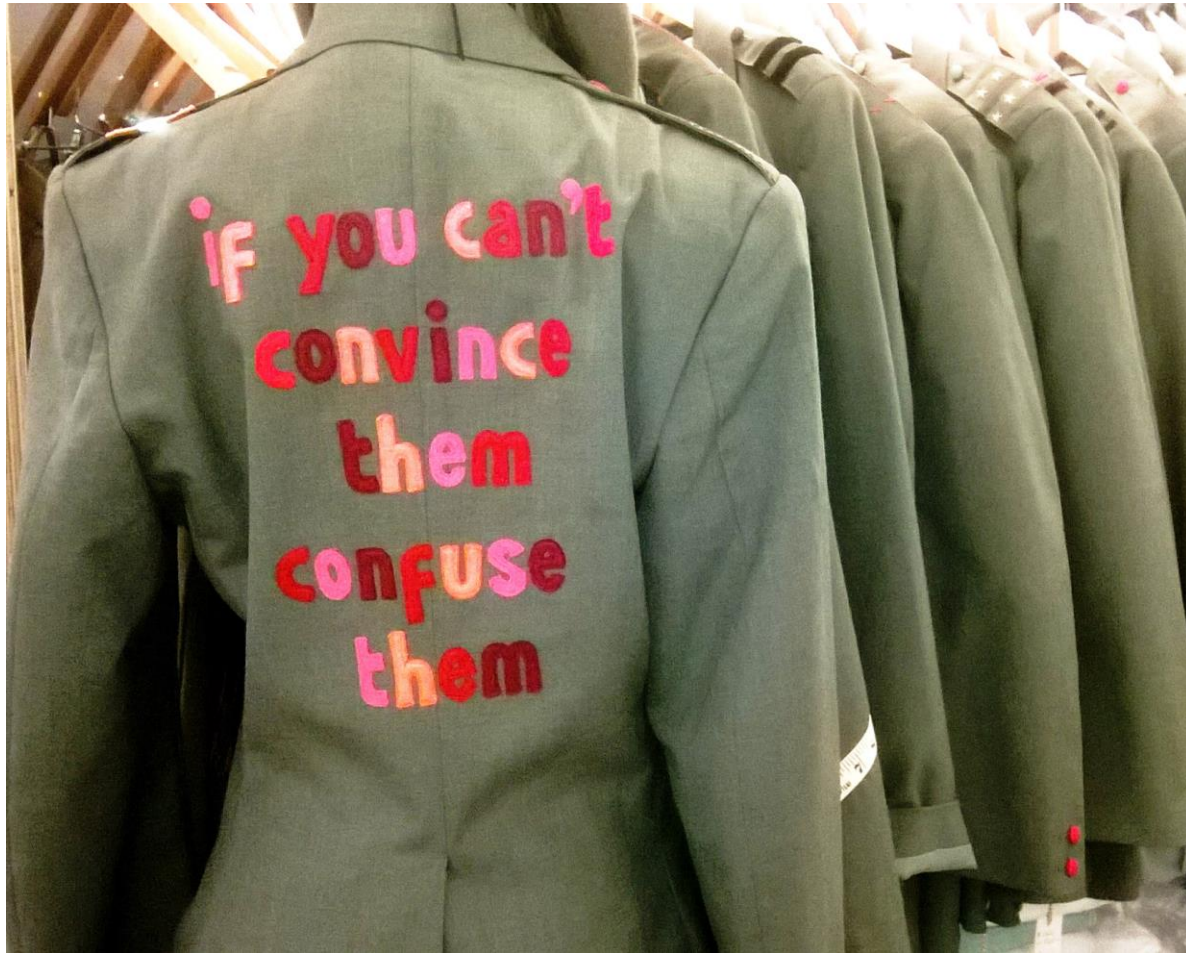
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 - Limited content coverage
- Open question: What are predictors of bullying

David Kaplan

Causality

- Experiments are considered gold standard
- Quasi-experiments come with additional assumptions
- Potential outcome framework
 - What is the selection process?
- We may be lucky to have the covariates at hand, but in general we would have to revise the study design

Finally...



Notes:

1. It's a joke!
2. Picture taken in the crafts market at the Wharf :)