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Reading enjoyment and reading skills: Lessons from an experiment with first grade children [★]Dominique Goux^a, Marc Gurgand^b, Eric Maurin^c^a(CREST)^b(Paris School of Economics-CNRS)^c(Paris School of Economics-EHESS)

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Abstract:

We consider a very intensive program targeted at low performing first graders identified by teachers as lacking appropriate parental support at home. The ambition of the program is to convey these children the daily contact with books that they may lack at home in order to develop their taste for reading and, eventually, their reading skills. Based on a controlled experiment in 109 French schools from deprived areas, we do find that taste for reading is significantly improved. However, there is no indication that this translates into higher reading skills, neither during the program year, nor during the next year.

Keywords:

Reading skills, Parental involvement, field experiment

1. Introduction

Reading skills are essential to every day life and to success in the workplace. Youth with lower level of reading proficiency are much more exposed to unemployment, poverty and delinquency. In most OECD countries, however, a substantial fraction of youth still fails to reach the minimum level of proficiency that is necessary to participate effectively in

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