

Incentives from Curriculum Tracking: Cross-National and UK Evidence

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Curriculum tracking creates incentives before its start, and we should expect scores in tested subjects to be higher at that point. I estimate incentive effects using both UK and international data. In the UK the causal effect is identified by a policy experiment, while the international data show a strong relationship between early tracking and early test scores. Incentive effects are important from a methodological perspective because they lead to downward bias in value-added estimates of the later age effect of tracking on achievement. They also invalidate placebo tests that work by regressing pre-tracking scores on tracking policies.