

Disruptive Interactions: Long-run Peer Effects of Disciplinary Schools*

Anjali P. Verma[†]
([Job Market Paper](#))

A. Yonah Meiselman[‡]

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Abstract

This paper studies peer effects in a disciplinary school setting, and estimates its impact on long-run educational and labor market outcomes of students sent to these schools. The existing literature suggests that students removed to disciplinary schools have worse future outcomes. We provide evidence that the composition of peers at these institutions plays an important role in explaining this link. Using restricted administrative records of all high school students in Texas public schools, we exploit the idiosyncratic variation in peer composition within a disciplinary school, within a school year to estimate the effect of peers' disruptiveness on student outcomes. We show that exposure to the most disruptive peers during placement at these schools increases students' subsequent disciplinary removals(5-8% per year), lowers high-school graduation(6%), college enrollment(7%), and college graduation(17%) and worsens labor market outcomes – lower annual employment(2.5%) and earnings(6.5%) at ages 23-27. These results show significant and lasting negative effects of temporary exposure to disruptive peers, thus highlighting an unintended consequence of exclusionary disciplinary policies.

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[†] Anjali Priya Verma: Ph.D. Student, Department of Economics, University of Texas at Austin.

[‡] Akiva Yonah Meiselman: Ph.D. Student, Department of Economics, University of Texas at Austin.