

## **Social Networks in Classes and Students' Psychological Comfort**

**Daniel Alexandrov** (Sociology of Education and Science Laboratory, HSE)

### Abstract

Children spend in school more than fifteen thousand hours, and school environment is second to family milieu in shaping their everyday lives in a mundane but very forceful way. Social and socio-psychological climate in school is most important for students, but in educational research much more attention is paid to academic achievement than to social and emotional comfort of school environment.

Social network analysis of friendships in classes along with the data on attitude scales (motivation, satisfaction, school belonging etc.) allow for the in-depth study and fine measurement of school environment. Our paper will present the results of our research on school environment in two particular dimensions: the relation between popularity (or marginalization) and academic achievement, and on the relation of school belonging and the topology of friendship networks in classes.

Large scale school surveys with network component (in one case 270 classes with complete networks from 98 schools in one city, in another – almost 550 classes with complete networks from 200 schools from two urban areas) allow us to use network data in complex multilevel regression analysis with rich set of parameters on all levels. My paper will present some of the results of these analyses.

Contrary to our expectations on the marginalization of ‘nerds’, we find that students are marginalized for good grades only in a small number of schools, and the effect is gender specific: such marginalization occurs only for boys, while for girls good grades are always positively related to popularity. The sense of school belonging is a measure for positive relation of a student with school environment, and high sense of belonging shows the absence of social exclusion and psychological comfort of school environment. We expected the sense of belonging to be associated with structural characteristics of friendship networks: students would have higher level of sense of belonging if they are embedded in highly cohesive networks. We found that sense of belonging is indeed related to transitivity of classroom friendship networks.

## **Who to Help? Trust and Preferences over Redistribution in Russia**

**Ekaterina Borisova, Andrei Govorun, Denis Ivanov, Irina Levina** (International Center for the Study of Institutions and Development)

### Abstract

Does generalized trust in society influence individual preferences over target groups for government redistribution? Existing research shows that trust affects government redistribution. In this paper we demonstrate that trust is important not only for demand for redistribution in general, but also for the preferred design of redistribution policy. Using a set of surveys of about 34,000 individuals across 68 Russian regions that were conducted in 2007, 2009 and 2011 we show that in high trust environment people demonstrate higher levels of support in favour of those who have performed services on behalf of the society, or can't work because of health problems or age; lower support is found for people in difficult life situations who are still able to work. To explain the observed relation we propose two possible mechanisms: substitution hypothesis, when people may expect help from others that substitutes support from the government, and civicness hypothesis, when people want to reward those who have done something noticeable for their country or to help those who are in great trouble and need special assistance which could be provided by the government. A novel instrumentation strategy is used to account for endogeneity. The results are robust to alternative calculations of the redistribution index, trust levels derived from 2007 and 2009 survey waves, and inclusion and exclusion of a rich set of control variables.

## **Social Comparison, Rewards and Incentives to Learn: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Uganda**

**Dagmara Celik Katreniak** (Center for Institutional Studies, HSE)

### Abstract

Substantial progress has been made in improving access to schooling in developing countries. Nevertheless, higher enrollment needs to be accompanied by advances in education quality in order to avoid stagnation or, at worst, quality downturn. A large number of interventions have been implemented with the aim of lowering absenteeism and improving students' performance. One possible channel is the provision of feedback about the subject's position in the group. Subjects also seem to improve if evaluated in groups and/or if provided with incentives, such as financial and reputational rewards. This paper contributes to the discussion in five aspects by implementing two types of social comparative feedback regimes - within and across-class group comparisons and two incentive regimes. First, it studies the effects of comparative feedback on students' group performance without further incentivization. Second, it helps to understand the value added of financial and reputational rewards introduced into a social comparison framework. Third, it provides us with further evidence on gender differences in responding to incentives. Fourth, it contemplates the effects of incentives on additional outcomes, such as happiness, stress and self-confidence. Finally, the paper contributes to the scarce literature on the provision of incentives in developing country. Disaggregation of the treatment interaction reveals that both girls and boys react similarly to the interactions of social comparison treatment with rewards, the channels are, however, different. While girls' improvement is driven mainly by the comparative feedback, boys react to rewards only with no added value of feedback provision. The results are heterogeneous also with respect to students' initial ability distribution – mostly students above median respond positively.

## **Workers Flows in the Russian Labor Market**

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### Abstract

Используя панельные микро-данные РМЭЗ – НИУ ВШЭ, работа анализирует основные потоки на российском рынке труда за 2000-2012 гг. Мы отмечаем высокий уровень мобильности и значительную транзитивную роль неактивности. Во-первых, мы строим матрицы переходов, показывающие вероятности межстатусных перемещений. Во-вторых, индексы Шоррокса дают интегральную оценку интенсивности перемещений и позволяют представить их в межстрановом контексте. В-третьих, динамическая мультиномиальная логит-модель отвечает на вопросы об индивидуальных детерминантах межстатусной мобильности и о наличии/отсутствии зависимости от прошлых состояний на рынке труда. В-четвертых, снижение безработицы почти полностью объясняется сокращением входящих в неё потоков при стабильном по величине оттоке, что является следствием проводимой политики на рынке труда.

## **Wages VS Informal Payment in police: comparative study of Russia, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan and Latvia**

**Tatiana Karabchuk** (Laboratory for Studies in Economic Sociology, HSE)

### Abstract

The project deals with the problem of police wage setting in comparative perspective. Based on unique data set, collected in four post-soviet countries (Russia, Kazakhstan, Bulgaria and Latvia) the research provides the comparative study focusing on the wage differentials in police and the probability for informal earnings. The survey had unique questionnaire for all four countries and the sample size for each country comprises of about 500 policemen. The respondents were asked to answer about 50 questions about their current position, wage, attitude toward bribes and extra income, consumption behavior, social guarantees and some other. The authors disclose the determinants of wage differentials inside the police, identifying as independent variables such as tenure, department, rank-position and place of living. The paper shows that the positive links between the wage size and attitudes towards informal payments take place only in Russia, but not in all other four countries. The same is true for the difference between the real and ideal wage stated by policemen.

## **Using TIMSS and PISA results to inform educational policy: a study of Russia and its neighbours**

**Martin Carnoy** (School of Education, Stanford University, Stanford, CA, USA), **Tatiana Khavenson** (Institute of Education, HSE), **Alina Ivanova** (Institute of Education, HSE)

### Abstract

In this paper, we develop a multi-level comparative approach to analyse Trends in International Mathematics and Science Survey (TIMSS) and Programme of International Student Achievement (PISA) mathematics results for a country, Russia, where the two tests provide contradictory information about students' relative performance. Russian students do relatively well on the TIMSS mathematics test but relatively poorly on the PISA. We compare the performance of Russian students with different levels of family academic resources over the past decade on these tests compared to students with similar family resources in Russia's neighbours and to Russian students studying in Latvian and Estonian Russian-medium schools. These comparisons and interviews with educators in Latvia and Estonia help us understand why students in Russia may perform lower on the PISA and to draw education policy lessons for improving international test performance generally and Russian students' PISA mathematics performance specifically.

# **Cultural and Structural Accounts of Counterfeit Alcohol Consumption in Contemporary Russia**

**Zoya Kotelnikova** (Laboratory for Studies in Economic Sociology, HSE)

## Abstract

Counterfeiting has become a global challenge but received little attention in sociology. The paper aims to reveal connections between consumer risk, consumer choice and social structure in the context of counterfeit alcohol consumption. Alcohol refers to common targets of counterfeiting as well as branded clothes and audio products in contemporary Russia. Different forms of counterfeiting are taken into account. Theoretically, the paper is inspired by Bourdieu, cultural theory of risk and moral economy perspective. The research is based on the Russia Longitudinal Monitoring Survey (RLMS-HSE), an annual nationwide panel survey designed to monitor the health and economic welfare of households and individuals in the Russian Federation. The research findings demonstrate that the majority of Russians believe that counterfeit alcohol may cause death. Nevertheless, the percentage of counterfeit alcohol drinkers consumed it deliberately is higher than one could expect. Cultural and structural factors account for the consumption of counterfeit alcohol. Counterfeit alcohol consumption is associated with hazardous alcohol drinkers and homemade alcohol drinkers who tend to ignore trademarks and the taste of alcoholic beverages. Social networks play a significant role in consumption of counterfeit alcohol: they reduce uncertainty derived from the ignorance to trademarks and serve as warranties of harmless consumption of low quality alcohol. Counterfeit alcohol consumers are highly likely to represent lower classes. The paper discusses how alcohol drinkers' involvement into counterfeit consumption is guided by moral values including use value logic and masculine attitudes to physical risks.

## **Relational Sociology: New Era in the Analysis of Social Networks, or An Independent Trend?**

**Darya Maltseva** (International Laboratory for Applied Network Research, HSE)

Abstract

In 1970-80s a new discipline was formed; it was named “The analysis of social networks”. Despite the fact that certain ideas of the discipline claiming to be theoretical were declared by its representatives (B.Wellman), some researchers (M.Emirbayer, J. Goodwin, M. Mizrachi) started criticizing them for not being theoretical enough; they put forward the relational sociology as a more solid alternative. The evolution of the above-mentioned movements in network research is studied in the paper; each of them is autonomous and theoretically completed. To conclude, the authors describe the level of sociological knowledge referred to both trends.

## **Re-Evaluating De Tocqueville: Social Mobility and Support for Democracy**

**Daron Acemoglu** (MIT), **Georgy Egorov** (Northwestern University), **Konstantin Sonin** (Higher School of Economics)

### Abstract

An influential thesis going back to de Tocqueville views social mobility as an important bulwark of democracy: when members of a social group expect to transition to some other social group in the near future, they should have less reason to exclude these other social groups from the political process. In this paper, we investigate this hypothesis using a dynamic model of political economy in the presence of social mobility. As well as formalizing this argument, our model demonstrates its limits, elucidating a robust theoretical force making democracy less stable in societies with high social mobility: when the median voter expects to move up (respectively down), she would prefer to give less voice to poorer (respectively richer) social groups. Our theoretical analysis also shows that in the presence of social mobility, the political preferences of an individual depend on the potentially convicting preferences of her future selves, under certain conditions paving the way to multiple equilibria.

## **A Simple Theory of Cascades in Networks**

**Alex Teytelboym** (Institute for New Economic Thinking, Oxford University)

### Abstract

We consider a linear threshold model of cascades in networks. An agent switches (e.g. adopts an innovation) if the proportion of his neighbors who have already switched exceeds his threshold. Agents' thresholds are drawn randomly at the start of the cascade process. We present a result for the expected number of switches in arbitrary finite networks with any initial seeds. For certain network topologies, we find analytic expressions for the expected number of switches. We define a new measure of an agent's ability to influence a cascade in a given network, called cascade centrality, which is the expected size of the cascade when the agent is the only seed in the network. We then consider a setting in which two firms compete to diffuse their products in a social network. Firms seed their products simultaneously and products diffuse according to the threshold model. Using cascade centrality, we provide a characterization of networks that admit pure-strategy Nash equilibria (PSNE). We provide tight bounds for the efficiency of these equilibria and for the inequality in firms' equilibrium payoffs. In trees, PSNE always exists and can be efficiently found. Our simple model admits a variety of extensions.

## **Delegating Relational Contracts to Corruptible Intermediaries**

**Marta Troya-Martinez** (New Economic School) and **Liam Wren-Lewis** (Paris School of Economics)

### Abstract

This article explores the links between productive relational contracts and corruption. The model considers a context where responsibility for a relational contract is delegated to a supervisor who cares in part about the profit of the relationship, and in part about the kickbacks paid by the agent. The agent can both exert effort that increases production and make corrupt kickbacks to the supervisor; the incentives for both come through self-enforcing contracts. We show that delegation to such a supervisor may increase the social welfare. Furthermore, when the future is not very valuable, this is the only way to sustain a productive relational contract. Delegation can ease the time-inconsistency problem of paying ex-post incentive payments; because if the supervisor reneges on such payments, she would damage the corrupt relationship (i.e. she would lose the future stream of kickbacks). We also establish the connection between the agent's compensation scheme, his effort and the associated kickbacks.