AERA Open Special Topic Call for Papers

Research using the Stanford Education Data Archive

Special Topic Editor: Andrew Ho

Public school students in the US take many standardized tests. For state accountability testing purposes alone, public school students in grades 3-8 take roughly 45 million math and reading tests per year. Their scores on these tests provide a potentially useful set of measures of educational success. Their usefulness, however, has historically been limited by the lack of comparability of test scores across states, grades, and years, and by the fact that states coarsen publicly reported scores into ordered categories (e.g., “below basic”, “basic”, “proficient”, “advanced”) the meaning of which is neither transparent nor comparable across tests.

A new open data resource, the Stanford Education Data Archive (SEDA; http://seda.stanford.edu), remedies these issues. Using almost 300 million standardized achievement test scores from roughly 22 million public school students each year from 2009 to 2015, Sean Reardon, Andrew Ho, and colleagues have constructed data files that provide estimates of the distribution of academic performance on a common scale for every public school district in the United States, disaggregated by grade, year, test subject, race, and gender. These data make possible comparative analyses of patterns of educational outcomes and progress across the US.

AERA Open invites paper submissions that use the SEDA data. We seek to publish both a) descriptive studies that inform education theory, policy, and practice; and b) studies that can plausibly identify the effects of policies, practices, and conditions on academic outcomes and inequality. In particular, we are interested in papers that deepen our understanding of educational opportunity, educational processes, and academic success in the United States.

Interested authors should submit a single-spaced, one-page abstract describing their proposed article. Authors chosen from the pool of abstracts will be invited to submit a full manuscript. Invited manuscripts will be peer-reviewed, meaning that invitation to submit a full manuscript is not a guarantee of acceptance. Although accepted manuscripts are subject to AERA Open’s one-time open access fee (see https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/journal/aera-open#submission-guidelines for details), the William T. Grant Foundation has agreed to cover the authors’ fee for this Special Topic.

Publication Timeline:
June 1, 2018: Submission deadline for abstracts (submit to AERAOpenEditors@aera.net)
August 1, 2018: Invitation to authors to submit a manuscript
December 1, 2018: Manuscripts due
From Spring 2019 on: Articles published as completed

Please direct questions regarding the Special Topic to Andrew Ho (andrew_ho@gse.harvard.edu). Please consult the AERA Open website (above) for general guidelines on manuscript submission.
Andrew Ho is a professor of education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and an associate editor of AERA Open. He is a psychometrician whose research aims to improve the design, use, and interpretation of test scores in educational policy and practice.