

EDUCATION

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EFP Takeaways

Race to the Tablet? The Impact of a Personalized Tablet Educational Program

Background

Now more than ever, technology is pervasive in U.S. schools. In fact, in 2015 alone, \$4.9 billion was spent on over 10.8 million devices for the classroom. As tablets and laptops become commonplace in schools, there is a need for causal evidence of technology's effectiveness. Elizabeth Setren explores the effects of a Math and English Language Arts tablet educational program in a Boston charter middle school. Her work is published in vol. 18, issue 2 of *EFP*.

The Study

Setren uses a randomized control trial to estimate the effects of the Math and Language Arts tablet educational program, which supplements core instruction in the Boston charter middle school. The trial took place in the 2013-14 school year and involved 438 middle school students. The author looks at the impact of the program on both Math and English year-end and quarterly formative exams.

Findings

The author finds that the program can substantially increase end-of-year test scores by 0.202 standard deviation in Math, but finds no effects for the summative English exam. For the quarterly formative exams, there are positive, but insignificant effects for Math and marginally significant effects for English.

These findings demonstrate the potential of technology to enhance student learning, specifically in Math.

The author argues that such technology could serve as a cheaper alternative to high-intensity tutoring for school districts without funding or labor supply for extensive tutoring programs.

For more details:

- View the [full issue](#).
- See the [full article in *Education Finance and Policy*](#).
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- Summary of:
Setren, E. (2023). Race to the Tablet? The Impact of a Personalized Tablet Educational Program. *Education Finance and Policy*, 18 (2): 213-231.